

Date: 21 May 2021

Time: 9am

Location: Paroo Shire Council Chambers, Cunnamulla

Attendees:

Representing customers: Will Grimwade, Cassie White (Paroo Shire Council), John Biggs

Sunwater representatives: John Kelly

Apologies: Nil

Agenda items		
Item no.	Item	Presenter
1	Welcome and Introductions	John K
2	Apologies	John K
3	Storage update - AA prediction for FY22	John K
4	FY21 scheme budget and expenditure review	John K
5	FY21 R&E program update - Automation of outlet gate for remote operation - Back to base meters on high use offtakes	John K
6	Public Safety Management Guideline	John K
7	21/22 Service and Performance Plan (SPP)	John K
8	Irrigation pricing discounts 2021-24	
9	General business	John K

1. Welcome and introductions

The chair opened the meeting at 9:00am and thanked the committee members for their attendance.

2. Apologies

Nil

3. Storage update

Sunwater advised the IAC that the current storage of Allan Tannock weir (ATW) was 4,772ML or 100%. Inflows from Feb/Mar rain has seen the weir fill and continue to spill for some time.

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AA Prediction for FY22

Sunwater provided the IAC with the “Start of the Water Year Announced Allocation Prediction Graph as at 1 July” and advised how this could be used to determine the AA at the start of the water year ([available here](#)). Given the current full storage it is anticipated that the weir will be still full or near full on 1 July 2021 and so it could be expected the AA will be 60-70%. With the weir full the AA on 1 July is usually about 69%.

4. FY21 scheme budget and expenditure review

Sunwater provided the IAC with the Profit and Loss (P&L) report for the scheme to 30 April 2021. Of note:

- Operating revenue was on budget at \$73k
- Operating costs were above budget by \$45k at \$22k
- Operating profit was above budget by \$46k at \$50k

Sunwater noted that the operating costs being above budget and subsequent profit being well above budget is primarily due to the project to address erosion on the upstream wall of the weir was unable to progress this year due to water levels. *The full P&L for the scheme for to 28 February 2021 is available [here](#).*

5. FY21 R&E program review

Sunwater provided the IAC with a summary of the FY21 R&E program ([available here](#)) and includes actual costs to date for each project.

The main project for the scheme this year was to address erosion protection works on the upstream side of the weir. Sunwater provided the IAC with further details of the issue and photos taken back in 2013 showing the collapsed concrete/rock protection that is intended to be broken up and with the addition of some large rock, reinstate the erosion protection on the upstream side ([available here](#)). However, water levels have not receded enough this FY to allow this work to progress. The project will be carried over into next year until such time as water levels provide access and the work can be completed.

Automation of outlet gate for remote operation

Sunwater raised the idea of automating the downstream outlet gate with a view to minimise the travel time (safety and scheme costs) associated with Sunwater operators travelling from St George to release water stored under the ‘Stock and Domestic Water’ rules in the Operations Manual. Whilst the IAC believes the rules provide limited environmental benefit, there was support for the automation of the valve. Sunwater advised it had recent discussion with the department about the rules and the department is of the view that there are landholders downstream who do benefit from the release of stock and domestic water. Sunwater advised the IAC that requests to amend the rule previously had not been successful and given the weir is within the Murray Darling Basin it was not likely the department would be supportive of changing any environmental, stock and domestic operating rules.

The IAC queried the intention of the upstream gate. Sunwater advised it was intended to replace the seals on the upstream gate as this gate could then be used to isolate the downstream gate for maintenance. The IAC were supportive of this approach.

The IAC also raised concerns about the potential for the gate to leak when operated frequently. Sunwater advised it needed to ensure the gate would reliably seal and ensure maintenance was such that the gate could be operated reliably.

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Back to base metering

Sunwater advised the IAC that it intended to take a proactive approach and replace the larger meters in the scheme with modern day equivalent electromagnetic meters with potential for transmission of flow data back to Sunwater. This would reduce meter reading requirements for Sunwater operators based in St George and also make it easier for customers to manage dual purpose metering accounting requirements (allocation water Vs water harvesting water). The IAC were supportive of the replacement of the current mechanical style meters. Sunwater advised this work would proceed under the annuity funded planned corrective maintenance program over the next couple of years.

6. Cunnamulla Water Supply Scheme Public Safety Management Guideline

Sunwater provided the IAC with the “Cunnamulla Water Supply Scheme Public Safety Management Guideline”. *A copy of the plan is available [here](#).*

Sunwater advised that the purpose of the plan is to summarise the management strategies utilised by Sunwater in the scheme to effectively manage public safety risk on or near Allan Tannock weir.

7. 21/22 Draft Service and Performance Plan

Sunwater provided the IAC with the draft 21/22 Service and Performance Plan for the scheme. *This plan is available [here](#) with an Information Sheet [here](#).* Sunwater noted the key performance measures for 2019-20 as follows:

- Operating costs were \$20k or 46.4% less than forecast
- Annuity funded costs were \$0 as there were no annuity funded projects undertaken in 19/20
- Total water deliveries were 1,021ML

Sunwater noted the outlook for 2021/22 as follows

- Forecast operating costs are \$40k
- Forecast annuity funded costs are \$10k (comprehensive inspection of ATW)

Sunwater did a page turn of the document with the IAC and it was noted (in table 8) that the annuity contribution increases significantly from 20/21 which was seen as a positive step by the IAC as this will assist in funding upcoming work (upgrade of meters and automation of the outlet gate).

Sunwater noted that post 2020-21 the main annuity funded planned corrective projects are meter replacements, a comprehensive inspection of the weir (conducted every 5 yrs), refurbishment of trashracks and the outlet gate walkway (to be confirmed at the comprehensive inspection).

8. General Business

Desilting the weir

The IAC asked if it would be possible to dredge/desilt the weir. Sunwater advised that while there are a number of approvals required before undertaking such an activity (desilting is considered an environmentally relevant activity) it is possible, however it comes down to the economics. Ultimately the scheme would have to bear the cost of desilting which would be significant noting that the cost to remove enough material to create 1ML of water is probably \$10k whilst the revenue received from 1ML of water for the scheme is only about \$35.

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Bathymetric/Lidar survey of the weir

Sunwater suggested that the IAC may want to consider undertaking a bathymetric/lidar survey to determine the affect of siltation on the storage volume (if any). Sunwater advised this work had been undertaken at many of its other storages. Sunwater suggested that it would seek quotes to get an idea of cost and revert back to the IAC for consideration before proceeding.

Irrigation pricing discounts 2021-24

Sunwater advised the IAC that the government had announced discounts on irrigation pricing as part of its election commitments back in October 2020. Sunwater advised that a 15% discount will apply to irrigation prices with 50% discount for horticultural growers. Sunwater advised that the 15% discount will be managed by Sunwater and will come off customers bills and applies to both Part A and Part B charges. The additional 35% is being managed through a rebate process administered by QRIDA. More information is available on the Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water website [here](#). The 15% discount is reflected in the 2021/22 fees and charges schedule published on the Sunwater website [here](#).

9. Approval and Review

Minutes:	John Kelly
Date:	31 May 2021
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