

CICL Member Update July 2021



Water Operations start of season - To assist with planning the commencement of water delivery for the 2021/22 season, please contact Water Operations if you are intending to place a water order in August.

Wet weather conditions delayed some of our planned winter works. Subject to customer demand the filling of channels may be delayed for water delivery to start later than the usual mid-August timeframe.

All early season water orders must be lodged by phoning the office T: 02 6954 4003 or M: 0427 544 269.

Crop form - Before a water order can be placed, members are required to complete a crop form with intended crop areas per farm. Crop areas can be updated at any time throughout the season if your plans change.

The crop form is available on our website [here](#) or from reception, and the completed form can be submitted via email to enquiries@colyirr.com.au or in person at reception.

2020/21 Invoices - Invoices are due for payment by Saturday 31 July 2021. Failure to pay will result in the suspension of water supply unless payment arrangements have been made.

Member benefit - CICL has announced a member benefit of 10 percent of delivery entitlements at no cost to members.

This offer is for members who are financial as of Saturday 31 July 2021.

To be financial, a member must have paid their 2020/21 invoices, or entered into a payment arrangement to the satisfaction of CICL before Saturday 31 July 2021.

For those eligible, the megalitre amount of the member benefit will be added to Water Statements by COB Monday 2 August 2021.

NSW Department of Planning, Industry & Environment Allocation Announcements

15/07/21

High Security	95%
General Security	50%
Groundwater (Lower Murrumbidgee)	60%

CICL announcement and offers

Member benefit	10%
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Waterways

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

P: 1300 850 105

Water statements are available on Waterways but its Water Ordering functions are currently switched off.

Inter-valley trade

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

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

WaterMart - The WaterMart temporary water trading platform commenced operation for the 2021/22 water year on Thursday 1 July 2021.

The WaterMart platform can be accessed [here](#). If you would like to discuss how to register, please contact Therese Chauncy on T: 02 6954 4003 or E: ea@colyirr.com.au

CICL Board elections - CICL will call for nominations from Monday 23 August 2021 for two member directors due to the retirement by rotation of Peter Sheppard and Anthony Mannes. The call for nominations closes at 12 noon on Thursday 23 September 2021.

Both Peter and Anthony have indicated they intend to seek re-election. If you require further information please contact the Company Secretary via reception on T: 02 6954 4003.

CERC - CICL called for nominations to the Community Environmental Reference Committee in June. Retiring by rotation were representatives from Boona, Yamma, KCPL (Kerarbury) and the community representative. Three nominations were received. The nominations returned Shona Hando for Boona, Shane Fraser for Yamma and Pat Brown as the Coleambally Community representative for three year terms. No nomination was received from KCPL.

CIMCL update – The Coleambally Irrigation Mutual Co-operative Limited board initiated the voluntary wind-up of CIMCL and the appointment of a liquidator in May 2021. The wind-up process is underway.

CICL Schedule of Charges – CICL has provided all members with our Schedule of Charges for 2021/22. The Schedule is produced to meet the requirements of the Water Charge Rules 2010 (*Cth*).

The Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) delayed its final determination for both WaterNSW and the Water Administration Ministerial Corporation (WAMC) charges with the new “government” charges to apply from 1 October 2021. CICL will update its Schedule of Charges once IPART finalises its determination for the government charges.

The consequence for members is that you will receive two invoices for WaterNSW Charges this financial year. The first one at the end of the first quarter (September 2021) and the second at the end of the financial year. Both will however only be payable by 31 July 2022.

Water use intensity policy - Members are advised that total farm water use (including on-farm bores) should not exceed 8ML/ha for the 2021/22 water season unless they have entered into Water Use Averaging Agreements with CICL. These agreements allow for averaging water use between unconnected farms and exempting farms from water use limits for horticulture, permanent plantings and other approved primary industries. Members must make an application in writing to CICL for a Water Use Averaging Agreement and the Agreement must be finalised before the mid-December allocation announcement for the Agreement to apply for the current season.

Please contact Keith Thompson via reception on T: 02 6954 4003 for further information.

Annual water allocation account limits - The water account rules which members need to be aware of are:

- Carryover plus the announced allocation net of annual trade cannot exceed 100 percent of general security water entitlements.

(Carryover is limited to 30 percent of general security water entitlements.)

