

MCCC AGENDA

Meeting no. 199

10.00am
Tuesday 27 June 2023
SRW Maffra

We acknowledge the Gunaikurnai people, Traditional Owners of this land on which we meet and we pay our respects to their Elders past and present.



**Southern
Rural Water**

Managing Water. Serving Communities.

Our Vision

Great value for customers and community through excellence in rural water management



Our Trademark Values

We are Always Safe and Accountable working as One Team to deliver a lasting Legacy.

Macalister Customer Consultative Committee

Date	Time	Location
27 June 2023	10am	SRW Office - Maffra

Topic		
1	Acknowledgement of County	Chair
2	Welcome and Apologies	Chair
3	Declaration of conflicts of interest	All
4	Confirmation of Minutes: Meeting 198	Chair
4.1	Attachment – Minutes MCCC Meeting 198, 28 March 2023	
5	Business arising from previous meetings	Chair
5.1	Attachment – MCCC business arising report	
6	<u>GUEST SPEAKERS</u>	
6.1	Macalister Avon Irrigation Development Project Update	Penny Winbanks
7	<u>PRINCIPAL MATTERS – FOR NOTING</u>	
7.1	Manager Water Supply East Update	Matt Cook
7.2	Communications Report	
8	<u>PRINCIPAL MATTERS – FOR DISCUSSION</u>	
8.1	Board update	Cameron FitzGerald
8.2	HARC Drainage Report	Matt Stagg
8.3	MID System Performance Review	Matt Stagg
8.4	Water Trading Platform Demonstration	Matt Cook/ Clinton Harley
9	<u>COMMITTEE MATTERS</u>	
9.1	Important issues from other customer committees	Cameron FitzGerald
9.2	Matters referred by/to the Board/board committee	Cameron FitzGerald

10		<u>GENERAL BUSINESS</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customer engagement review update – Cameron FitzGerald 	All
11		Meeting evaluation	Chair
12		Next meeting	
13		Close	

Item No: 1

Subject: **Acknowledgement of Country**

'We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land on which we are meeting. We pay our respects to their Elders, past and present, and the Elders from other communities who may be here today.'

Item No: 2

Subject: **Welcome and Apologies**

The Chair will welcome attendees and note any apologies for this meeting.

Item No: 3

Subject: **Declaration of Conflicts of Interest**

The Chair will ask committee members to declare any conflicts of interest relating to the business of this meeting.

Item No: 4
Subject: Confirmation of minutes – Meeting 198
Action: For approval
Author: Hayley Taylor – Executive Assistant
Date: 15/06/2023

PURPOSE

1. To ensure that the minutes taken of committee meeting 198 are an accurate and sufficient record of discussions held and decisions made at the meeting.

RECOMMENDATION: That the committee approves the minutes of meeting 198 held on Tuesday 28 March 2023.

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE CONSIDERATIONS

2. Minutes are confirmed at each committee meeting.

BACKGROUND

3. Draft minutes are circulated after each committee meeting. Any suggested changes are captured as track changes, for consideration and confirmation at the following meeting.

REPORT

4. Draft minutes of meeting 198, held at SRW Maffra Office on Tuesday 28 March 2023 are provided in attachment 4.1.
5. **Budget impact:** Nil
6. **Link to strategy:** Nil.
7. **Risk:** Committee meeting minutes are a public record and may be subject to release under Freedom of Information. Directors should ensure that minutes accurately and appropriately reflect the discussion and decisions of the meeting.

NEXT STEPS

Who	Action
Meeting Secretary	Once confirmed, a hard copy of the minutes will be signed by the committee Chairman and saved on the board portal and Southern Rural Water Website.

Macalister Customer Consultative Committee

Minutes of Meeting 198

Date	Time	Location
28 March 2023	10:00am	SRW Maffra Office

Present

Mr Benn Thexton	Chair
Mr Alan Clyne	Committee Member
Mr Brad White	Committee Member
Mr Graeme Anderson	Committee Member
Mr Kate Lamb	Committee Member
Mr Norm Drew	Committee Member
Mr Stephen Dwyer	Committee Member

In Attendance

Ms Joanne Butterworth-Gray	Board Chair, SRW
Mr Cameron FitzGerald	Managing Director, SRW
Mr Simon Wilkinson	General Manager Service Delivery, SRW
Mr Matt Cook	Manager Water Supply East, SRW
Ms Hayley Taylor	Executive Assistant, SRW (Scribe)

Absent

Ms Jeannette Howie	Committee Member
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Guests

Amanda Castle	Acting Manager Capital Delivery
Michael Dowe	Capital Delivery Engineer

1. Acknowledgement of County

The Chair acknowledged the Traditional Owners of the land on which the meeting was held.

2. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed all present to the meeting.

3. Declaration of conflicts of interest

The Chair asked attendees to declare any conflicts of interest relating to the business of this meeting.

There were no new conflicts raised.

4. Confirmation of minutes – Meeting 47

The minutes of meeting 196 and 197 were approved.

Moved: Graeme Anderson

Second: Alan Clyne

5. Business Arising

The report was taken as read.

The committee noted some customers did not receive the Macalister Irrigation District (MID) Water Delivery Delays Factsheet that was produced on behalf of Macalister Customer Consultative Committee (MCCC) members after the Special MCCC meeting in February.

Management advised that the factsheet was sent to all customers that Southern Rural Water (SRW) had an email for, except those that had opted out of receiving communications.

The committee suggested that emails are followed by a text advising customers had received an email. This may prompt customers to update their emails with SRW. It was also suggested that important notices could be put into the water ordering system.

6. PRINCIPLE MATTERS – FOR NOTING

6.1 Manager Water Supply East Update

The report was taken as read.

The committee discussed Low Reliability Water Supply (LRWS) including:

- That SRW could consider reviewing the allocation model to enable the unused High Reliability Water Supply (HRWS) to be available to all customers prior to the end of the irrigation season.

Management referred to the recent Allocation Model Review completed in 2022 and are satisfied the model is robust and fit for purpose to deliver the fairest form of water allocations to customers.

- Customers are not buying as much water as usual and are relying on their low reliability water allocation.
- The possibility of SRW providing a prediction on how much low reliability water customers could expect.

Management advised that SRW is reluctant to provide predictions of this nature as there are too many uncontrollable factors. A committee member stated that if irrigators were to rely on a prediction to make decisions, it could have a detrimental impact to their business if the prediction is wrong. Management advised that data provided in the Weekly Snapshot is continually updated and can assist customers in making informed decisions.

Management advised that depending on delivery levels, SRW will be considering increasing LRWS.

Management introduced Sean Patmore to the committee. Mr Patmore is the new Irrigation Service Delivery Supervisor – East. Mr Patmore stated he is excited to join the well-established team and the number one focus of the team is ensuring customers have what they need.

Management advised that the final report of the Hydrology and Risk Consulting (HARC) Drainage Review is due by end of March and **confirmed** recommendations from the report will be discussed at the June MCCC meeting.

Action	Action Officer	Due Date
Present recommendations of the HARC Drainage Review to the committee at the June 2023 meeting.	M. Cook	01/06/2023

6.2 Communications Report

The report was taken as read.

7. PRINCIPLE MATTERS – FOR DISCUSSION

7.1 Board Update

Ms Butterworth-Gray, Board Chair, advised:

- The Board had received a briefing at the March 2023 meeting on the MID Delivery Delays and the concerns raised by the MCCC members on behalf of irrigators as well as an update on the Siphon 7 leak and repairs.
- The Customer Engagement Review will be presented to the Board in the coming months. The report will provide an opportunity to review the way SRW

engages with customers and will help inform SRW's strategy and board agenda.

- SRW will be participating in a public forum run by the Essential Services Commission (ESC) in May regarding the Pricing Submission.

7.2 Newry Modernisation Update

Amanda Castle, Acting Manager Capital Delivery and Michael Dowe, Capital Delivery Engineer, joined the meeting at 10:48am to discuss the Phase 2 Modernisation work schedule and provide a progress update.

It was **noted**:

- Newry Irrigation upgrades are expected to be completed in October 2023 however water supply will be ready for delivery at the beginning of the season.
- Currently working with customers in regard to decommissioning works.
- As expected, excess groundwater has impacted works. The project team have the correct piping to manage this and Jaydo are adapting the trenching and pumping to manage the water and are familiar with working in these conditions.

