

NOGOA MACKENZIE IRRIGATORS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Meeting Date: 27 November 2014

Held: Emerald SunWater, Esmond Street, Emerald

Meeting Opened: 10:10 am

Present: Robert Ingram, Neville Brownlie, Neek Morawitz, Les Fluerty, Colin Bendall, Neil Farrell, Andrew Maughan, Donna Lewis (scribe) & Petrina Douglas(part of meeting).

1. Apologies: Nigel Burnett, Matthew Barnes, Paul Wortley & Christopher Ryan

2. Previous Minutes: As circulated & published on website

3. Business Arising from Previous Meeting:

3.1 Service Standards for Notification of Shutdowns

- Discussion on the process for this afternoon's meeting with all water users re *Service Standards for Notifications of Shutdown*.
- One irrigator has written to say they are not in favour of the Proposed Scheme Rules and Targets Amendments as circulated. This will be debated at this afternoon's meeting.
- Focus on having the 8 week notification for shutdowns brought back to a more reasonable time-frame.
- Discuss the idea of opportune shut-downs.
- Inform the meeting of the cost of Acrolein and the possibility of lowering that cost with the ability to have opportune shut-downs.
- Inform the meeting of difficulties with algae. Need to drain water for 2 or 3 days to kill 80% of algae.

3.2 Update on Selma Pumps

- Three pumps are running well. Two pumps running yesterday, one pump running today.
- Temporary pump put in Tuesday (25th). Situated on pad about 1 ½ mtrs from water edge. Plan to run the pump tomorrow. The pump is a supplement for the main Selma pumps.
- Bushing material on hand for refurbishment of bearings if required for Selma pumps. Michell bearing has to be sent to England if a complete refurbishment is required.
- Spare temporary pump in Depot yard.
- PLC system – Brisbane Project Manager has investigated problems and a replacement system will be costed for the R&E budget for next year.
- Robert noted our Electrical Contractor will be away over Christmas. A contingency plan is required. Neil to work out plan and advise Robert.
- Neil to contact pump hire to see if hire pumps are available if we should require them.

3.3 Bulk Water Ordering

- Andrew Maughan advised that Emerald water officers are continuing to manage the water orders at the moment however they are training Ron (Bulk Water employee based at Fairbairn Dam) to take and work out water orders for river water irrigators. Communication to go out to all affected customers when he is to take over. Currently no specific timeframe for Bundaberg to take over responsibility. Change ideally at start of new water year.

3.4 Scheme Operations Opportunities for Improvement Action List

- Colin gave an update of the actions on the list. He will add column to the list indicating what has been achieved & put on website with these minutes.

4. General Business

4.1 Slashing

- Robert Ingram reported Selma Channel needs to be slashed as there are major weed problems. Robert has completed some slashing himself as wild sunflower was getting out of control.
- Les Fluerty reported that Weemah Channel has no major weed problems.
- Les also noted the importance of not slashing edge of drains in peak season as the grass clogs the channels.
- Contract for a new slashing contractor being organised by Brisbane Procurement staff. Neil to check on progress of contract.

4.2 TCC System

- John Walters & Andrew Geddes have experienced some problems with the system.
- Kevin Simpson (Kevall Electrical) is working with Rubicon to sort out any issues. Kevin will also be making updates to the system with the assistance of Rubicon next week.
- The system is a great assistance to Water Officers in that they are able to make changes to the gates from their computers at the depot. At the moment they are not able to connect from their home computers or iPads as they don't have remote access. Donna to send Colin a copy of the email about remote access from iPads.
- Concern was expressed regarding ongoing issues with the systems. Neil reported that these are maintenance issues and are being addressed. TCC gates & flow sensor checking have been added to the preventative maintenance plans.
- Look at costs at the first meeting in 2015 and invite John Walters & Andrew Geddes to talk about TCC system.

4.3 Annual Performance Reports for 2014

- *Colin Bendall took meeting through pertinent points of the 2014 Annual Performance Report for Emerald Distribution.*
- Reports are available on the SunWater website and notes on expenditure are listed in the report.
- Items above QCA targets – electricity, rates and insurance. Colin noted that a lot of work has occurred this year to address insurance costs and we should see significant savings next year.
- Discussion held on the high cost of Acrolein – Colin to investigate the possibility of alternative suppliers.
- To get back in line with QCA targets one of the actions has been not to fill the vacancy left by staff changes when one officer retired. In the Emerald Budget 1.5 positions were allocated to Bulk Water work. The majority of this work has now been taken over by BW. One of the Emerald maintenance personnel is now multiskilling to work as a water officer in peak season.
- *Andrew Maughan took meeting through pertinent points of the 2014 Annual Performance Report for Nogoia Bulk Water.*
- Costs below the QCA target
- Discussion regarding the cost of decommissioning the Fabridam at Bedford Weir. Note in report indicated there was consultation with irrigators – those present at the meeting noted they had only minimal consultation
- Question about insurance – is there an insurance pay out on the Fabridam that could be used for getting water back. Andrew to make enquiries with Rob Keogh and have answer for next meeting.
- Check on disposal cost for Fabridam.

5. New Business

5.1 Water Supply Arrangements and Service Targets for Nogoia Mackenzie Water Supply Scheme

- Petrina Douglas (Customer Accounts Manager) took meeting through proposed changes to Water Supply Arrangements and Service Targets (referred to as SunWater Distribution Rules in the Channel/Pipeline contract; and SunWater Rules in the River/Groundwater contract) document.
- Discussion around the need for reminder will be placed in the local newspaper, one week before the planned shutdowns. Could there be a blanket type advert or listing of wide range of dates? Colin to check on legalities. Follow up advert in paper is not necessary.
- Tracked change document to be circulated for approval by IAC.

5.2 Meter repairs

- All meters were repaired before the peak season. Neil reported there are currently two meters out of service.
- One meter on the river we can't dig pipe up until over peak season. The other meter we are waiting on parts through Siemens to come from overseas. Water officers are making estimates of water usage.

5.3 Winton Creek

- Winton Creek concerns with weed control. Neil to organise a dozer to clear an access beside Winton Creek low-flow to enable spraying to control hymenachne weed.

5.4 Local Management Arrangements

- Colin advised the LMA proposal is planned to go to Cabinet Budget Review Committee (CBRC) next Friday (5th December). There appears to be positive momentum for local management to proceed.

6. Meeting Closed: 12:20pm

7. Next Meeting: March 2015

Minutes Confirmed:

Chairperson - Robert Ingram

SunWater Manager

Date:

Date: