



# Media Release

Date: Friday 13 November 2009

## Hold tight we are coming says NVIRP CEO

Landowners and irrigators in the north of the State are currently undergoing the greatest challenges to their farming operations ever experienced, the CEO of the Northern Victoria Irrigation Renewal Project (NVIRP) Murray Smith said today.

“We know that landowners are keen to discuss their future irrigation upgrades and water delivery requirements and we are hearing that NVIRP is just not moving fast enough to satisfy each and every landowner.

“Let me assure all of these people that we are considering all the changes and challenges impacting on their business at the moment especially the drought, the Commonwealth’s water buyback and at the same time we are trying to undertake the largest ever irrigation upgrade on a working system,” Mr Smith said.

“Our officers are currently consulting with individual irrigators whose properties are situated along backbone channels in the five irrigation regions (Murray Valley, Torrumbarry, Rochester, Pyramid-Boort and Central Goulburn) where new automated regulator gates are being installed, enabling a near on-demand water delivery to individual properties.

“We need to proceed with the capital works in a systematic manner and our Modernisation Coordinators and Farm Irrigation Designers are each day working with landowners to assist them to take advantage of the NVIRP incentives as we push on installing this world class irrigation technology,” Mr Smith said.

Total Channel Control® offers an improved level of service while optimising meter outlet numbers and locations on backbone channels allowing NVIRP to then consider reducing the number of regulators and other structures on the backbone.

“In the end it assists us to minimise the ongoing operation and maintenance costs to all customers. This is one of our highest priorities to ensure consultation remains ahead of our capital works program. We expect to be looking to spread out into spur channel areas more extensively in the New Year,” he said.

“There is concern from irrigators who are not situated on the backbone channels about how their water will be delivered in the future, so let me encourage these people to attend any advertised modernisation meetings or contact our Modernisation Coordinators in the five regions.

“We are also working with the Farm Irrigation Design companies to see if more resources can be sourced and directed to the demand coming from customers on spur channels.

“An explanatory brochure explaining on-farm meter connections will soon be available from NVIRP,” Mr Smith said.

Stage 1 of the \$2 billion irrigation upgrade is on target to deliver the long term water savings that will enhance irrigator’s entitlements as well as provide water for environmental needs of the rivers and wetlands in the region. Less than 20 per cent of the water saved will go to Melbourne via the Sugarloaf Pipeline.

NVIRP Offices are at situated at Kerang 03 5451 0115, Pyramid Hill 03 5455 7004, Rochester 03 5484 0452, Tatura 03 5824 5611 and Cobram 03 5871 0133

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**Media Contact:**

Merrill Boyd  
Executive Manager Communications  
Northern Victoria Irrigation Renewal Project  
T: 0438 678 323  
E: [merrill.boyd@nvirp.com.au](mailto:merrill.boyd@nvirp.com.au)