

CICL Member Update July 2023

CEO recruitment – In early July Julian Speed was announced as the successful candidate in CICL’s executive search for a new CEO. Julian’s most recent employment was as CEO of South Australian Forestry Corporation. Julian will commence his tenure in the middle of October, and I will conclude my tenure with CICL after the 2023 Annual General Meeting (AGM) on Thursday 26 October.

CICL board elections – CICL will call for nominations from Monday 21 August 2023 for one member director due to the retirement by rotation of Craig Perkins.

Craig, who is our Deputy Chair, has advised he intends to renominate. The call for nominations closes at 12 noon on Wednesday 20 September 2023.

Appointment of independent director - The term of independent director, Sharon Smith, concludes at the 2023 AGM. The board will recommend to members Sharon be reappointed for a further three years at the AGM.

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

This offer is for active members who are financial as of Monday 31 July 2023.

To be financial, a member must have paid their 2022/23 invoice, or entered into a payment arrangement to the satisfaction of CICL before Monday 31 July 2023.

The megalitre amount of the member benefit will be added to Water Statements by COB Tuesday 1 August 2023.

2022/23 invoice – Your invoice is due for payment by Monday 31 July 2023. Failure to pay will result in the suspension of water supply unless payment arrangements have been made.

CICL Schedule of Charges – CICL has provided all members with our Schedule of Charges for 2023/24. The Schedule is produced to meet the requirements of the Water Charge Rules 2010 (*Cth*) and can be found [here](#).

NSW Department of Planning & Environment Allocation announcements

17/7/23

High Security	95%
General Security	37%
Groundwater (Lower Murrumbidgee)	100%

CICL announcement

Member benefit	10%
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Waterways

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

T: 1300 850 105

WaterMart



The WaterMart platform can be accessed [here](#).

Inter-valley trade (IVT)

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

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

IVT spill – The NSW government has announced a decision to spill the IVT balance with the spill to take effect on 14 August 2023. More information is available [here](#).

Temporary water restriction – The NSW government has announced a temporary restriction on interstate water trades into the NSW Murray, Lower Darling and Murrumbidgee regulated river water sources. This restriction commenced on 1 July and will last until 31 August 2023, unless it is repealed earlier. More information is [here](#).

Water Operations start of season - To assist with planning the commencement of water delivery for the 2023/24 season, please contact Water Operations to discuss your water order requirements.

At this stage, water will be available for delivery to customers in late-August following completion of winter maintenance work.

The timing may be influenced by weather conditions and customer demand, so please keep Water Operations updated with your plans by phoning the office T: 02 6954 4003 or M: 0427 544 269.

Waterways statements – Waterways will be open for statements from 12 noon on Friday 21 July 2023.

Crop forms - 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 [here](#) or from reception on T: 02 6954 4003.

The completed crop form can be submitted via email to enquiries@colyirr.com.au or in person at reception.

Water use intensity 2023/24 - Members are advised that total farm water use (including on-farm bores) should not exceed **8ML/ha** for the 2023/24 water season unless they have entered into a Water Use Averaging Agreement with CICL.

These agreements allow for averaging water use between unconnected farms and exempting farms from water use limits for 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.

Updated CICL Water Use Policy – CICL has updated its Water Use Intensity Policy. The revised policy will apply from 1 July 2023 and can be accessed [here](#). Members are reminded that **Rice Soil Suitability remains integral to our policy.**

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

- Carryover is limited to 30 percent of general security water entitlements.
- Carryover plus the announced allocation cannot exceed 100 percent of general security water entitlements. Member benefit and allocation trade in is in addition to the 100 percent.
- General security water entitlement holders can access off-allocation water in supplementary events when the announced allocation for general security is less than 70 percent. Any off-allocation usage is included in the account limit of 100 percent unless History of Use (HOU) supplementary water is held.
- If you have used off-allocation water and an increase to general security announced allocation would cause you to breach the account limit of 100 percent, the off-allocation usage above the account limit is converted to normal (non-supplementary) usage.
- HOU supplementary water holders can access off-allocation water in supplementary events up to the volume of their HOU.
- Supplementary water is not available against high security water entitlement holders or delivery entitlements.