The committee members discussed whether customers could pump from bores and water holes to help reduce the water table should be considered for future works. The size of the pipes and the requirement for them to be one meter below the surface, meaning excavations are approximately three meters below the surface was noted by a committee member.

Management advised that time had been built into the works program if pumping groundwater long term was required and this isn't expected to hold up the project. Ms Castle would pass on the feedback to see if there was merit in customers pumping groundwater.

The committee questioned whether the main pipeline will be held up by the one customer that has not signed on. Management advised that they are confident that a resolution will be reached, and the project will not be delayed.

A member stated Jaydo are doing a great job in restoring the site once the pipe had been installed. The Managing Director said this was pleasing to hear as it is SRW's expectation that this would occur, and the feedback would be passed onto the CEO of Jaydo.

Management advised the new MID Project Lead will be Matt Weatherall who is starting early April. Mr Weatherall has previously worked for SRW and brings a wealth of experience to the project.

7.3 Macalister Avon Irrigation Development Project Update

Due to the presenter being on unplanned leave the presentation will be held over to the June 2023 meeting.

Mr White, MCCC member and member of the Macalister Avon Irrigation Development Project Consultative Committee provided an overview of the last meeting to the committee noting:

- The different options being considered to get water from the MID across the Avon River.
- There will still be restrictions with regard to channel capacity, and SRW will need to consider utilising low supply periods to supply water across the Avon and there will be a heavy reliance on on-farm storage.
- Discussion around the positive effects for the Avon, and whether customers had the appetite to give up their Avon entitlement for the piped water.

The Managing Director reiterated that project is an options study and that if it was to progress to funding there will be a requirement that the environment and Traditional Owners (TO's) aspirations will need to be considered.

Action	Action Officer	Due Date
Macalister Avon Irrigation Development Project Update to be presented at the June 2023 MCCC meeting	P. Winbanks	01/06/2023

7.4 MID Delivery Delays

Management advised the Matt Stagg, Projects and Innovation Specialist is leading the work to explore potential changes to the ordering system. A tender will be released in the next week for a consultant to undertake this work. Management reiterated that SRW want to ensure this work is completed by experts to ensure the best possible outcome for customers.

The committee **requested** that the consultants speak to the MCCC members or the MCCC Chair to ensure the issues discussed at the February 2023 MCCC meeting are communicated. Management advised they will ensure customers are consulted as part of the review.

Action	Action Officer	Due Date
Consultants engaged to explore potential changes to the ordering system will be directed to consult with the MCCC members or MCCC Chair	M. Stagg	01/06/2023

on water delivery delay issues discussed at the February 2023 MCCC meeting.

8. COMMITTEE MATTERS

8.1 Important issues from other customer committees

The Managing Director advised that:

- The Werribee Bacchus Marsh Customer Consultative Committee (WBMCCC) discussed a project investigating the reconfiguration on how their water is delivered. The project looks at a new source of recycled water into the district, that is better quality and more reliable than the current option. There could also be a benefit to the environment and urban water customers. No customers would be forced to give up their river water rights, but could choose to do so, to access the new recycled water source. This project is being developed in partnership with urban water corps.
- The Southern Groundwater and Rivers Forum (SGRF) discussed the Water is Life policy, and the discussion centred around engagement with TO groups around water entitlements. Mr Drew, outlined that it was a very informative session and had good engagement from SGRF members.

8.2 Matters referred to/by the Board/Board Committee

No matters have been referred to the committee by the board or board committee.

9. General Business

There were no items of General Business raised.

10. Meeting evaluation

The Chair asked for feedback on the effectiveness of this meeting.

The members advised that this meeting was one of the better MCCC meetings in recent times and there was a feeling that everyone has been included in the meeting. The Committee Chair acknowledged the agenda is relevant and focused on current issues.

The committee **requested** that instead of lunch at the conclusion of the meeting, could the meeting commence with morning tea instead. Management **agreed** to the request and this will be implemented going forward.

Action	Action Officer	Due Date
Organise morning tea for MCCC meetings going forward, instead of lunch.	H. Taylor	01/06/2023

11. Next meeting

The next meeting of the Macalister Customer Consultative Committee is Tuesday 27 June 2023 and will be held in the SRW Maffra Office.

