



NEWSLETTER

Issue 10

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In this Newsletter we cover the following areas:-

- Upgrade of Water Meters
- Update on PVWater Co-operative

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UPGRADE OF WATER METERS

We discussed at our Annual General Meeting last November issues confronting us with the existing propeller activated water meters used exclusively throughout the irrigation scheme. These issues are as follows.

1. To improve the accuracy of the meter, the meter manufacturer has changed the size of the meter assembly and the new assembly will now not fit into the meter body or meter barrel that previously housed the old assembly. This means that we are unable to replace meter assemblies with the new model and we are rapidly running out of old assemblies to undertake repairs to meters as required.
2. As part of water reforms, an Australian Standard for Rural Water Metering is being developed so that more accurate recording of water use for irrigation is achieved. Although not finalised as yet, the new standard is expected to ban the use of propeller activated meters as they will not meet the required +/- 5% accuracy in the field.

The most pressing issue for us is that we will be unable to repair the existing meters as our supply of spares is depleted. With this in mind the Board has decided to install some battery operated electromagnetic water meters throughout the scheme on a trial basis. These meters are the latest technology available and we have obtained units from three different suppliers for the trial

The trial meters will be installed over the coming weeks and, with use during this irrigation season, will provide us with some useful information on meter reliability, battery life and costs to change over the meters for the different brands of meter.

UPDATE ON PVWATER CO-OPERATIVE

At last we are able to report to members on some positive moves towards the full establishment of the Co-operative structure for the Pioneer Valley Water Board. The major impetus for this has come from the Independent Review of Queensland Government Boards, Committees and Statutory Authorities (Webbe/Weller Review) that was completed for the Government in 2009. In regard to Water Boards the Review recommended that they be abolished and either transferred to Local Government or move to alternative structures. Our move to an alternative co-operative structure is clearly in line with the recommendation.

The Webbe/Weller Review also recommended that any State Duties associated with restructure of Water Boards. This removes the requirement for the payment of stamp duty for the transfer of the scheme to the Co-operative.

The Queensland Government accepted these recommendations and has now moved to put in place changes to legislation to facilitate the abolishment of Water Boards. This has involved an amendment to the Water Act 2000 to provide for exemption from transfer duty. We now are waiting for advice from Government on the requirements for the existing loans we have with Queensland Treasury Corporation when we move to the Co-operative.

We have received advice from the Government on the detailed administrative requirements that we will have to address to allow for the formal conversion of PVWB into a co-operative under the provisions of the Water Act 2000. We will be advising you further on these requirements over the coming weeks.

After a lengthy recess waiting for decisions from Government we can now get on with the process we began some 5 years ago to convert the irrigation scheme into a co-operative.