

### From the CEO

The Murray Darling Basin Authority (MDBA) has made big improvements in its engagement with Basin communities in recent times. In 2021, WMI has met with the MDBA team twice. Once in February to discuss the deliverability/shortfall risk in the Murray River and then in May, to meet the MDBA Chair Sir Angus Houston.



L to R: MDBA Manager, River Operations Andrew Reynolds, WMI Director Kevin Watson, WMI CEO Judith Damiani and MDBA Chair Sir Angus Houston.

I have also been appointed to the MDBA's new Sunraysia community forum, where we will work with a range of scientists and water managers to utilise community knowledge to improve local water and environmental management.

### NSW introduces new mandatory COVID-19 safety measures from 12 July 2021

The NSW Government has announced the mandatory use of the Service NSW QR code and

masks at all workplaces and retail businesses from Monday 12 July. WMI, as a registered NSW COVIDSafe business, has a unique QR code displayed at entry points at the office and depot.

Customers, staff, and all other visitors will need to check-in using the Service NSW QR code, wear a mask and hand sanitise on entering.

Visitors will also be required to sign-in to the WMI register through our normal process. This can be used as a check-in for those without a phone.

Please keep our community safe and follow the government guidelines when visiting WMI. There are signs, masks and hand sanitisers available, and our staff are happy to assist if required.



**Fourth Quarter Invoice 2020/21**

due for payment:  
4.30pm on

Friday 6 August 2021

**On-call Officer**

24 hours/365 days  
Ph: 0428 596 428

**Office Hours: 9.00am to 4.30pm**  
Monday to Friday, excl public holidays

Contact us:

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**Upcoming office closures:**

**Labour Day**

Monday 4 October 2021

### WMI Charges review update

WMI would like to advise that the Charges review is coming to a conclusion.

This comprehensive (and long-running) review is the first in WMI's 26-year history and has included:

- customer consultation;
- a review of other irrigation infrastructure operators' charges;
- an independent review of the Asset Replacement Fund and its associated fees; and
- Expert consultant assistance with the creation of detailed customer impact modelling.

A draft proposal will be provided to the WMI Board for further consideration at a special meeting being held on 16 August 2021.

A final proposal, once adopted by the WMI Board, will be accompanied by an extensive customer communication and engagement program.

### Fourth quarterly invoice due for payment

Customers are reminded that all accounts now receive quarterly invoices.

The fourth quarter invoice for 2020/21 is now available and due for payment on or before Friday 6<sup>th</sup> August 2021.

Please contact the office before the due date if there are any difficulties in prompt payment of accounts.

To have your quarterly invoices paid by direct debit from a nominated bank account, contact the office for a form and your invoice will always be paid on time.

### Additional Water Fee reminder

Water usage above allocation is billed quarterly at \$1,200/ML.

Please ensure you **always have a positive water allocation balance** in order to meet your needs for the current irrigation season. Customers should contact the friendly office staff for more information.

### Recent prosecutions (NSW)

The NSW Natural Resources Access Regulator (NRAR) has been busy educating, monitoring, auditing and prosecuting irrigators across NSW including:

*Prosecution 1:* A Moree-based irrigation company has been charged with a record 43 charges against the Water Management Act 2000 (WM Act), making it the largest prosecution the regulator has issued in its three years of operations.

*Prosecution 2:* Two Griffith-based water users have been charged for allegedly breaching the WM Act after taking water in excess of the licences and approvals.

### Recent prosecution (VIC)

Lower Murray Water (LMW) successfully prosecuted Victorian almond irrigator Brownport Almonds Pty Ltd for taking water without an allocation over two irrigation seasons (2018/19 and 2019/20). It is the first prosecution under the strengthened Victorian Water Act 1989 which provides for greater deterrence against the unauthorised taking of water.

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In 2018 all Murray-Darling Basin Governments entered into the Murray-Darling Basin Compliance Compact with the aim of reforming and improving water compliance.

### Murray-Darling Basin Inspector General

The Australian Government has appointed an Inspector-General for the Murray-Darling Basin. The Inspector-General will be responsible for compliance and enforcement with the *Water Act 2007* and the Basin Plan.