12. Close

With no further business the meeting was declared closed at 11:44am.

DRAFT

Item No: 5
Subject: **Business arising from previous meetings**
Action: **For noting**
Author: **Hayley Taylor – Executive Assistant**
Date: **15/06/2023**

PURPOSE

1. To allow the forum to assess management progress on items identified for action from Macalister Customer Consultative Committee meetings.

RECOMMENDATION: That the committee notes the status of business arising action items, including:

- one action item has been completed, and
- two action items will be discussed within this agenda

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE CONSIDERATIONS

2. Business arising is considered each meeting.

BACKGROUND

3. Actions are captured in the minutes each month and transposed into risk wizard where base and aspirational dates are added along with the responsibility for completion.

REPORT

4. Attachment 5.1 describes each action item, its status, and a comment on its progress.

BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS - MCCC

Action progress: Complete

Action	Source	Due date	Completed date	Accountable officer	Status comment	
25128	Organise morning tea for MCCC meetings going forward, instead of lunch.	Macalister Customer Consultative Committee, 28 March 2023 - Agenda Item 10, Meeting Evaluation	01/06/23	29/05/23	Hayley Taylor	As requested morning tea will be provided prior to the meeting for MCCC meetings.

Action progress: This agenda

Action	Source	Due date	Completed date	Accountable officer	Status comment	
25126	Present recommendations of the HARC Drainage Review to the committee at the June 2023 meeting.	Macalister Customer Consultative Committee, 28 March 2023 - Agenda Item 6.1 Manager Water Supply East Update	01/06/23	01/06/23	Matt Cook	Refer to agenda item 8.2
25127	Macalister Avon Irrigation Development Project Update to be presented at the June 2023 MCCC meeting	Macalister Customer Consultative Committee, 28 March 2023 - Agenda Item 7.3 Macalister Avon Irrigation Development Project Update	01/06/23	15/06/23	Penny Winbanks	Refer to agenda item X.x

Item No: **6.1**

Subject: **Macalister/Avon Irrigation Development Project**

Action: **For noting**

Author: **Penny Winbanks, Manager Strategic Partnerships & Policy**

Responsible executive: **Elisa Hunter, General Manager Strategy, People & Culture**

Date: **14/06/2023**

PURPOSE

1. To provide an update on the progress and findings of the Macalister Avon Irrigation Development Project (Mac/Avon Project).

RECOMMENDATION: That the committee **note** the progress of the project, specifically:

- 6GL/yr can be delivered to the new area without impacting current MID service levels
- The scheme relies on private on-farm storages to manage individual supply through peak demand times
- Customers of the proposed scheme will have different service levels and tariffs
- Design options range from about \$30M - \$37M

BACKGROUND

2. The Mac/Avon Project aims to test the feasibility of extending a new water supply scheme from the MID across to the eastern side of the Avon River. This includes; water resource availability, functional design, environmental and cultural heritage assessments, MID service impact assessments and economic analysis.
3. A non-infrastructure option for increasing access and reliability was also explored due to customer interest.
4. This phase of investigations will be complete by September (draft findings by July).
5. The new scheme is reliant upon access to around a quarter of the water savings produced through modernisation of the MID. Savings created via modernisation is in the order of 27GL.
6. A key guiding principle of this work is that there are no negative impacts to current MID service levels as a result of extending the water supply network.

REPORT

7. Water resource availability assessments suggest that 6GL of water can be delivered to the new area without impacting the current service levels of MID customers
8. This relies on the new area being serviced by private, on-farm storages to manage supply through peak demand times.

9. To manage impacts to current MID customers, customers of the proposed scheme will have different service levels and tariffs. This ensures priority is given to MID customers during peak demand times.
10. Five design options have been identified with capital costs estimated from around \$30M to \$37M. All delivering 6GL/yr to known demands that could be reached through gravity fed system.
11. The design of the new scheme is expected to smooth out operations of downstream operations within the MID, and in some design options, service could be improved.
12. The non-infrastructure option that was explored is not feasible.

NEXT STEPS

13. Complete consolidation report draft due for completion in July. Final report expected by September.
14. If outcomes are favourable we will seek to undertake broader engagement to address operational and water sharing matters, as well as technical work around the funding model, 'product' offering, tariffs and investment logic mapping to inform a business case.

