

Quarterly update

AUTUMN 2017



Project Director update

Welcome to the Autumn edition of the Connections newsletter. I hope you have had a productive and prosperous season so far.

Since our last edition, there has been a great deal of work behind the scenes to get ready to hit the ground to implement the Reset Delivery Plan.

Our contractor, John Holland, will be constructing a bumper Winter Works 2017 program with a budget of around \$100 million.

A fundamental part of the Reset Delivery Plan is the rollout of the reconfiguration process, which is what we need to put in place to finish the job and to end the cyclical negotiations that were holding up many landowners who just want to see their solution implemented.

To modernise the GMW water delivery system (the channels, the service points, etc.) we need to develop desktop concept reconfiguration plans for all of the remaining channels yet to be modernised. These desktop plans are what we will use to 'kick off' the consultation process with landowners.

The key points to keep in mind with reconfiguration are:

- » Once the process is started, we expect to reach the construction stage within five to six months. Construction will depend on complexity and the season
- » Once adopted, we are able to implement a reconfiguration plan – we can do the works even if we're still waiting for landowners to agree to on-farm works
- » This means that for landowners who have signed an on-farm works agreement, **we can get on with the works.**

I've spoken with many landowners who have been waiting for some time to see this happen, most recently at the Victorian Farmers Federation Water Forum on 2 March.

Soon, you will see a number of things happen:

- » John Holland will manage around 60 per cent of the remaining works that group as 'uncommitted', meaning, there are no signed agreements in place. John Holland will scope, consult, design and construct these works.
- » Our internal delivery team will manage the remaining works i.e. those that have existing agreements with landowners in place. Many of these have been in the pipeline for some time (for example, contingent agreements – or what we call 'committed' channels).

You will start to see action on the ground – across the GMID – in the coming weeks, and I look forward to giving you a progress update in the Winter newsletter.



Frank Fisseler
Project Director



5–6 months

**EXPECTED LENGTH FROM INITIAL LETTER
TO ADOPTED RECONFIGURATION PLAN**

Kicking off the new reconfiguration process

A key part of the project's reset delivery plan is a new engagement process that incorporates reconfiguration plans. A reconfiguration plan is simply our plan for upgrading the GMW-owned parts of the water delivery system, such as service point meters, channels and pipelines.

We kicked the process off for a group of channels in Murray Valley in late January. Starting with an introductory letter and a channel meeting with landowners on those channels, we can get a sense of how accurate our initial desktop planning is and the kind of information that we need to collect in individual landowner meetings.

Generally, we expect the process to take five to six months from initial letter to adopted reconfiguration plan – this is a much quicker process than previously, where some people have waited for years to see any progress.

Not all landowners will be taken through the reconfiguration process. Some exceptions are where we are simply upgrading, rationalising or retaining an existing meter in the same location – this can be done quickly in consultation with you.

If you still don't know how you are affected by the reset delivery plan, please check the My Connections Information portal on the project website, or talk to us via phone or email. We welcome your questions and will get back to you as quickly as we can.

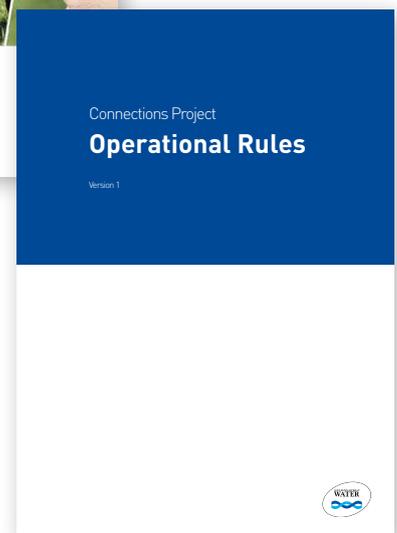
New guide for landowners now available

The Landowner Guide has been published to help you navigate the new reconfiguration process.

We've listened to your feedback throughout the project reset and you told us that you want to know how we make important decisions about changes we make to the GMW water delivery system.

The Guide is supported by the Connections Project Operational Rules which provide information about how we determine meter types and sizing, as well as the principles of co-contribution, voluntary dry-off and on-farm works.

[View the new Landowner Guide and Operational Rules on the website \[www.connectionsproject.com.au\]\(http://www.connectionsproject.com.au\) in the publications section.](http://www.connectionsproject.com.au)



Get set for a bumper Winter Works 2017

We're getting ready for a big 2017 Winter Works program. Clocking in at around \$100 million, the works will prioritise meters and channels that don't rely on complex on-farm works to be carried out.

This enables the project to get some quick water savings wins while we continue to roll out our new engagement process as part of the project reset.

BUILDING AROUND

35  **KILOMETRES OF NEW PIPELINE**

REMEDIATING AROUND

33  **KILOMETRES OF CHANNEL**

INSTALLING CHANNEL AUTOMATION AT

273 **SITES**

Spotlight on the Connections Project Stakeholder Consultative Committee

The Connections Project Stakeholder Consultative Committee (SCC) has now met six times, most recently in February.

SCC Chair, Richard Anderson, believes that the SCC is a critical forum for stakeholders to provide relevant and timely feedback to the Project Control Group (PCG) on how we're doing.

"We've got a great selection of committee members from across dairy, horticulture and mixed farming, as well as representatives from water services committees, Goulburn Broken CMA, councils and DELWP – so we have some really good discussions about the needs of irrigators right across the GMID," says Richard.

"At the last meeting we talked about the ways the SCC can make a valuable contribution to the project in 2017, including providing early advice on information that we plan to give to landowners.

"The activities of the SCC will be more open too – we will post the agenda and minutes on the project website as well as meeting dates, and any actions we've taken as a result of SCC discussions."

For more information on SCC members and the terms of reference, go to the 'Stakeholder Consultative Committee' page on the GMW Connections Project website.

Accessing your land

As we gear up for Winter Works 2017 and beyond, there may be times where we need to enter your land.

The GMW Customer Charter sets out the general principles, communication requirements and expected conduct of our project team when seeking to access private property. Contractors working on the project's behalf must also abide by the Charter.

Before we enter your land, we will take reasonable steps to:

- » Contact you before entering your land
- » Inform you of our intentions and timeframe before entry

- » Consult with you regarding any planned works that may have a significant impact on your property
- » Respond to your queries promptly and courteously
- » Inform you immediately of any damage or interference to your operations, services, structures or property, and
- » Listen and respond promptly to any concerns or complaints.

You can get a copy of the charter from GMW's website www.gmwater.com.au/customer-charter or phone 1800 013 357 to request a copy by email or post.

To find out more about the GMW Connections Project

Contact us

Website

www.connectionsproject.com.au

Call

1800 013 357

Email

connections@gmwater.com.au

Visit

255 Ferguson Road
Tatura VIC

Your local area
GMW office
to talk to one
of your local
engagement officers

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We're moving

Please note that from Monday 1 May 2017, the main office of the GMW Connections Project will be located at 55 Welsford, Shepparton.

The project telephone number and our postal address remain the same.