WMI hosted the Deputy Inspector-General and compliance team members during their visit in May 2021.



Australian Government compliance officers including the Deputy Inspector-General (3<sup>rd</sup> from right) pictured with the new Coomealla pump station meters, WMI CEO (right) and WMI Assets & Operations Manager (3<sup>rd</sup> from left).

### WMI Water and Administration Charges 2021/22

WMI customers would have received a mailed copy of the Schedules of Charges 2021/22 in June. A copy is also available on the website.

These charges are determined by the WMI Board each year as part of their budgeting process.

Compared to 2020/21 the main charges have either remained the same or increased by up to 5% with a summary as follows:

<b>BURONGA *</b>	<b>2021/22</b> \$	<b>2020/21</b> \$	<b>Variance</b> %
Access Fee #	119.60	118.20	1.2
Casual Users Access Fee +	203.00	200.00	1.5
Asset Replacement Fund Fee ^	20.92	19.92	5
Infrastructure Loan Repayment Fee ^	15.00	15.00	0
Stock & Garden ^	474.00	469.00	1.1

<b>COOMEALLA *</b>	<b>2021/22</b> \$	<b>2020/21</b> \$	<b>Variance</b> %
Access Fee #	71.10	67.70	5
Casual Users Access Fee +	123.00	119.00	3.4
Asset Replacement Fund Fee ^	14.28	14.28	0
Joint Venture Repayment Fee ^	9.20	9.20	0
Stock & Garden ^	352.00	336.00	4.8

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<b>CURLWAA *</b>	<b>2021/22</b> <b>\$</b>	<b>2020/21</b> <b>\$</b>	<b>Variance</b> <b>%</b>
Access Fee #	57.70	54.90	5.1
Casual Users Access Fee +	88.00	84.00	4.8
Asset Replacement Fund Fee ^	9.96	9.48	5.1
Stock & Garden ^	381.00	363.00	5

\* The complete Schedule of Charges for 2021/22 is available on the WMI website, at the Office or upon request. Not all fees and/or charges are listed above.

# The Access Fee will be divided evenly across the first three Invoices.

^ These fees plus the Fixed and Variable Government Charges are invoiced quarterly.

+ The Casual Users Access Fee, Water Usage Above Access Fee, Membership Levies and Additional Water Fee – Fee for Service are levied in the final invoice.

WMI will be charging water use each quarter rather than at the end of the year to assist with cash flow and debtor management.

This follows the change to quarterly billing for all Stock & Garden customers.

### Fixed and variable government charges to change

The fixed and variable NSW government charges will change pending a delayed IPART (NSW Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal) determination in mid-September 2021.

WMI will endeavour to re-issue the Schedule of Charges as soon as practical after the determination in anticipation of a 1 October 2021 start date.

If you require further assistance in understanding these charges you can contact the office staff for more information.

### End of year surplus allocation water trade

The total volume traded was 2,082.5ML with approximately \$194,000 returned to customers after WMI costs were deducted.

Eligible customers will see that their final WMI bill for 2020/21 will return these funds to their account.

### Winter maintenance update

We have our scheduled winter maintenance program underway with the main tasks including:

#### Buronga

- Install new pump station mag-meter (complete)
- Install low-river pump for Mildura weir maintenance 12-30 July; supply will be restricted to 100L/s during this period
- Alcheringa relift – upgrade PLC.

#### Coomealla

- Install six new pump station mag-meters (complete)
- Replace motor on pump C – for overhaul
- Balance tower inspection and maintenance
- Relift – upgrade PLC (complete)
- Relift – bearings replace on pump 2.

#### Curlwaa

- Install new pump station mag-meter
- Balance tower inspection and maintenance

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### Mourquong

- WMI continues to maintain the Mourquong pump station, pipelines and outlets based on a service agreement.

WMI endeavours to minimise any interruptions and will alert customers to any planned or unplanned events.

### Meter upgrade and telemetry project update

The latest Siemens meter and Datacall telemetry firmware updates will be rolled out by early July.