Item No: **7.1**
 Subject: **Manager Water Supply East Update**
 Action: **For noting**
 Author: **Matt Cook, Manager Water Supply East**
 Date: **27/06/2023**

Issue	Commentary 2022-23
Allocation Update	Current Allocation is 100% HRWS and 100% LRWS
System Efficiency (target vs actuals)	Efficiencies are tracking well at 83% with 123,200 ML delivered to date.

Place of Take

Place of Take (PoT) continues to progress with customer consultation and Water Corporations partnering with DEECA to work through the changes required with in the Water Register.

Targeted conversations are currently being held with SRW customers in the west where syndicates are involved. With in the Eastern Irrigation Business there are no river customers affected by these syndicate changes.

Following an extension to the required implementation date, the PoT requirements are now likely to come into place in November 2023.

Winter Maintenance.

Various maintenance and repair tasks are underway for the irrigation system. Asset inspections will assess the condition of structures and identify erosion and weed issues. Mechanical repairs will be conducted on Flumegate regulators, while seal repairs will prevent leakage in customer outlets.

Faulty meters will be replaced for accurate measurement, and reference sensors will be replaced to ensure gate functionality. Tree and vegetation maintenance will optimize solar panel performance and prevent asset damage. Bird spike replacements and head wall repairs are also scheduled. Additionally, erosion control, flow gate repairs, walkway replacements, channel relining, cleaning, and siphon repairs are underway to maintain efficient water operations and prevent failures during peak demand.

Zero tolerance on water theft.

As we lead into a new water season with forecasts of drier than average rainfall, SRW will be reminding customers of SRW's regulatory requirements and the zero tolerance on water theft.

To support this requirement (including the ability to produce PIN's) additional SRW staff will be trained and accredited in compliance and enforcement.

Newry Modinisation and progress.

With all Newry irrigation customers now signed up to their Modinised Works Agreement it's full steam ahead on the Newry Pipeline Project, with more than ten kilometres of the 17.25 kilometres of pipeline laid.

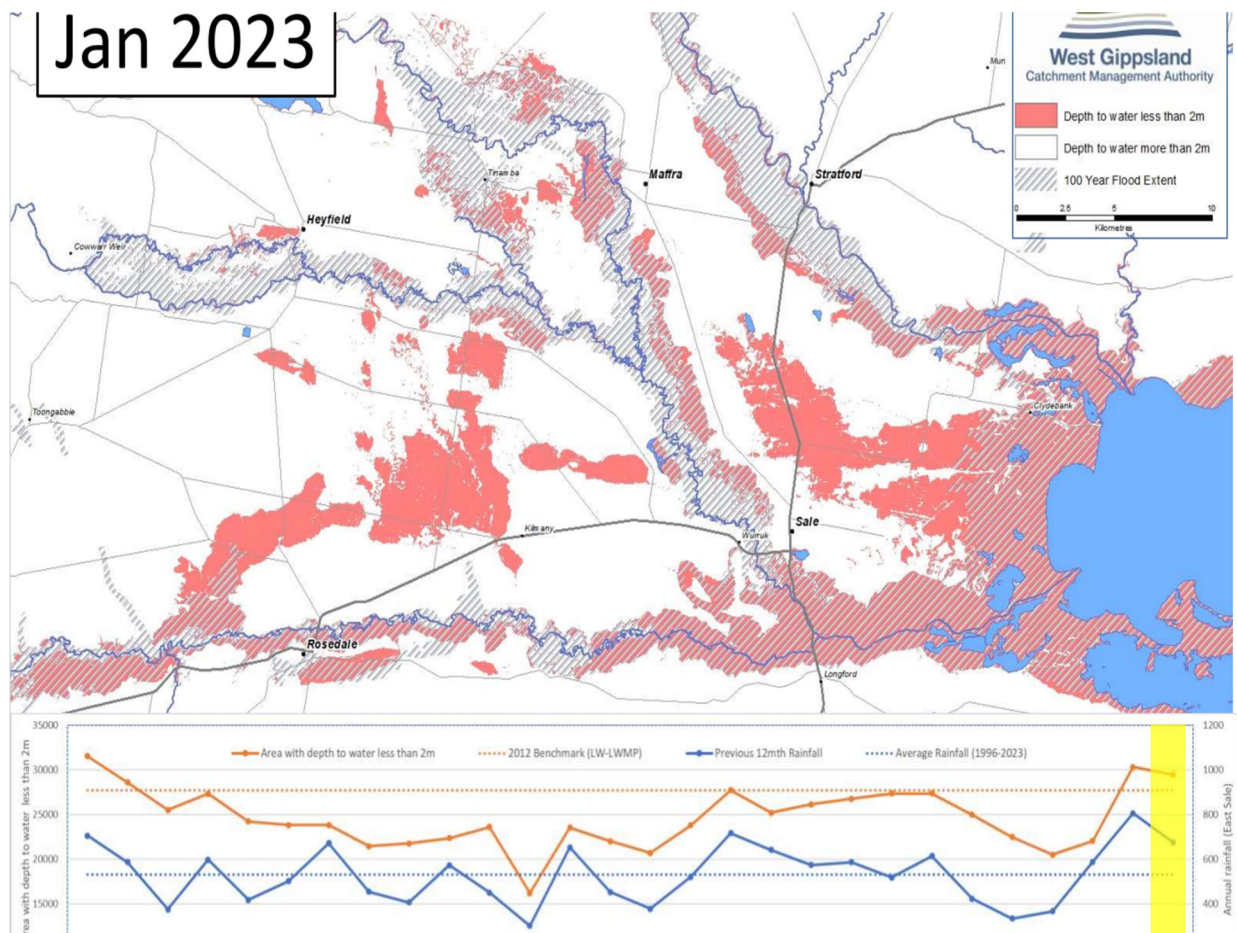
An additional five kilometres of customer connection pipelines will also be installed, as part of the overall 22.6km pipeline project. Work is also underway on construction of the offtake structure. This is infrastructure that will divert water from the Main Northern Channel to the pipeline. Customer outlets have also been assembled, which will start to be connected to the main pipeline this week.

