

Northern Victoria Irrigation Renewal Project

In June 2007, the Victorian Government announced \$1 billion for Stage 1 of the Food Bowl Modernisation Project to secure an estimated long term average water savings of 225GL annually after it is completed in 2012.

The Stage 1 funding is comprised of \$600m (State Government), \$300m (Melbourne Water) and \$100m (Goulburn Murray Water).

NVIRP Board Directors

Mr Richard Guy (Chairperson)
Mr Terry Francis
Mr Barry Steggall
Mr Peter MacCamish
Mr Geoff Akers
Ms Miranda Douglas-Crane
Mr Neil Brennan.

Establishment in the region

NVIRP has now been established in Shepparton with CEO Mr Murray Smith and Senior Executives appointed.

- The dedicated website is www.nvirp.com.au

The Goulburn Murray Water (GMW) Reconfiguration Program has been merged with the NVIRP Connections Program, with the GMW Reconfiguration teams moving across to NVIRP.

Early Works component completed in 2008

The Early Works program (delivered by the Alliance Partnership) in the 2008 winter resulted in:

- Installation of 1000 flume gates at 690 sites.
- Installation of 33km of HDPE plastic channel lining
- Approximately 15km of channel bank remodelling
- Around 125 people directly employed and over 300 contracted employees (80% local contractors)

The Managing Contractor for NVIRP, *Transfield Services* was appointed in December 2008. Transfield Services were an Alliance Partner in the delivery of the Early Works.

2009 Winter Works Program and Consultation

The majority of the winter 2009 capital program took place in the Rochester-Campaspe Irrigation Area; all customers (approximately 1,600) in this area were consulted.

Farm Irrigation Designer Consultancy groups have been engaged to work with irrigators to identify improved on-farm irrigation systems and develop proposals for consideration by NVIRP under the Connections program.

The 2009 winter works program included:

- The installation of a further 1000 new regulator gates
- Completing the installation of 1047 meters as part of the early works program
- Further lining of high-loss channels with HDPE plastic

Environment Management System

NVIRP is establishing an Environmental Management System (EMS)

- As part of the EMS, an environmental watering plan (EWP) is currently being devised for wetlands as part of the Modernisation program, which will be consistent with the project principles of achieving a net gain in financial, social and environmental values. Site Environment Management Plans (SEMPs) for works sites will also be included in the EMS.
- Streamlining delivery channels will also reduce the overall ecological footprint of the irrigation system. The upgraded system will enable environmental water to be more effectively delivered to wetlands and waterways in the irrigation district.

Commonwealth Stage 2

The Victorian and Commonwealth Governments have reached an agreement securing up to \$1 billion funding for Stage 2 of the project to achieve a further 200GL of water savings, subject to due diligence.

The Victorian objectives of the overall project include:

- Better management of water resources - delivery of water savings
- Productive irrigation system - reduced in area but higher value
- Sustain regional communities - irrigation based employment maintained
- Managed adjustment of some local irrigation dependent communities
- Reduced environmental footprint from irrigation activities

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