During a supplementary event, only orders from farms with general security water entitlement will be considered supplementary use. Orders from those farms with high security water entitlement, G class water entitlement, or delivery entitlement only will be using allocation and must have the water available in their account before ordering.

Water availability outlook for 2023/24 – The Department of Planning and Environment current water allocation statement and outlook released on Monday 17 July can be found [here](#).

Seasonal outlook member meeting – CICL has again arranged for the Department of Planning and Environment to provide a water allocation update on Thursday 17 August 2023. This will be a breakfast meeting. Bacon and egg rolls will be available from 8.00am with the presentation starting at 8.30am at the Coleambally Community Club.



Introducing Russell Rutledge, Maintenance Officer

How long have you worked for CICL and what is your role? – 13.63 years as a Maintenance Officer.

What were you doing before you joined CICL? – I had a range of

jobs, including farm worker, security guard and self-employed seed grading contractor.

What does your job entail? – Plant operation, truck driving, and general maintenance tasks.

What is a common question you get from customers? –

“When is the water coming back on?”

“When is the water going off?”

What is the favourite part of your job? – Operating CICL’s plant.

What do you like to do when you are not working? – I enjoy woodwork.

What is your favourite quote – “We are on a mission from God”, but I don’t get to use it too often. From the Blues Brothers movie.

Staff changes – CICL welcomes Genna Rixon as Administration Assistant. Genna will be working closely with Bronwyn Vearing, Therese Chauncy and Bernie Star providing customer service, member communication, administration assistance and assisting with aspects of temporary trading, including the WaterMart platform.

Genna comes to us from Murrumbidgee Irrigation where she was employed as a Business Administration trainee and completed her Cert III in Business Administration.

Luke Fox, Mechanical/Channel Technician, left CICL recently to pursue a career with a fencing contractor. CICL is currently recruiting to fill this vacancy.



Introducing Laura Sleeman, GIS Officer

How long have you worked for CICL?

– I have worked at CICL for three months as the Geographical Information Systems (GIS) Officer.

What were you doing before you

commenced with CICL? – Previously I worked for a USA based utility company helping to align their networks to updated cadastre (land parcels).

What does your job entail? – A small bit of capturing data but mostly sorting and analysing geographical data using GIS.

What is a common question you get from staff? – Can you make a map of ????

What is the favourite part of your job? – Finding a pattern in data.

What do you like to do when you are not working? – When I am not at work I am hanging out with my dogs or finding a new place to hike.

What is your favourite quote? – “Don’t forget to stop and smell the roses.”

2023-2028 Strategic Plan – CICL recently refreshed its Strategic Plan. CICL appreciates the contribution of members who participated in CICL’s focus group during the development of the plan. The updated plan has six strategic objectives which capture our core business as well as the areas which are important to our continued success. Each objective has several initiatives that management will undertake. The strategic objectives are:

1. **Water delivery and water management optimisation** – to optimise the efficient and reliable delivery of water distribution and drainage services.
2. **Information systems** – to enhance the technological environment to meet the business’ operational requirements.
3. **Human resources** – to attract and retain the human resources and to implement support systems to enable the business to achieve its strategic and operational objectives.
4. **Brand and reputation** – to ensure CICL’s brand and reputation remains respected and pre-eminent among stakeholders.
5. **Asset management – replacement/maintenance** – to ensure CICL’s infrastructure remains suitable to meet current and future operational requirements.
6. **Investment management** – to invest funds to meet the needs of the business, including asset replacement, with the aim of limiting increases in customer charges to a level below CPI.

Industry events

Trent Gardiner, NSWIC Life Delegate - At the NSWIC meeting in Whitton on Wednesday July 5 former CICL chair, Trent Gardiner, was endorsed as a Life Delegate to NSWIC.

Trent Gardiner was CICL’s delegate to NSWIC for six years whilst he was chair of CICL. Trent served on the board of NSWIC for five years and was deputy chair for three years until he retired as a director of both NSWIC and CICL in 2016.

In Trent’s time as a delegate and board member he was a dedicated supporter of NSWIC and the importance of council being a united and effective organisation that advocates in the interests of NSW irrigators.

CICL welcomes NSWIC’s recognition of Trent’s contribution to NSWIC, as it is important our industry acknowledges the work and contribution of individuals.

Iva Quarisa, Murrumbidgee Private Irrigators and Murrumbidgee Groundwater, was made an Honorary Delegate.

This follows the recognition of Mary Ewing, Lachlan Valley Water Executive Officer, and Jenny McLeod, CICL, who were both made Honorary Delegates to NSWIC in March this year.

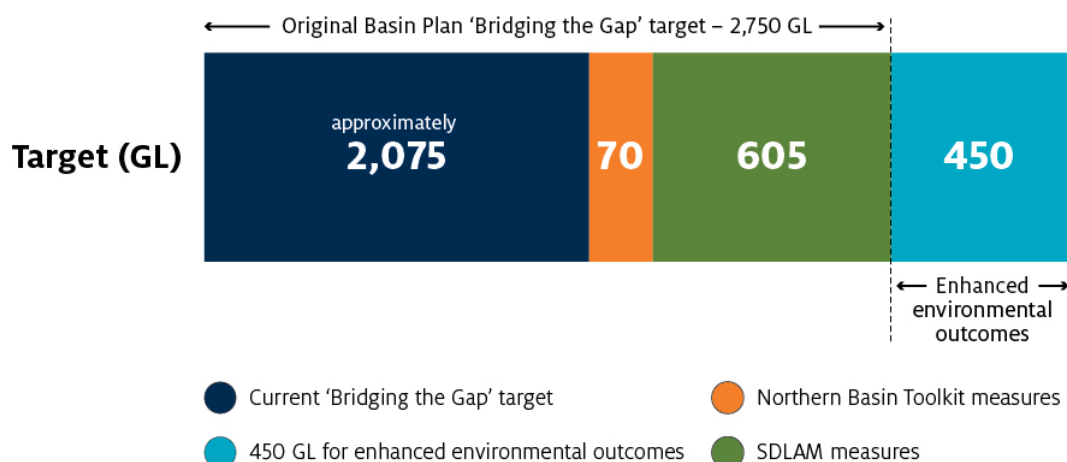
The Australian Ricegrowers’ Conference – CICL is a sponsor of this event which is being held in Griffith on 10-11 August with ticket sales closing next Tuesday, 25 July.

Further information and tickets can be purchased [here](#).

Cotton Collective – The Cotton Collective event is on in Toowoomba from Tuesday 1 August to Thursday 3 August, more information is [here](#).

External issues

Basin Plan challenges – There are looming deadlines approaching for finalisation of the Murray-Darling Basin Plan. The graphic below shows the Basin Plan numbers (surface water) including how the numbers increase and decrease. The original Basin Plan volume (surface water recovery) was 2,750GL. This was reduced by 70GL for the northern Basin Toolkit measures, and by 605GL for the Sustainable Diversion Limit Adjustment Mechanism (SDLAM) projects. The 450GL is to provide enhanced environmental outcomes and to be from efficiency projects that are at least socially and economically neutral. The SDLAM projects and 450GL efficiency funding are due to end on 30 June 2024.



The table below gives an update in where we currently sit, including in the Murrumbidgee.

