

Date: Thursday 10 December 2020

Time: 9am to 10.30am – Fairbairn Irrigation Network and Irrigation Advisory Committee (FINIAC) meeting to follow for those involved

Location: Anglican Church Hall, Ruby Street Emerald

Attendees:

- Members of the IAC - Robert Ingram (RI), Matthew Barnes (MB), Neville Brownlie (NBr), Nigel Burnett (NBu), Les Fluerty (LF), Neek Morawitz (NM) & Dion Roberts (DR)
- Sunwater (SW): Jason Smith (JS)
- Fairbairn Irrigation Network (FIN)– Geoff Beard (GB), Ross Burnett (RB), Peter Galea (PG) & Donna Lewis (DL)
- Mining Representatives: Neil Dale (ND) Ensham; Madeline Bourke (MB) Curragh
- Urban Representatives: Jason Hill (CHRC Consultant)
- CH Cotton Growers & Irrigators Representative: Aaron Kiely (AK)

Apologies:

Paul Wortley, Anne-Marie O’Callaghan, David McDougall, Hamish Millar and Scott Collinge

Minutes:

| Item no. | Item |
|----------|---|
| 1 | Introduction and Welcome RI opened the meeting at 9:10am & welcomed everyone. |
| 2 | General Business 2.1. Dam level forecast & Low-Level Pumping <ul style="list-style-type: none">• JS gave presentation regarding the low level of Fairbairn Dam and the impacts.• Fairbairn Dam Level – Historical Low of 7.8% as at 10/12/20.• Actual & Forecast table displayed.• Silt in the Selma chase is making flow to the Selma Pump Station difficult. There is an average of 800mm siltation restricting flow.• Sunwater are currently desilting the Selma chase with a 250T crane with clam bucket to allow pumping to continue for a few more weeks.• JS thanked GB for research & planning of desilting.• PG expressed concern regarding the disturbed silt going through the Selma Pumps and whether it is doing any long-term damage. JS advised that they were only using one pump to ensure if there was any issue it would only affect one. Fairbairn water officers are checking the pump often to ensure it is working well.• Long term forecast is positive for rain.• Critical Levels & Constraints – Storage Performance. Dam has never been this low before, so we do not have any historical information.• Right bank tower – Low level pumping costs to be finalised next week. Looking at using a smaller pump to start in February and then putting a large pump in 15 March. Approx. 80ML a day required March to June 2021 for towns, industrial & any water left. NM queried the estimated diesel usage for pumps as it seems too high. JS to finalise costs and have |

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| | <p>paperwork & processes in place for purchases/hire etc before Sunwater office closes for the Christmas Break.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ND queried if 50ML down the river will reach Ensham. JS will talk to ND to make individual arrangements. • PG queried who is paying for the low-level pumping & desilting and if there were any plans to charge back to the customers. In his opinion the government should be paying not irrigators. JS to confirm regarding costs, however his priority is to provide the water. • Comment from the meeting that Sunwater has just sold water for considerable sum and funds should be used to make delivery of that water possible. • LF asked if there is any government drought assistance available. JS noted that assistance is not available yet as we have not run out of water and the customers would need to approach the relevant government body to request funding. <p>2.2. Bathymetric survey</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey has been completed however could not get access everywhere with the boat due to shallow water and trees and the LiDAR cannot pick up below the water surface. There is, therefore, a section that has not been surveyed. • Dead storage is 187.01 which is overall much the same as previous records. Dead storage is mostly the old riverbank and close to the RB Tower. 102,000ML of water still in the dam. • NBU queried the water quality. JS confirmed that they are testing. ND queried if the water quality results were available. JS to check to see if they are published on website. • Whilst conducting the Bathymetric survey, Sunwater surveyed the Selma & Emerald Town Weirs for the council. Bill Wilkinson (CHRC) has all the figures. • GB asked if FIN can have a copy of the bathymetric survey since customers are ultimately paying for it in the annuity. • JS will request. <p>2.3. Communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NBU queried whether there are any plans to communicate with the community to reassure them they are not going to run out of water. He does not want there to be any backlash on irrigators for using water. • JH will talk to council regarding messaging/communication. • JS noted that Sunwater will protect the council's water allocation however they do not usually use all of their allocation. • MB queried if there is any forecast for next year's allocation. • JS explained the calculation only looks at the current water year and the way water sharing/carryover etc works. Water sharing rules are detailed in the operations manual available on our website here. <p>2.4. Low Water Storage Working Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting to be held in Emerald 29th January 2021. Invitations should be issued by Friday 11th December 2020 |
| 3 | <p>New Business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NIL |

| Action Items | | | |
|--------------|---|--------------|------------|
| Ref No. | Item | Assigned To: | Due Date: |
| 1 | Finalise costs and have paperwork & processes in place to enable set up & pump hire for low-level pumping | Jason Smith | 23/12/2020 |
| 2 | Talk to ND (Ensham) to plan for water delivery. | Jason Smith | 31/12/2020 |
| 3 | Clarify who is paying the costs for low-level pumping & desilting | Jason Smith | 22/1/2021 |
| 4 | Check to see if water quality reports/records are available on website for public access. | Jason Smith | 22/1/2021 |
| 5 | Confirm if customers can have a copy of the bathymetric survey | Jason Smith | 22/1/2021 |

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| Chair: | Robert Ingram |
| Minutes: | Donna Lewis |
| Date: | 10 December 2020 |
| Meeting Closed: | 10:20am |

| Response to action items | |
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| Prepared by: | Jason Smith |
| Date: | 2 February 2021 |
| Document link: | here |