

CICL Member Update December 2021

CIMCL update – The final step in the restructure of the dual cooperatives is now complete, with the deregistration of Coleambally Irrigation Mutual Cooperative Limited occurring on Wednesday 17 November 2021. The changes to CICL's tax status and subsequent changes to CICL and CIMCL approved by members will have enduring significant benefits to CICL and its members.

Water Operations update – Late-December and early-January are expected to be high irrigation demand periods (assuming the wet conditions do not persist). We encourage all customers to provide CICL with as much notice as possible of water orders. Once the Murrumbidgee River becomes fully regulated and storage releases are being made to meet water orders, supplementary water access will cease and there will be pressure to ensure CICL's seven-day advance order is accurate.

If you have not already provided CICL with your final crop areas please do so by contacting Water Operations via Reception on T: 02 6954 4003 or after hours on M: 0427 544 269.

Blow grass alert – The warm windy weather has blow grass moving in. It is causing blockages in CICL's channels and drains and at regulators. Please report observations of blow grass accumulation to maintenance@colyirr.com.au.

Delivery restrictions – CICL's October newsletter detailed our approach to managing delivery restrictions and capacity constraints. More information can be found [here](#). The key point to be aware of is that during a restriction event the available flow is shared between active orders (per farm or per SFU) for tier one and tier two delivery entitlements.

Show respect for our staff – Unfortunately, one of our operational staff was recently verbally abused by one of our customers. CICL endeavours to provide excellent customer service. If you have issues with your water supply or other service all we ask is that when raising your concerns you do so respectfully.

NSW Department of Planning, Industry & Environment Allocation announcements

1/11/21

High Security	100%
General Security	100%
Groundwater (Lower Murrumbidgee)	100%

DPIE have advised that from Tuesday 15 March 2022 monthly allocation statements will commence to communicate potential water availability from 1 July 2022.

CICL announcement and offers

Member benefit	10%
Additional water offer	4%

Waterways

<http://www.colyirr.com.au>

T: 1300 850 105

Christmas operations

CICL Offices

Closed from 12 noon Friday 24 December until 8.30am Tuesday 4 January 2022.

Waterways

No changes with staff contactable on M: 0427 544 269.

WaterMart

Operational, however, trades will not be approved and transferred to allocation accounts between 12 noon Friday 24 of December and 8.30am Tuesday 4 January 2022.

Annual transfers

Closed from 12 noon Thursday 24 December until 8.30am Tuesday 4 January 2022.



Inter-valley trade (IVT)

Up-to-date information on the IVT is [here](#).

You can register for WaterNSW IVT alerts [here](#).

Introducing Steve Edwards, TCC Supervisor



How long have you worked for CICL? – I have just returned to CICL. For the last five and a half years I have been working at Milbrae Concrete in Griffith, managing reinforcement sales for concrete, and Lowes Petroleum Griffith Depot.

What is your role at CICL – I am replacing Eric Hutchinson as the Total Channel Control Supervisor, with Eric planning to retire in 2022.

What does your job entail? – I am responsible for placing our water orders with WaterNSW to meet our members' water demand. I also assist our members with placing starts, stops or altering orders. Another important part of the TCC role is to monitor channel flows and levels across our network.

What is a common question you get from members? – It's been quiet since I started probably because of the recent rain and low irrigation demand.

What do you like doing when you are not working? – Relaxing with family and friends.

What is your favourite holiday destination? – The Sunshine coast.

Channels are NOT for swimming in -

Irrigation channels are not a safe place to swim or play. As well as the known dangers like varying water depths, submerged objects and snakes, channels have automated structures that can trap and drown you. These structures are remotely operated resulting in unpredictable flows. I remind you that swimming in channels is **prohibited**. Please ensure your children and visitors are also made aware of this.



Introducing Keith Thompson, Environmental Compliance Officer



How long have you worked for CICL?

– I have been with CICL for four years (I started in November 2017).

What does your job entail?

– The important bit is compliance monitoring and reporting for our EPA Licence and

our Water Supply and Works Approvals. The fun bit is coordinating the delivery of environmental water to our members' wetlands.

What's a common question you get from customers/members? – "Is there something wrong with the weather stations?"

What do you like to do when you are not working? – Spend way too much time and money tinkering on cars.

Where is your favourite holiday destination? – Howqua Hills and most of the Victorian high country.

Water safety for primary schools – CICL continues to financially support both of our primary schools to run intensive swimming programs for all primary students. Our goal is to encourage maximum participation in this program, but also for the program to reinforce our message that swimming in channels is prohibited because it's dangerous.



Photo courtesy of St Peters

Peak Flow Fact Sheet – A new fact sheet is available which explains CICL's Peak Flow Charge and its rationale. The fact sheet is [here](https://www.colyirr.com.au).

Single Farming Unit Fact Sheet and Application form – CICAL has recently updated its Single Farming Unit Policy (SFU) and updated the application form. A copy of the new policy has been posted to all SFU holders. Nearly 70 percent of CICAL farms are involved in a SFU which simplifies members' within season water allocation account management.

CICAL recently produced a fact sheet which succinctly explains the SFU policy including what it doesn't cover. A copy is [here](#) and the application form is [here](#).