Type of recovery	Progress
Bridging the gap 2,075GL	2,107.4GL ^{1,2}
Murrumbidgee contribution 435.9GL	442.3GL
Supply projects 605GL	At risk 190GL-315GL
Murrumbidgee benefit 162GL³	At risk 51-85GL (estimated)
Efficiency projects 450GL	12GL registered and 14GL contracted
Murrumbidgee contribution	5.6GL
Minimum efficiency contribution 62GL	

The Commonwealth Water Minister has asked the Murray-Darling Basin Authority to give an “honest” assessment of what can be achieved by 30 June 2024. This may be an indication the Commonwealth is considering extending the deadlines for the Basin Plan.

¹ There is over recovery in some valleys. The current purchase program is expected to result in this target being met in each valley.

² One GL equals 1,000ML. One Murrumbidgee general security water entitlement equals 0.591ML, long term diversion limit extraction factors. (Updated LTDLE, NSW 2018).

³ The Sustainable Diversion Limit in the Murrumbidgee is 162GL higher because of the SDLAM. If reconciliation proceeds in 2024, and results in less than 605GL of benefit, the Murrumbidgee will have a new lower SDL.

Finalising the Basin Plan – In a positive initiative the Commonwealth Water Minister has called for ideas on how to finalise the Basin Plan. CICL, along with Murrumbidgee Irrigation, proposed a project for the Murrumbidgee to improve river operations and environmental water management, generating water savings and better environmental outcomes through re-regulation and improved control systems. We have called this the **Murrumbidgee Optimisation Project**.

Industry bodies across the Basin have identified a range of projects to deliver on Basin Plan outcomes without the need for further water recovery.

Water Ministers are due to meet in August with the aim of reaching agreement on the steps to finalising the Basin Plan. CICL along with NSWIC and National Irrigators' Council continue to advocate that government needs to find solutions that avoid further buyback.

Local Member's Bill to block buybacks from NSW – In an interesting tactic, Independent Member for Murray, Helen Dalton, introduced a Private Member's Bill to block NSW selling water to the Commonwealth with the intent of enshrining a socio-economic test in the NSW Water Management Act 2000. You can read the bill [here](#). The first opportunity for debate will be the August parliamentary sittings.

Productivity Commission Review of Basin Plan Implementation – The Productivity Commission's second review of the implementation of the Basin Plan is underway with a draft report due in September or October and a final report in December.

At our briefing with the Productivity Commission in Griffith, the Associated Commissioner emphasised the Productivity Commission want to firstly investigate how effectively the Basin Plan has been implemented and make recommendations on what to do next.

Further information is available [here](#).

Water Market Reform - Consultation for the draft Water Amendment (Water Market Reform) Bill 2023 has commenced. This Bill is the first major step in legislative change to implement the Water Market Reform Roadmap agreed to by the Commonwealth Government. The Bill covers:

- Water Markets Intermediaries Code
- Water market decisions
- New and strengthened insider trading prohibitions
- New market manipulation prohibitions
- Data and systems reforms.

The Bill also includes the removal of grandfathered "tags", something CICL has advocated for.

Once the legislation is made with its supporting regulations, irrigators will need to provide more information when trading annual allocations, water entitlements, and delivery entitlements, and there will be significantly more information about water market activity in the public arena. There will also be new requirements for water brokers and exchanges.

NSW Government Response to the Upper House Status of Water Trading Inquiry - The NSW Government released its response to the Upper House Inquiry in June, the response is [here](#).

The response notes the government is currently considering enhancements to its registers. The response relies heavily on implementation of the Roadmap for Water Market Reform. In relation to public water market registers, it notes the need to carefully balance increasing transparency while protecting privacy.

Conclusion – I encourage you to attend the "Water Outlook" meeting on August 17.

All sectors of the industry have worked hard to provide solutions to NSW and Commonwealth Water Ministers for finalising the Basin Plan in a way which avoids further buyback. The next few months are a critical opportunity for government to make sound decisions

Clifford Ashby, CEO