The Siemens meter firmware upgrade has unfortunately disabled the customer resettable totaliser function on the meter due to a recent Siemens worldwide change. This means the meter can no longer be reset to zero.

The firmware upgrades will be followed by final testing and project completion.

### Delivery Entitlements can be Temp Traded

The annual temporary transfer of Delivery Entitlements (DEs) from one customer in the same irrigation area to another customer in the same irrigation area is possible.

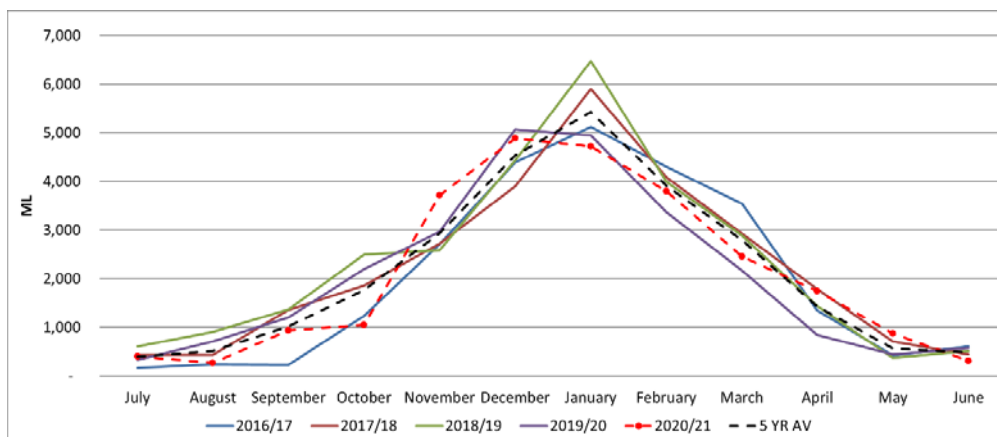
A temporary transfer means the customer who receives the DEs enjoys the reduced cost of using water (for one season) by avoiding or reducing the impact of the higher Casual Users Access Fee, while the customer who acquits the DEs enjoys a reduced overall WMI bill (for one season).

WMI staff are happy to assist customers understand the costs and benefits of any such temporary transfers. If the trade is a WMI facilitated trade, any trades will be based on demand, availability, and a lessor's lodgment date (first in first served).

Transfer forms must be lodged by Friday 24 September 2021, with the transfer applying for all the 2021/22 season

### Total Water Pumped over 5 Years

The volume of water pumped by WMI in the 2020/21 year was 25,099ML, 1% higher than the previous year. Total water used was 2.4% below the 5-year average.



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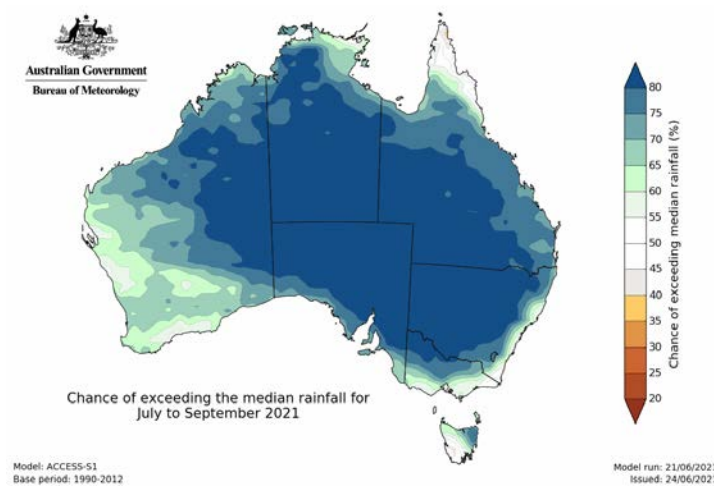
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### Climate Outlook: July to September 2021

The Bureau of Meteorology is forecasting above average rainfall for most of Australia for the July to September 2021 period.



Maximum temperatures for Sunraysia are forecast to be below average though minimum temperatures are forecast to be above average for July to September 2021.