Groundwater monitoring.

As we head into a season with drier than usual rainfalls, salinity effects remain at the forefront of partnership organisations (WGCMA, AGVIC, SRW) minds. 13 groundwater pump sites continue to operate, and salinity awareness is being completed by partnership organisations with customers.

Over the past 12 months WGCMA, AgVic and SRW have been working on a project to explore the long term future of groundwater monitoring and pumping with regards to Salinity utilising Groundwater Consulting Australia. This study is ongoing and will include future consultation with customers.

The project will include the development of business cases for funding to support the role out of the plan.



Item No: **7.2**

Subject: **Communications and Engagement report – June 2023**

Action: **For noting**

Author: **Kris Perkovic, Senior Community Engagement Adviser**

Date: **15/06/2023**

PURPOSE

- To update the Macalister Customer Consultative Committee on recent communications and engagement activities.

RECOMMENDATION: The Committee note the report.

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE CONSIDERATIONS

2. Communications and engagement activity is reported at each meeting.

BACKGROUND

3. The Communications and Engagement team develops communications plans, issues media releases, manages the website and social media, customer and community engagement activities and looks after media enquiries.

REPORT

4. Quarterly newsletter

Southern Rural Water issued its first quarterly region-wide customer newsletter on Thursday 1 June. It was distributed to customers with a valid email address.

5. Website

Southern Rural Water has produced a range of website content for the Macalister area.

<https://www.srw.com.au/news-media/celebrating-our-dairy-farmers-world-milk-day>

<https://www.srw.com.au/news-media/season-outlook-el-nino-horizon>

<https://www.srw.com.au/news-media/making-most-victorias-construction-boom>

<https://www.srw.com.au/news-media/newry-farmer-cant-wait-new-pipeline-come-online>

<https://www.srw.com.au/news-media/upgrade-cowwarr-weir-underway>

<https://www.srw.com.au/news-media/southern-rural-water-launches-new-groundwater-map>