- History of Use (HOU) supplementary water use **up to** the volume of HOU held is **in addition** to the account limit of 100 percent.
- Supplementary water can be used if no HOU right is held. Members who do not hold HOU supplementary water should be aware when deciding to use supplementary that supplementary water use is part of their 100 percent general security account limit.

Staff changes – CICL is disappointed Tessa Evans resigned to take up an Assistant Miller position at Coprice, Coleambally. Tessa joined us shortly after leaving school and was with us for just over three years and performed admirably, grew significantly as an employee, and became a valued member of the Water Operations team. We wish Tessa all the best in her new challenge.

CICL has recently appointed Paul Muir as Asset and Maintenance Assistant Manager. Paul comes to CICL with experience with the NSW Rural Fire Service but is also well known as a local farm manager and contractor. Please see more about Paul in the staff profile.

Staff profiles – CICL would like to introduce our staff to members via our newsletter. Starting with this newsletter, we feature our newest staff member, Paul Muir, and Shane Taylor.

Introducing Paul Muir - Where have you most recently worked and what was your role? - *I was the officer in charge of learning and development with the NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS) based in Griffith.*



What are you looking forward to with your employment with CICL? - *Joining one of the leading irrigation companies and being a part of the team that takes it into the future.*

What do you like to do when you are not at work? – *When I am not at work my time is usually busy with taking kids to sporting activities or volunteering for the RFS.*

What is the best advice you have received?

- *Don't ever take down a fence until you know why it was put up.*

What is your favourite quote? – *“Life is like a garden, you have to dig it.”*

Introducing Shane Taylor, Water Operations Quality Assurance Officer.



How long have you worked at CICL? -

Almost four years.

What areas have you worked in at CICL? -

I have always worked in Water Operations, starting as a Channel Technician in 2017 before taking up my current role as Quality Assurance Officer two years

ago.

What does your job entail? - *All things metering - I look after and monitor our offtake metering which includes our NSW metering compliance. I perform internal meter accuracy checks and organise with external parties to complete independent checks. I have been auditing our non-FlumeGate (S&G and pump) sites and complete work on meter installation and removals. I also work closely with the Total Channel Control operators and help run the system on the odd weekend so I'm often on the phone chatting with customers and placing water orders.*

What's a common question you get from customers/members? *I am the point of contact for any metering questions or concerns. The most common questions I receive are about installations, removals and general metering questions mostly involving our non-FlumeGate sites such as our stock and garden meters and pumps.*

What do you like to do when you are not working? - *I love the outdoors so when I'm not at work I enjoy fishing and camping, more recently I've been getting into running and cycling.*

What is your favourite quote? *"Come to me with solutions not problems."*

COVID safe – When entering our office or depot you need to register through the NSW QR code system and you are required to wear a mask. These requirements are consistent with the NSW Government requirements. In addition to the QR Code system and requirement of wearing a mask, the following preventative measures remain in effect:

- Members, contractors and consultants who have been in a declared “hotspot” in any state are requested not to come to CICL’s facilities.
- This also applies if your direct family members have been in a “hotspot” or if you or your family have come into contact with people from these areas.
- Staff remain available to assist you by email, phone or video conferencing.
- Our facilities remain open for those who have not been to a “hotspot”, however, please make an appointment in advance and wear a mask if seeing our staff members.
- Visitors from Victoria (outside of the NSW/Victorian border region) must complete a travel declaration form accessible on the Service NSW website [here](#).
- 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.

External issues

Meter compliance deadlines for groundwater users – Local groundwater users that own their meters are reminded they need to comply with the NSW non-urban metering standards by 1 December 2022.

The experience of irrigators required to comply by 1 December 2020 is that it takes time to complete the process and there are often delays in accessing infrastructure and contractors with the correct qualifications to complete the process.

CICL encourages groundwater users to start the process of establishing what they need to do to meet the 1 December 2022 deadline.

In the words of the NRAR Chief Regulating Officer, Grant Barnes *“I didn't know is not a defence”*.

There is information on WaterNSW's website [here](#) which will assist you.

In parallel with understanding your requirements for metering please familiarise yourself with the conditions on your Work Approval. In many cases the Work Approval includes an annual extraction limit for the water year. This limit is site specific and unrelated to the annual limits in the Water Sharing Plan.

This limit cannot be exceeded. NRAR have acted against a number of groundwater users where water use has exceeded this extraction limit. Your works also need to be consistent with your Work Approval.

