

Media Release

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NVIRP's second annual report released

Modernisation of the Food Bowl's ageing irrigation system is well underway with a long list of successes detailed in Northern Victoria Irrigation Renewal Project's (NVIRP) second annual report.

During the past 12 months, more than 1000 regulator gates were installed and on-farm connections negotiated while nearly fifteen kilometres of channel has been plastic lined as part of the \$2 billion renewal project that will help secure the region's future.

The 2008-09 annual report also describes how a workforce 500-strong carried out 175,000 hours (currently over 350,000) of work within the Goulburn Murray Irrigation District with no time lost to injury. Other achievements ranged from setting-up modernisation consultation committees, to meeting stringent environmental conditions under tight timelines set by the Planning Minister.

NVIRP CEO Murray Smith said in the report that the current environment was challenging due to water availability, which was testing for programs as well as farmers.

"We are acutely aware that this creates uncertainty...(this) can also add to existing tensions, however we are confident that the strategic investment in irrigation modernisation works is providing for the short and long-term future of today and tomorrow's irrigators in this productive region of northern Victoria," Mr Smith said.

In the report, NVIRP Board Chair Richard Guy described the project as a way to turn around a very difficult situation and enhance delivery of irrigation water.

"Our progress with Stage 1 ... has seen the Federal Government request us to prepare a business case for Stage 2 ... the introduction of the Stage 2 funding will see greater efficiency in proceeding with both projects simultaneously," Mr Guy said.

An independent auditor is verifying water savings from 2008-09 works in accordance with the Department of Sustainability and Environment's *Technical Manual for the Quantification of Water Savings*. The water savings figure will be available later this year.

To view the full report visit www.nvirp.com.au or phone 1300 163 006.

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