

# BOARD BULLETIN

A report of matters associated with Southern Rural Water's board meeting by video conference 2pm Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2020



Excellence in rural water management, driving growth and customer productivity in southern Victoria.

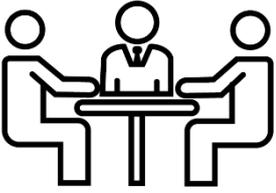
## Present:

Ms Diane James AM	Chairman
Mr Michael Malouf AM	Deputy Chairman
Ms Naomi Cleary	Director
Mr Christopher Edwards	Director
Mr Angus Hume	Director
Ms Peta Maddy	Director
Ms Michelle Murray	Director
Ms Kylie Steel	Director
Mr Cameron FitzGerald	Managing Director

## Management:

Mr Stuart Wrigglesworth	Chief Financial Officer & Corporation Secretary
Ms Renae Cooke	Executive Assistant to the Managing Director
Ms Nicole Griffin	General Manager Assets and Environment (for part)
Ms Elisa Hunter	General Manager Strategy and Performance (for part)

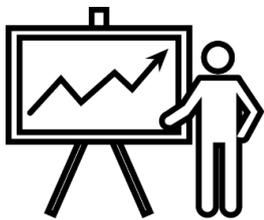




## OUR MEETING

The SRW board met virtually via videoconferencing for its June meeting consistent with our continued response to the emergence of COVID-19.

The meeting welcomed the recent announcement of \$10.4m in funding support for Phase 2 of the Macalister Irrigation District (MID) modernisation project by the Victorian Government. This \$62.7m program of works will complete the modernisation of the MID, securing its long term future as a critical food and fibre producing region. The Victorian Government's funding announcement builds on the \$31m of Federal Government support for the project announced in 2019.



## OUR OUTCOMES

The board approved the 2020-21 Corporate Plan which has been developed to deliver on SRW's vision of excellence in rural water management driving growth and customer productivity in Southern Victoria. The plan has been prepared in unprecedented times as we respond to the emergence of COVID-19 and incorporates how SRW is continuing to successfully respond to this challenge.

While COVID-19 response remains important, the Corporate Plan highlights the work SRW continues to deliver to respond to climate change through our net zero carbon emissions pledge, bushfire recovery initiatives and drought preparedness investments and sets targets to enhance water trading, increase the rollout of digital metering and improve the efficiency of water delivery in our irrigation districts. It also outlines our commitments to implement capital projects, including MID modernisation works, that seek to ensure we can deliver excellent service over the long term across southern Victoria.

SRW's annual prices and water sales plans were also approved for the 2020-21 financial year. The board was pleased that SRW continues to implement steady prices that are consistent with those approved by the Essential Services Commission in 2018.



## **BUSINESS OBJECTIVES**

### **Business resilience**

#### **Improved asset management**

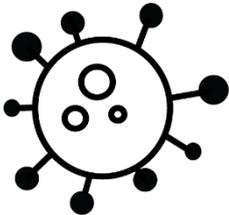
The meeting discussed the 2019-20 Annual Dam Safety Report which covers seven high hazard dams and the nine diversion weirs owned and operated by SRW. The board accepted the report which concludes that all of SRW's dams meet the limits of tolerability set out by Australian National Committee on Large Dams (ANCOLD). The board approved a suite of dam safety improvement projects for 2020-21 that are designed to ensure SRW continues to meet ANCOLD requirements.



#### **Modern assets**

In addition to welcoming government funding, the board discussed the details of MID Phase 2 project which will reconfigure the Newry irrigation supply with pipelines replacing channels and automation of customer outlets. There will also be upgrades and reconfiguration of the Nuntin supply network.

The project will create water savings of more than 12 gigalitres per annum through improved efficiency of water delivery across some of the century-old and least efficient zones in the MID.



#### **Supporting customers in hardship**

The board discussed how SRW is supporting customers who may be experiencing hardship in response to the emergence of COVID-19. The board was pleased to hear about the support mechanisms such as extended payment arrangements that are being made available to customers experiencing difficult times, and encouraged management to continue provide excellent hardship support through all available channels.

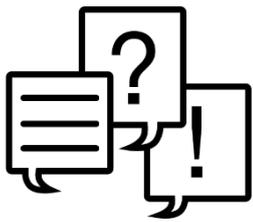


## LEADERSHIP AND CULTURE

### A culture of excellence

#### Leading in times of change

The board discussed the work being undertaken to build a culture of excellence at SRW with a particular focus on growing the capacity of SRW's senior leaders to be effective in the face of the challenges and opportunities associated with climate change, population growth and emerging technologies.



#### Compliance review

The board discussed the recent announcement by the Minister for Water outlining a review of compliance activities by rural water corporations across Victoria. The board reiterated the continued importance of SRW's role in ensuring compliance with licences issued under the Water Act 1989 and noted the scope of the review which includes consideration of:

- policies, procedures and frameworks established to govern and manage compliance and enforcement
- monitoring and reporting processes, including use of data
- governance arrangements within and between the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) and water corporations
- mechanisms for DELWP and water corporations to identify emerging compliance risks, such as high-volume unauthorised take, including use of reporting

The board looks forward to receiving the outcomes of the review and will work closely with SRW's customer consultative committees to oversee the implementation of all relevant actions.