Rainfall run-off regulation and licencing of FPH – The licencing and measurement of water captured on designated flood plains in the northern Basin remains unresolved. In response to failure of the regulations to allow licencing, the NSW government has restricted access to supplementary water licences in the Gwydir (50 percent) and Border Rivers (75 percent).

In addition, legal uncertainty remains for irrigation farmers across the Basin because the rainfall run-off regulation exemption was disallowed. This exemption reduced this uncertainty for irrigation farmers across the Basin who are using "best management practices" to capture rainfall run-off in tail water drains, preventing this water which may be contaminated from entering water ways.

CICL believes the parliament needs to work constructively to resolve these issues.

The NSW Upper House is holding another inquiry into this issue. More information is available [here](#).

Inspector-General Water Compliance Legislation – The Commonwealth Parliament has passed legislation to establish the Inspector-General Compliance. This will result in the strengthening of compliance and transfer of the MDBA's compliance responsibilities to the Inspector-General. Troy Grant's formal appointment is imminent.

Basin Plan amendments – Taking the opportunity presented by changes to the *Water Act 2007* (Cth) being before the Senate, National Party members proposed amendments to the Water Act and Basin on 25 June. The amendments were defeated in the Senate and in

the House of Representatives. The changes proposed were consistent with changes to the Basin Plan which are supported across the irrigation sector. The changes proposed reflect the need for more time to progress what are complex and difficult SDLAM projects. They also reflect the need for the Basin Plan to be adaptive and open to exploring different ways of achieving environmental outcomes.

The partisan response to the proposed changes shows how challenging it is to build support across the political spectrum for increased flexibility in the Basin Plan. CICL will make a submission to the [Senate Committee](#) formed to report on further improvements to the operation of the Water Act.

Government response to ACCC Murray-Darling Basin Water Markets Final Report – The Commonwealth is establishing an Expert Panel to provide advice to government on a *Work Plan* to support implementation of the ACCC Murray-Darling Basin Water Market recommendations.

The ACCC report is detailed and data rich. Unfortunately its recommendations are centred around the creation of a new, un-costed Commonwealth regulator, the *Water Markets Agency*. This makes it difficult for anyone to pick up and progress those elements which have wide spread support, for example regulation of water brokers.

In addition, many of the recommendations require the co-operation of the states, so implementation is far from straight forward. CICL supports low cost initiatives that will improve the transparency of market information, including water allocation announcements, and other announcements affecting the market.

BOM Water Information Portal - The BOM have released their first version of their Murray-Darling Basin Water Information portal. This is a central source of information for Murray-Darling Basin water, covering availability, allocation volumes, water take, water trade and prices, environmental water, weather, and climate. Funding to the BOM to develop the portal is a result of industry complaints about how hard it is to access information and navigate the multitude of water information sources.

The site can be accessed [here](#). The BOM is seeking feedback on their work to date.

Irrigators are one group that have raised concerns about how to access information in the once place. CICAL encourages you to have a look at the portal and provide your feedback, including details of information you require which is missing. It is only by end users looking at the information and providing feedback that it can be improved.

IPART determination - IPART delayed their final determination for WaterNSW and WAMC charges to allow time for stakeholders to comment on their draft decisions for new charges to recover the costs of implementing the NSW Government's non-urban metering reforms.

The proposed charges include an annual \$74 per licence scheme management charge and either a telemetry or non-telemetry charge of \$226 per meter.

Government owned meters will have an additional annual meter service charge of \$831. These charges apply to CICAL's licences and meters and to any customers with Water Access Licences including groundwater licences.

The NSW government is providing additional funds to WaterNSW to support the upgrade of government owned meters and to encourage connection to the government telemetry system.

CICAL had previously argued that metering charges should not be per water entitlement. We also argued that government should provide the capital to upgrade the government owned meters to the NSW non-urban metering standard.

Conclusion – I thank all members for their continued cooperation with our COVID requirements as ensuring we keep COVID out of the Coleambally community is important.

2021/22 is shaping to be a high water availability year which is welcome. I encourage members to provide us with their crop forms with their current intentions and to update their crop areas as plans change. Crop areas help inform our operational planning, particularly our seven day advance order to WaterNSW.

CICAL was planning a breakfast meeting in August, but because of the risks associated with COVID the meeting has been delayed. The proposed meeting agenda will include, water availability, river operations challenges and opportunities, and WaterNSW's [Water Insights](#) portal.

Hopefully the risk of COVID diminishes in the coming months and this meeting can proceed later this year.

Clifford Ashby
CEO