

Date: Friday, 29 January 2021

Time: 9:00AM – 11:30AM

Location: Mayfair Ridge Tavern

Attendees:

Chair: Jason Smith (Operations Manager, Nogoa Mackenzie)

Representing customers: Scott Collinge, Jason Hall, Geoffrey Kavanagh, Kelly Smith, Neil Dale, Geoff Beard, Robert Ingram, Neek Morawitz, Ross Burnett, Peter Besch, Aaron Kiely, David Hiette, Deborah Silver,

Sunwater representatives: Jason Smith (Operations Manager, Nogoa Mackenzie), Manesh Magan (Customer Engagement Lead), Marian Hart (Senior Water Resources Engineer), Roshan Singh (Senior Project Manager), Zoe Lee-Archer (Customer Engagement Support), Dan Turton (Customer Experience Manager)

Apologies: Ian Cooper, Sean Allen, Dan Cawte, Hamish Millar, Craig Pressler, Adam Chappell, Elmien Ballot, Madeline Bourke, Scott McEwan, Tania Kennedy, Patrick Stewart, Tom Cregan, Brian Gaka, Nick Williams, John McDougall, Scott Mason

Minutes:

Agenda items		
Item no.	item	Presenter
1	MEETING OPEN	Jason Smith
2	INTRODUCTIONS	Jason Smith/All
3	CUSTOMER FORUM IDEAS	Jason Smith/Manesh Magan
4	WORKING GROUP FORMATION	Jason Smith/Manesh Magan
5	BEFORD IRD WATER RELIABILITY OPTIONS STUDY	Roshan Singh/Marian Hart
6	NEXT STEPS	Roshan Singh/Marian Hart/Jason Smith
7	MEETING CLOSE	Jason Smith/ Manesh Magan

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1. MEETING OPEN

[Agenda item 1]

- Introductions completed in room and on Microsoft teams
- Purpose of group confirmed
- Terms of Reference confirmed
- Code of Conduct confirmed

2. INTRODUCTIONS

[Agenda item 2]

- Name, background, purpose, and goals of Sunwater staff and customer representatives
 - The group is looking to achieve the following:
 - Be involved in water security conversations
 - Improve water reliability
 - Explore options to replace yield lost by the removal of the IRD
 - Raise/ return Bedford Weir to the capacity achieved with the IRD with permanent infrastructure Sunwater Heading

3. CUSTOMER FORUM IDEAS

[Agenda item 3]

- Sunwater discussed the ideas gathered during the Customer forums and advised we will use these as a starting point to re-establish how to restore and improve water reliability.

4. WORKING GROUP FORMATION METHODOLOGY

[Agenda item 4]

- To discuss the Bedford Weir IRD Options Study and other options to improve water security and reliability
- Sunwater advised that this meeting can also be used to ascertain what issues need to be discussed and when. Focus today is the Bedford IRD Options Study but we can discuss future agenda items to work through.

5. BEDFORD IRD OPTIONS STUDY

[Agenda item 5]

- Project Purpose and Program
- Sunwater advised that the key objectives are:
 - To take customer ideas through the options analysis process and assess the impacts of these ideas on water reliability. The impacts of the removal of the IRD are also being assessed when Fairbairn Dam is at extremely low levels.
 - Sunwater wants to focus on collaborating with customers and stakeholders and ascertain how we can replace/minimise impacts to water supply reliability. Our options also need to be commercially viable and able to withstand funding and approval scrutiny.

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- Sunwater went through the project roadmap and advised that Sunwater wants to meet again with customers in March after taking the proposed options through the screening process and providing a high-level overview of the assessment.
- Once options have been confirmed, more comprehensive testing will help Sunwater determine the most viable options to put forward and apply for funding.
- Sunwater advised that the meeting today was to discuss all ideas. We will meet in March and June again with customers.
- Feedback and comments from the Low Water Storage Working Group:
 - Bedford IRD was paid for by the sale of water allocations. Cannot lose sight of the fact that the Bedford IRD Options Study should not be a new project but should be a rectification of the previous project. If the IRD was still in place, with Fairbairn Dam at its current level, the AA would increase by 2.7%.
 - The costs of the Temporary allocation water sold recently in Nogoa shows the value of water to the local economy.
 - The gross losses for cotton, citrus and potential coal are significant with the low water levels.
 - \$3,300/ML x 2.7% allocation, TT value = 16,500,000
 - For Urban users: trucking of water at \$100,000/ML during critical water conditions would result in \$500,000,000 cost to replace 2.7% AA.
 - The Queensland Government should fix Bedford; cost should not impact Sunwater
 - Sunwater has committed as an organisation to assess options for replacement of the storage lost due to removal of the IRD. In terms of funding, must get a business case ready and go through the approval process for funding.
 - LWSWG: Money made from temporary transfer should be used to fund this project because in previous years Sunwater has not put water lost by Bedford on the TT market but this water year they did.
 - Sunwater advised is willing to consider all options to make water available, including using Sunwater existing allocations and/or utilising TT dollars to fund the IRD replacement.
 - If Bedford weir required amending, let's say it broke and it lost the yield, we would fix it. Why doesn't Sunwater have an obligation to fix the yield lost by the removal of the bag.
 - How does ownership work in regards to who is responsible for the repair of Bedford (Sunwater or the Government)
 - Paradise if not fully allocated yet Bedford is. And Paradise had a downstream community concern flooding of Bundaberg.
 - Customers are paying a rate of return for infrastructure that no longer exists
 - Customers don't want to be paying for this project for years to come
 - Want a technology upgrade to restore what was lost with the removal of the bag.
 - Business case revenue will be zero because it is a repair not creating more allocation to sell.
 - Is it an option to make Bedford weir higher than it was before than with bag, to create more allocation to sell?
 - Have to consider downstream and upstream flooding.
 - LWSWG wanted to ensure that Sunwater acknowledges there has been loss of available capacity with the removal of the IRD and we will work with customers to replace the yield that was lost.
- Workshop (facilitated)
 - Sunwater asked for the room to break into 3 groups of 3-4 people and discuss a) What does success look like? And b) What options should be put forward for screening?
 - Sunwater went through possible options and proposed high-level things to consider such as site location, size and storage capacity, technical difficulties and costs associated.

