

CICL Member Update March 2021

CIMCL Update – Members have been sent a letter from the chairman of CIMCL, Adrian Hayes, about a special postal ballot to determine the future of CIMCL. Information sent included a disclosure document and special postal ballot papers.

The board of CIMCL, after a review of the options available for the future direction of CIMCL, are recommending to members the transfer of CIMCL's Sinking Fund (circa \$40M) to CICL as a lump sum. Following this transfer the board of CIMCL is recommending the wind up of the mutual.

Members are encouraged to attend at least one of the information meetings where the proposal will be explained and members will have the opportunity to ask the CIMCL board and management about the proposals.

The meetings start at 9.00am as follows:

- Tuesday 16 March 2021, Coleambally Club
- Wednesday 17 March, Yamma Hall
- Thursday 18 March Tubbo Fire Shed.

Assuming members agree to transfer the Sinking Fund to CICL, the mutual would no longer have a purpose which is why CIMCL is recommending winding up of the mutual.

The vote closes at **12 noon on Tuesday 23 March 2021.**

The special postal ballot requires 75% of those voting to be in favour of the proposed change for the change to proceed.

Monthly Account Statements email - You recently received an email notification that CICL will be emailing **account statements** (summary of the invoices) to all customers effective from the January month end. At this stage the invoices will continue to be posted. You are reminded to update your email contact details if they have recently changed.

Please contact Alison Hayes on T: 02 6954 4003 if you have any queries. A copy of the Customer Communication form is [here](#).

NSW Department of Planning, Industry & Environment Allocation announcements

15/1/21

High Security	100%
General Security	100%

CICL announcement and offers

Additional water	8%
Member benefit	6%
Water offer	3%

Waterways

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

P: 1300 850 105

Inter-valley trade

WaterNSW continues to deliver IVT water to the Murray. Up to date information on the IVT is [here](#).

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

WaterMart-



The WaterMart temporary water trading platform is a secure, transparent, fast option for buying and selling annual allocation with competitive transaction fees. The WaterMart platform can be accessed [here](#).

Water Operations update – Members are reminded that the emergency stop function on outlets is only to be used in an emergency. Please use the two hour order change feature in Waterways to allow the TCC system to maintain channel supply.

Water statements have been updated with stock and garden usage after meters were read in late January. Members are reminded to ensure they have water allocation available to cover their stock and garden usage.

A stock run for West Coleambally Channel is being planned for early March in consultation with members along the channel. Please contact the Water Operations team with your orders.

Water Operations can be contacted via M: 0427 544 269 or via Reception during business hours T: 02 6954 4003.

Quality assurance of metering - Flume Gate™(FG) Tip Tests - By the end of January, our channel technicians completed the second round of FG tip tests at all farm outlets for this season. Four FG's, situated on channel sections that did not see much water the previous two seasons, were found out of specification. Those FG's were re-commissioned and are now reading accurately. In addition, CICL normally have an independent third party to conduct random tip test at a number FG's. Due to COVID-19 our Quality Assurance Officer will perform these random tip tests.

Tip Tests are an important part of CICL's efforts to provide confidence in the accuracy of our measurement of water delivery to members and external stakeholders.

What happens to improvements in water availability now 100 percent is announced?
- There will be no further **announced allocations** in 2020/21 by the Department of Planning Industry and Environment (the Department) because general security and high security announced allocations have reached 100 percent. Improvements in water availability will go towards 2021/22 water availability.

The Department has announced the next Water Allocation Statement will be on 15 March 2021. Starting in March the mid-monthly statements will communicate the potential water availability on 1 July 2021 for the 2021/22 water year.

Supplementary water access may be announced if there is a surplus in the river downstream of the storages.

However, the 100 percent general security announcement means supplementary water access is only available to CICL customers who hold History of Use (HOU) supplementary access. The maximum volume of supplementary water use cannot exceed the HOU volume.

Customers are reminded the annual water allocation account limits are:

- The maximum announced allocation and account limit for general security and high security is 100 percent.
- Carryover from the current water year to the next water year is available only on general

security water entitlements up to 30 percent of the water entitlements.

- The account limit including announced allocation and carryover for general security water entitlements is 100 percent, nett of annual allocation trade
- HOU supplementary water use **up to** the volume of HOU held is **in addition** to the account limit of 100 percent.

If you have questions about your water allocation statements please contact Water Operations.

Casual usage charge - Customers are reminded the casual usage charge of \$17.91 per ML applies to any water use more than 110 percent of delivery entitlements. The charge applies per farm or if the farm is in a single farming unit (SFU) per SFU. Details of CICL's charges can be found [here](#). The casual usage charge (if applicable) will be included in the CICL's June accounts.

The number of delivery entitlements held is available in *Waterways*.

Drainage water - Members are advised that draining water contaminated with pesticides into the CICL drainage system is a breach of CICL's Rules. If you have accidentally released contaminated water into the drainage system Members must contact either Mark Robb on M: 0427 544 361 or Keith Thompson on M: 0439 084 569.

Spray drift – your responsibilities - With the best season we've had in years our members should remain vigilant to protect our crops from the harmful effects of spray drift. Spray drift is caused by the improper application of pesticides and costs farmers across the Murray-Darling Basin millions of dollars every year in crop losses, hefty fines and court cases.