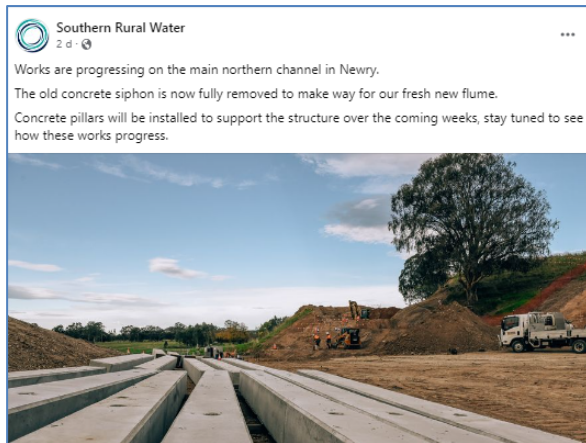
<https://www.srw.com.au/news-media/macalister-avon-irrigation-development-mid-project-update>

6. Customer newsletters

Customer newsletters were sent to landowners on the Newry Pipeline Project on 7 June and the 11 May.

7. Social media

Our social media campaigns have received good responses. Below are some examples of content since the last meeting. Please follow our social media pages to see more.



NEXT STEPS: A further update will be provided at the next MCCC meeting.

Item No: **8.1**

Subject: **Board Update**

Cameron FitzGerald, Managing Director, SRW, will provide an overview of discussions at the most recent Board meeting.

Item No: **8.2**

Subject: **HARC Drainage Report**

Matthew Stagg, Projects and Innovation Specialist, SRW, will discuss the outcomes of the HARC drainage report.

Item No: **8.3**
Subject: **MID System Performance Review**
Action: **For noting**
Author: **Matthew Stagg – Strategic Projects and Innovation Specialist**
Date: **20/06/2023**

PURPOSE

1. To articulate the limitations, restrictions and supply constraints on the MID supply system. Further, to make recommendations for changes or implementations which could improve supply performance and/or equity across the channel and pipeline systems in the MID.

RECOMMENDATION: The committee **note** that Hydrology and Risk Consulting (HARC) have been appointed to undertake the MID System Performance Review.

BACKGROUND

2. The Macalister Customer Consultative Committee (MCCC), in a special meeting called in February 2023, discussed the difficulties experienced by some customers during the peak demand period of the 22/23 irrigation season.
3. SRW presented statistics from the 2022/23 season for delivery timelines and delays, along with data derived and anecdotal context for the MCCC's consideration.
4. The MCCC recommended that SRW shall undertake a more detailed study of the restrictions and understand the impacts of implementing changes to improve system performance.

REPORT

5. SRW have appointed Hydrology and Risk Consulting (HARC) to undertake the MID System Performance Review.
6. Mr Matthew Stagg, Strategic Projects and Innovation Specialist, SRW, will provide a presentation on the scope of the MID System Performance Review during the meeting.
7. The interim and final reports shall be tabled at future meetings.

NEXT STEPS

8. A workshop will be facilitated by HARC on 30 June 2023 with SRW Service Delivery team members and a representative of the MCCC to discuss system limitations.
9. In July 2023, HARC will meet with Rubicon Water to discuss the planning and control systems, and Rubicon's suggestions for system improvement.
10. By early September 2023, HARC will have compiled a final report which will be tabled at a future MCCC meeting.

Item No: **8.4**

Subject: **Water Trading Platform Demonstration**

SRW will provide a demonstration of the new Water Trading Platform.

Item No: **9.1**

Subject: **Important issues from other customer committees**

Cameron FitzGerald, Managing Director, will provide a verbal update on important issues raised at other customer committees.

Item No: **9.2**

Subject: **Matters referred by the Board**

Cameron FitzGerald, Managing Director, will discuss matters that have been referred by/to the Board.

Item No: **10**

Subject: **General Business**

The Chair will introduce any items of general business.

- Customer Engagement Review – Cameron FitzGerald, Managing Director.
-

Item No: **11**

Subject: **Meeting evaluation**

The Chair will seek feedback on the effectiveness of this meeting.

The Chair will ask the committee to assess the performance of the committee at this meeting, using the below questions as a guide.

1. Do we think the committee is adding value?
 2. What's working?
 3. What's not working?
-

Item No: **12**

Subject: **Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Macalister Customer Consultative Committee will be confirmed during the meeting.

Item No: **13**

Subject: **Close**

The Chair will close the meeting.
