

Macquarie-Cudgegong Customer Advisory Group

Notes of Meeting
Thursday 29 November 2018
Via Skype

Participants: Tony Quigley, Chris Hogendyk, Chris Devitt, Grant Tranter, Brad Cam, Tim Hosking, Stuart Crawford, Rick Reid, Robert Millner, Bill Tyrwhitt, Rob Tuck, Sri Sritharan, Mahmood Khan, Amber Daines, Jonathan Dickson and Toni Hayes.

Apologies: Peter Schuster, Lindsay White.

Meeting Opened: 10.30am

1. Update on actions from the last meeting (12 September 2018)

- See action sheet attached.
- Customers sought information on what is happening with the money budgeted for the desilting of the North Macquarie Marsh bypass channel (\$3.2M).

Action MC1811.01: *WaterNSW to advise what is happening with the funds previously allocated to desilting of North Macquarie Marsh bypass channel (\$3.2M).*

Responsibility: M Clayton

2. Water System Operations Update

- WaterNSW presented the water operations plan for the Macquarie-Cudgegong. Reports are available on WaterNSW's website at www.watnsw.com.au/operations
- Customer's drought planning has seen significant carryover into this year; 316GL, equivalent to 52% of share component in the Macquarie Valley, and 20GL or 102% of share component in the Cudgegong Valley.
- The delivery of water in accounts relies on stored water, minimum forecasted inflows and planned bulk water transfer (BWT) from Windamere to Burrendong Dam. Therefore, with the current low inflows not all carryover water in the accounts can be delivered.
- Access to general security and planned environmental water accounts has been reduced by DoI to 70% of the 1 July 2018 carryover balance.
- A BWT from Windamere to Burrendong Dam is likely to commence in January 2019 if conditions remain dry.
- Delivery of environmental water commenced at Burrendong Dam on 12 July 2018 and is planned to continue to 8 December. In total about 130GL of licenced and planned environmental water would be delivered to the Macquarie Marshes.
- Stock & Domestic replenishment flows to the Marra Creek and Lower Bogan River have been completed for this year. The S&D flow requirements in the lower Macquarie River have been met by the environmental water draining out of Macquarie Marshes.
- Under dry conditions, the timing of all S&D replenishment deliveries in 2019 will depend on rainfall and inflows to the dam and flows in the downstream tributaries.
- Customers highlighted concerns around the timing of the Bulk Water Transfer with concerns the water will arrive too late for cropping. Believe it needs to be in Burrendong by 14 February at the latest to allow lead time to deliver to irrigators at the bottom end. WaterNSW advised the strategy is to keep the dam level above 3% in order to get flows required to meet demand through the valves. WaterNSW is aware of the impact to irrigators if timeframes are not met.

3. Drought Communications (A Daines)

- WaterNSW has a number of dedicated resources available to customers providing updates and information on the drought, including a weekly regional customer drought update and valley storage levels. Customers can also opt to subscribe to receive updates.
- www.watnsw.com.au/drought
- Customers sought information on where the fixed fee rebate for co-held WALs is up to. WaterNSW advised that a lot of work has been taking place in this area. It is still in the works but is taking longer than hoped. WaterNSW will continue to keep customers informed as this progresses.

4. Active Management in Northern Unregulated Systems (J Dickson)

- The Water Reform Taskforce is continuing modelling and policy development in preparation for public consultation in 2019.
- Active management is determining what volume of flows can be accessed and when, in defined ways but with consideration of specific events. WaterNSW is involved in the working group developing active management.
- Active management is being considered in the Barwon-Darling first, which will inform work on Unregulated Macquarie-Bogan and Gwydir valleys.

5. DoI Water Update - Water Resource Plans (WRPs) (J Dickson)

- There are currently 5 draft WRPs on public exhibition. A further 3 plans will be released prior to Christmas, with remaining plans to be exhibited in 2019.

6. IPART Cost Shares Review update (J Dickson)

- The draft report was released on 16 October 2018 with submissions due to IPART on 27 November 2018.
- IPART took a strict interpretation of the impactor pays approach which, in most cases, shifts the cost share ratios towards customers.
- IPART stated that the impact on WaterNSW's rural determination would be a 1% increase in customer bills and a 7% increase for WAMC, however these percentages will not hold for future determinations, as the spend profile for each determination is different.

7. New pages to register for (J Dickson)

- WaterNSW publishes a number of regular updates that customers can subscribe to, including the Customer Newsletter, weekly customer eNewsletter, state-wide customer notifications, weekly water availability reports, Murrumbidgee inter-valley trade (IVT) notifications and water storage and supply reports.
- Visit our website at www.waturnsw.com.au/subscribe and select updates of interest to you.

Next Meeting: Wednesday 27 February 2019, Dubbo

Meeting closed: 11.15am

Macquarie-Cudgegong Customer Advisory Group

Carried Forward Actions

Action No. yymm.action no	Action	Responsibility	Status
MC1809.01	Water Availability figures in the Operations Plan to be corrected and updated by WaterNSW.	M Khan	Complete.
MC1809.02	WaterNSW to report transmission loss by river section in Operations Plans going forward.	A Langdon	In progress. Ongoing work is taking place to better understand and breakdown valley losses, including transmission, order vs take and required end of system flows.
MC1809.03	WaterNSW to decide on consistent terminology for Operations Plans for all reports on losses, that clearly breaks down system loss, WSP requirement flow, transmission loss and operational loss.	A Langdon	In progress.
MC1809.04	WaterNSW to advise if there are any long-term plans to address issues at Gin Gin weir which affect customers in low flow conditions.	R Magaharan	There are plans in place to block the lower scour valve when water levels permit. This should keep the weir pool at a higher level during periods of low flows. Customers sought additional information on when work will be done.
MC1809.05	WaterNSW to advise cost of repairs to channel breaches in the North Marsh bypass channel.	R Magaharan	\$106,760 which includes three weeks for two of our staff and the contractor costs. Customers sought additional information on when work will be completed.

MC1809.06	SDL numbers on Nimmie-Caira to be provided to the committee out of session.	M Clayton	<p>Complete.</p> <p>The Nimmie-Caira Project involved the purchase of 84,417ha of land which was used largely for irrigated agriculture purpose and the associated 381,000 shares (173GL long-term average use) supplementary water (Lowbidgee) entitlement. The water entitlements have been transferred to the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder (CEWH).</p>
MC1809.07	WaterNSW to provide a list of fish passage strategy nominated projects in the Macquarie.	M Clayton	<p>Complete.</p> <p>Existing WaterNSW Dam Safety Upgrade offset projects (currently on hold):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dubbo North Weir - Gin Gin Weir - Marebone Break Regulator <p>Others:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gunningbar Regulator - Mills Crossing (Bulgeraga Channel) - Bulgeraga Creek Regulator - Gum Cowal channel Regulator - Monkeygar Breakaway – 6 erosion structures <p>North Macquarie Marsh – 9 locations</p>

New Actions

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