Do your bit to eliminate spray drift this season and follow the pesticide Safety Data Sheet application guides and the advice of your agronomist. Many agricultural chemical companies and peak bodies have also published detailed guides for the proper application of pesticides on farm. Examples are in the links below.

["Keep the spray on the weeds"](#)

[Nufarm "24 hour risk profile for summer spraying](#)

If you would like to know more about spray drift make sure to contact your local agronomist. If you are concerned about a spray drift incident you can contact the EPA environment line on 131 555.

New faces at CICAL – We have welcomed some new faces to CICAL in the last few months. Mark Stratford joins us as a Geographical Information Systems Officer, working with the Environmental Compliance team. Mark is originally from

Coleambally and previously worked for the NSW Housing Corporation in Sydney. Our need to improve our GIS capability, which will assist all parts of business, was identified during 2020. Adam Davis joins us in Information Systems filling a vacant position. Adam was previously at Narrandera Council. Luke Fox joins us as a mechanical technician. His work will improve our capacity to efficiently maintain our FlumeGates and other mechanical infrastructure. Luke has previously worked locally, including at Coprice, Coleambally. I encourage you to make these new team members welcome to Coleambally.



External issues

SDLAM action – CICAL, along with Murrumbidgee Irrigation and Murray Irrigation, continue to communicate to our stakeholders the importance of the Sustainable Diversion Limit Adjustment Mechanism (SDLAM) being successful. The SDLAM is essential to avoiding further water buyback from our communities.

In the coming weeks we will provide members with more information about how you can assist raise awareness of the importance of the SDLAM.

Our message to the governments responsible is:

- Engage with communities and implement without delay your projects.
- Identify and implement alternate projects if existing projects are unachievable or under deliver.
- Remove or amend legislation so that the timeframe is extended.

The SDLAM mechanism currently provides for environmental outcomes equal to 605GL of water entitlements or held environmental water. No irrigation dependant communities can afford to have more water returned to the environment which is the risk if the SDLAM delivers less than 605GL.

We all need to focus on achieving the environmental outcomes in different ways. CICAL customers communicating with all stakeholders the importance of the SDLAM will help focus governments.

IPART Review of WaterNSW and WAMC charges – The Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) is making four year pricing determinations for both WaterNSW (regulated surface water) and Water Administration Ministerial Corporation (WAMC) (groundwater, unregulated, some MDBA, regulated resource management and compliance). Both WaterNSW and WAMC are proposing very significant increases in water charges.

These proposed increases are caused by increases in costs by both WaterNSW and by government. One of the other drivers is IPART's previous position that water users should pay an increased share of the following costs:

- Environmental Planning 50-80%
- Flood operations 50-100%
- Dam safety 50-80%
- Fish passage 50-80%

CICL and NSWIC have both objected to these price increases. The draft determination is due in March. It would be good if more irrigator voices were heard on these issues.

You can find out more information about WaterNSW review [here](#) and more information about the WAMC review [here](#).

Flood Plain Harvesting (FPH) and rainfall run off regulations - The rain fall run off exemption regulation included in the package of regulations the government consulted on prior to Christmas is important to you.

This regulation is essential to removing the conflict for CICL and its members between their legal requirements to retain irrigation tail water on farm and the requirements of the Water Management Act.

The proposed regulation is an efficient administrative solution to the conflicts between:

- CICL's Combined Water Supply Work Approval and Water Use Approval Water Management Works Licence and the Water Management Act.
- CICL's responsibilities under its Environment Protection Licence under the Protection of the Environment Operations Act and the Water Management Act.

CICL's Rules (applying to its Members) and the Water Management Act.

Some irrigators and industries think they can harvest 10 percent of the run off on their farms as a harvestable rights allowance. This is incorrect unless the farm storage is on a stream which is not the case for CICL members.

It is important the final regulation is not disallowed by the upper house. The politics of the NSW upper house with political fighting and division over flood plain harvesting present a real risk this regulation will be rejected.

We are advocating in your interests on this issue to avoid our members being facing legal uncertainty.

Tracking groundwater usage – The Department has developed a dashboard which can be found [here](#) which allows you to search your aquifer to determine the risk of use this year exceeding the extraction limit.

WaterNSW Water-Insights Portal – WaterNSW has been continuing to develop its Water Insights Portal which can be found [here](#).

Multiple public inquiries and reports have raised access to information about a wide range of water issues. WaterNSW in conjunction with the Department have been investing in improving access to information as well as improving the way information or data is presented.

You can find on WaterInsights specific information for the Murrumbidgee, including volumes held by the environment, losses in the main stem of the Murrumbidgee and the Yanco system. Trade data is available for this year and includes some historical data. It's well worth having a look at this information.

Conclusion – I encourage members to attend one of the planned meetings about the future of CIMCL. The changes to CIMCL, if approved by members, are the final step in the restructure of CICL and CIMCL with CICL becoming a Public Authority in 2020. These changes will have enduring benefits for members.

I look forward to talking to members about the changes proposed in mid-March.

Clifford Ashby
CEO