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- Working groups discussed what does success look like and what options should we consider for screening for 25 minutes. The below were the responses collected.
- What does success look like for water reliability options study?
 - Table 1:
 - Ensure system yield (and reliability) is replaced within the scheme.
 - Note: Allocation has not been extinguished, reliability has been reduced
 - Want to see physical water returned to the system
 - Whether demand is still with Bedford Weir or is elsewhere in the system.
 - Table 2:
 - Restore Bedford weir to pre-loss level as a non-negotiable to any another agenda or project
 - Table 3:
 - Start the assessment process now, but the group understands that solution will not be immediate
- What options should we consider for the study/screening and why?
 - Table 1:
 - Understand what demand is below Bedford weir
 - Look at zones from upstream ponded area of Bedford Weir to the upstream ponded area of Tartrus Weir.
 - Want to ensure that it warrants fixing the Weir.
 - Transmission losses: what is the impact of not having the IRD in regard to operating the Weir. Is there more efficiency by having more air space?
 - If the Weir was raised, will efficiency also increase due because transmission losses (need to send water from Fairbairn) with decrease?
 - Sunwater:
 - If we replaced the 5000 ML in Bedford, will it be used? As water used/purchased from Weir raising has been relocated further upstream.
 - Suggestion: raise Selma weir to 3000 ML.
 - Desilt/extract soil from Fairbairn dam
 - Raising/installing another Comet Weir
 - Proposed weir downstream from junction of the Comet and the Nogoa Mackenzie River was discussed 20 years ago but never progressed
 - There have been previous options studies done to investigate how to replace yield/supply reliability loss from the removal of the IRD. We must leverage off these previous studies and learn from what has already been discovered.
 - Table 2:
 - Opportunistic enhancement project: Risk profile for approval for weir raising is very different to scenario of replacing infrastructure. If looking for extra allocation, higher risk for getting application approved as it is no longer a simple repair project
 - Have there been material improvements to IRD's that would make them safer than the original one in place?
 - Technology upgrades that will achieve same yield as bag.
 - Resolution of system losses needs to be explored as a separate exercise to this project.
 - Table 3:
 - Water stays operational
 - OSS: but must energy requirement and water quality concerns
 - Was there any funding/money from insurance from IRD loss to fund this project?
 - Was there funding set aside for maintenance/replacement of the IRD?

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- Must consider sustainability and environmental impacts of proposed options
- Whether Sunwater needs to resume land to implement any of the proposed options
- Dial in options:
 - Would de-silting Bedford Weir create more yield?
 - Can there be a bidirectional pipeline established between Bedford and Bingegang weirs for the efficient transfer of water back upstream as well as servicing irrigators and customers between?
- Other notes
 - If irrigable land downstream of Bedford was used, then the 5000 ML would be used. But now the water has been sold and water reallocated, it is no longer utilised.
 - Will the irrigable land function like it did before the IRD was deflated should the 5000 ML in Bedford be restored.

6. NEXT STEPS

[Agenda item 6]

- What are the compliance requirements for grant funding?
- There needs to be an adjustment or change in the rationale in the type of water meters we are using
 - Are we using the most efficient and cost-effective meters – Sunwater is proposing “Rolls Royce” standard meters when others may meet the standard required.
 - What is the Australian Standard?
 - Has Sunwater put new submission/responded for new metering policy in QLD.
 - Circulate information to group if Sunwater has more information to provide.
- At what point do we need extra pump at Selma, Weemah and the river.
- At what point will the pumps stop working: is it at the dead water level. From recent experience we have a better understanding of the trigger levels when pumps are required – documentation re these levels should be included in the ROL for future reference and not lost. Sunwater to action.
 - Carryover rule: want to revisit conversation about carryover rule with more information? What rule will we adopt and how will we implement it?
 - Does sliding scale carryover rule change pricing?
 - Discuss when pricing review could be completed by
 - Should carryover rules change when Fairbairn is at very low levels?

When to meet again?

- Potential February meeting for carryover rules – to be confirmed depending on availability of relevant pricing information
- Send more comms to all customers about carryover rules
- Need long term information of risks and impacts of change in carryover rules
- Bedford IRD Options Study assessment to come in March meeting with customers

7. MEETING CLOSE

[Agenda item 7]

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8. Approval and Review

Chair:	Jason Smith
Minutes:	Zoe Lee-Archer
Date:	Friday, 29 January 2021

Action Items

Action Item	Person Responsible
Provision of technical information related to carryover sliding rule and previous responses received	Marian Hart
Pumping triggers to add to ROL documentation	Marian Hart
Modelling assessment of Bedford Options	Marian Hart

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