# **Central Lockyer Irrigation Forum**

## **Held: 7:00pm on 13 June 2017 at Gatton**

**Attendees:** 22 irrigation customers were in attendance

The meeting commenced at 7:15pm.

**Agenda Item 1 – Welcome & Introduction**

Customers were reminded that the 2016-17 Central Lockyer Valley Water Supply Scheme Network Service Plan was available on Seqwater’s website and the 2017-18 plan would be available from 30 September 2017 (see <http://www.seqwater.com.au/water-supply/irrigation/central-lockyer-valley-water-supply-scheme>). The Network Service Plans contain useful information regarding operating costs, renewals and water usage history for the scheme.

Customers without internet access who wish to receive a copy of the existing plan, and/or request the new plan when it is available, were asked to register their interest by phone (1800 077 005).

**Agenda Item 2 – Review of 2016-17 operations & operations outlook for 2017-18**

Due to a lack of surface water in the scheme, there were no significant operational matters to report.

**Agenda Item 3 – Review of 2016-17 renewals and renewals outlook for 2017-18**

Seqwater reported on the current year renewals program and outlined the renewals works expected to be undertaken in 2017-18.

Seqwater explained that renewals planning extends well into the future and is based on the average life expectancy of an asset. A planned program of works is created for each asset (including meters) and each year condition assessments are conducted on those assets which are identified in the works program for that year, to determine if the asset needs to be replaced having regard to its age and condition, how it is performing and whether any legislative changes require it to be replaced. Where possible, if the asset is in good condition, its life is extended.

In 2016-17, the budget provided for 24 meters to be replaced however Seqwater was able to replace a total of 34 meters within budget. Other works included replacement of the boundary fence at Clarendon Dam, replacement of the damaged walkway at Showgrounds Weir and refurbishment of 6.4km of channel at Clarendon Dam.

Planned works for 2017-18 include a new hydraulic system and valve for Clarendon Weir and the replacement of 40-60 meter installations throughout the scheme.

There were no renewal projects for Morton Vale pipeline in 2016-17 and no planned works for 2017-18.

**Agenda Item 4 – Announced Allocation 2017-18**

The formula for determining the announced allocation is defined in the Resource Operations Plan (ROP) and this was explained in more detail. Attendees were advised that due to the inflows in March 2017, the announced allocation for Morton Vale pipeline was forecast to be around 20%. However, as Bill Gunn Dam was only forecast to be around 9% full, the announced allocation for the start of the new water year on 1 July was likely to be 0%. Seqwater advised that any time the announced allocation is less than 100%, it will be reviewed at the beginning of each month (or after significant inflows) to determine if it can be increased.

A customer asked what restricts water into Bill Gunn Dam. Seqwater advised that since it is an off-stream storage, the restriction is due to how much water can be gravity fed through the pipeline.

**Agenda Item 5 – Operations rules for dams and weirs**

Seqwater gave an explanation of the operation of Laidley Diversion Weir including an overview of the legislative requirement for all of the weirs in the system to be filled down to Kentville Weir before water can be diverted to Bill Gunn Dam. Water from the weir flows through a 1200mm pipe and is gravity fed to the dam however when the flow over the weir decreases significantly, there is not enough head to push water through the pipeline. The maximum diversion under ideal conditions is 345ML.

Seqwater also gave an explanation regarding the operation of Clarendon Weir including the legislative requirement for all weirs on Lockyer Creek down to Kentville Weir to be filled before water can be diverted from Redbank Weir. Seqwater acknowledged that during the most recent flood event in March 2017, there was an issue where the pumps at Redbank Pump Station cut out during the night due to a low suction level alarm which meant that approximately 4 hours of flow did not get diverted. However, due to the low head of this flow it is unlikely that much water was lost. Seqwater explained that the issue with this alarm is currently being investigated to find a solution that will prevent the problem from happening again.

**Agenda Item 6 – Irrigation water price path**

The current price path ends 30/06/2017 however as advised previously, the next price path has been deferred for two years to align the Seqwater and SunWater price paths and to allow SunWater to finalise local management arrangements regarding their channel systems.

As volumetric allocations have not yet been determined for most irrigators, no Part A pricing will apply to irrigators other than Morton Vale pipeline allocation holders, Crowley Vale Water Board and Laidley Golf Club. Therefore the current pricing will continue with increases of CPI each year for Part B for river and groundwater allocations and increases of CPI plus $2 per annum for Part A for Crowley Vale and Laidley Golf Club.

Morton Vale pricing will increase by $2 per ML per year plus CPI for Part A and Parts B, C & D will increase by CPI only.

Seqwater advised that the current actual expenditure is tracking well against the forecast expenditure used to determine the current price path. In fact, Morton Vale costs are much less than budget and this will be discussed with government going into the next price path.

Whilst there is no official budget for the renewals, Seqwater explained that the price path includes an annuity component. The annuity is calculated by forecasting the projected scheme expenses for the next 20 years and then converting that figure to a flat cost per annum.

Seqwater explained that renewals planning is done far into the future and is based on the average life expectancy of an asset. Closer to the time, condition assessments are done to determine if the asset really needs to be replaced having regard to its age, how it is performing and whether any legislative changes require it to be replaced. Where possible, if the asset is in good condition its life is extended. Once we know the full 30 years renewals program, it will be shown to the forum to discuss.

**Agenda Item 7 – Volumetric water allocations project update**

Gordon Vanderest, spokesman for the Lockyer Water Users Forum (LWUF), addressed the meeting and advised that the LWUF had spoken to the Minister and Mayors regarding the performance of the water assets and trying to get additional water into the dams. They have also spoken about some concerns they have regarding water quality and water trading and encouraged irrigators to get in touch with the LWUF regarding these matters.

**Agenda Item 8 – Future consultations, other matters**

Seqwater will continue to hold forums every 12 months however once the direction notice for the next price path is received, Seqwater may call an earlier forum to discuss the renewals program and any other issues.

Customers can find more information about the scheme on the Seqwater website under Everyday Water/Irrigation Schemes/Central Lockyer Water Supply Scheme.

**Agenda Item 9 – Meeting close**

With all agenda items completed, the meeting was closed.