

Mary Valley Irrigation Forum

Held: 7:15pm on 2 June 2015 at Gympie

Registered attendees: 12 irrigation customers were in attendance.

The meeting commenced at 7:30pm.

Agenda Item 1 – Introduction

The forum was told that Seqwater proposed to continue with irrigator forums open to all customers of the Scheme unless customers requested an alternative arrangement. Seqwater advised that consultation forums would continue to be held at least annually. Additional forums may be held subject to customer or Seqwater demand. It was suggested that an arrangement like a customer council might be better suited to deal with certain operational matters throughout the year. Seqwater offered to meet with any customer working groups formed to address specific issues. Customers were advised to signal the need for convening a forum by placing requests by email or phone.

Customers were advised that the 2014 network service plan was available on the Mary River Water Supply Scheme page on Seqwater's website and the 2015 plan would be available from 30 September 2015. Customers without internet access and wishing to receive a copy of the existing plan and the new plan were asked to register their interest.

Agenda Item 2 – Renewals program

Seqwater reported on the 2014-15 renewals program and outlined the renewals works expected to be undertaken in 2015-16.

Agenda Item 3 – Future renewals plan

Seqwater presented future renewal projects above \$10,000 out to 2036-37. It was explained to the attendees how these projected costs impacted on the renewal annuity in the current price path and would impact the next price path. Seqwater advised that the future program of works would be updated for presentation ahead of the next pricing review.

Seqwater presented two future projects that qualified for a high level options analysis. Seqwater explained that carrying out options analyses would not impact the current water prices. The attendees elected to defer any decision until forecasts for the next pricing round are presented.

Agenda Item 4 – 2015-16 announced allocation

The process for determining the announced allocation was presented and explained. Attendees were advised that the forecast announced allocation was expected to be 100%.

Agenda Item 5 – Operations

The forum was opened for questions and answers.

There was discussion about a number of operational matters including the adequacy of stream flows and discussion on the operation of stream flow gauges. Seqwater confirmed that readings from all gauges are taken into account and noted that changes in the characteristics of the river bed impacted flow conditions in certain parts of the river.

Agenda Item 6 – System for ordering water

Seqwater advised attendees that the water supply contracts variously refer to a “system for the ordering of water” or “ROL holder rules” both of which envisage documenting and publishing the operating rules for the scheme. Discussion ensued about the process for ordering water and the objective of ensuring supply to all irrigators. It was noted that rainfall could occur after an order was placed and the water may not be needed when it arrived. Seqwater assured customers that the time taken for water to reach the lower sections of the scheme would be taken into account in such cases.

It was suggested that compliance would be greater if water ordering commenced when the dam level falls below a nominated percentage such as 80%. Seqwater pointed out that releases may be required once the water stops flowing over the spillway. Customers were urged to order water regardless of stream flow or spillway flows.

Seqwater highlighted the requirement for customers to ensure safe and convenient access to meter sites for Seqwater’s representatives including keeping the site clear of vegetation growth.

Seqwater advised customers that a document setting out the rules would be mailed out to all scheme customers and posted on the Mary Valley scheme page on Seqwater’s website.

Agenda Item 7 – Water trading

Seqwater explained the difference between permanent and temporary water trading. Attendees were reminded that temporary trade forms are available from Seqwater or on the Mary Valley scheme page on Seqwater’s website. Seqwater reiterated that it has no role in the facilitation of permanent water trades.

Agenda Item 8 – Other matters

Attendees were shown how to find and access the Mary Valley scheme web page on Seqwater’s website.

Agenda Item 9 – Meeting close

With all agenda items completed, the meeting was closed.