COVID Safe - The management of CICAL continues to review its pandemic risk mitigation strategy considering State announcements, including the NSW re-opening road map. CICAL requires all staff and visitors to our premises to be fully vaccinated. Alternative arrangements can be made to ensure CICAL is still able to provide its services to customers who are not fully vaccinated.

The following courtesies continue to apply:

- Please make an appointment in advance of visiting our premises and only do so if absolutely necessary. We would prefer it if you deal with our staff by email, phone or video conferencing.
- If you do need to meet with staff, please practice social distancing, hand washing and sanitising.
- Do not meet with our staff if you are feeling ill.

Australasian Bittern Conservation Summit, February 2022 - CICAL is a sponsor of the Australasian Bittern Conservation Summit being held at the Historic Hydro Hotel, Leeton, on 1 to 4 February 2022. CICAL and some individual members have been strong supporters of the Bitterns in Rice project. Any members interested in attending should register [here](#).

Environmental Watering - We have once again conducted environmental watering at several wetlands located throughout the Coleambally Area of Operations. The results have been very successful with numerous sightings of southern bell frogs. We hosted a visit from staff from the Commonwealth Environmental Water Office and NSW DPIE-EES and they expressed their gratitude to CICAL and its members for participating in the Saving Our Species – Southern Bell Frog project. Below is

a picture of a Southern Bell Frog. The Southern Bell Frog is considered vulnerable and our work, combined with the use of environmental water, is important to preserving the population of this species in our area.



Damage to channel crossings – be responsible – Local farm machinery traffic continues to cause damage to channel crossings and approaches. The photograph below is an example. CICAL member funds are used to repair this damage at a starting cost of circa \$6,000 per guard rail. CICAL requests members, their employees and contractors to take more care, slow down and/or find alternative routes so this damage stops.



Drainage off farms - Members would be aware from text and email notifications that we have an ongoing problem with Metolachlor and other pesticides being detected in our drainage water this season. You are once again advised that draining water contaminated with pesticides into the CICAL drainage system is a breach of CICAL's Rules. Penalties include fines as well as the suspension of supply of water. If you believe that you have accidentally released contaminated water into the drainage system please contact CICAL on T: 02 6954 4003 and speak to Keith Thompson or Mark Robb.

External issues

Water reform road map – The Commonwealth Government has appointed Darryl Quinlivan as Principal Advisor responsible for developing a road map with the state governments for implementation of the ACCC Water Market recommendations. The direction from the government is the road map must include practical, cost effective reform which is supported by the states by June 2022.

Supporting the Principal Advisor is an advisory group which is to advise on the economics, water markets and anticipated impacts of proposed reforms. CICAL is pleased our Policy and Communication Manager, Jenny McLeod, has been appointed to this group.

CICAL's overarching concern with the ACCC's recommendations is the creation of a new regulator, potential changes which may impact on irrigators' property rights, the cost of reform, and who will pay.

CICAL will inform customers of opportunities to have input to this work if they arise. Some of the proposed changes will impact on WaterMart and CICAL's trade processes. It is essential that change brings improved efficiency and not higher costs or more bureaucracy. You can find out more [here](#).

SDLAM Acceleration Program – The NSW Government recently announced it is progressing implementation of a number of projects which are important to delivering some of the 605GL of the Sustainable Diversion Limit Adjustment volume. This includes the Yanco Modernisation Project. CICAL welcomes the decision of the state and commonwealth to progress these projects as they are important to minimising the impacts of the Basin Plan water recovery on communities and irrigators.

Better Baaka and Better Bidgee – The NSW Government also announced it is progressing a range of projects intended to result in system wide better environmental outcomes in the Darling (Baaka) and the Murrumbidgee Rivers. CICAL also supports action to look at investments that result in better environmental outcomes (commonly referred to as complementary measures). However, we have a long way to go before we can be confident these programs reduce our Basin Plan risk. CICAL is focussed on

continuing to emphasise the importance of governments delivering on their commitments to find projects that provide environmental outcomes equal to at least 605GL of water.

Floodplain management plans for southern Basin – The Department of Primary Industry and Environment has announced it will remake floodplain management plans in the Lachlan, Murrumbidgee and Murray. The current Murrumbidgee flood plain management plan only covers a small part of the flood plain. The Natural Resources Commission audit of the southern basin floodplain management plans was critical of the plans and progress with their implementation. CICAL owns a number of flood works which are important to protecting the integrity of our assets and allowing the movement of water in major flood events westward. CICAL will participate in this planning process to ensure these long-standing structures can continue to operate.

Season's greetings – On behalf of CICAL management and staff I wish you and your families a happy and safe Christmas and New Year.

I thank our members for their continued cooperation with our COVID-19 requirements. I draw members' attention to our decision to require staff and visitors to CICAL premises to be fully vaccinated. We believe this decision will reduce the risk to our workforce of COVID-19 and minimise the risk to the wider CICAL community.

I encourage all members to keep abreast of their irrigation schedules. The summer irrigation demand always places pressure on the accuracy of CICAL's seven-day advance order. This is a significant challenge with most members only providing the minimum of two hours' notice. Accuracy will be crucial when river operations shift from the current flood operations mode to regulated water supply.

I look forward to CICAL being able to hold more face-to-face meetings with our members in 2022 and for a continuation of improved seasonal conditions.

Clifford Ashby
CEO