



Murray Irrigation

SEASON OPERATING PLAN

July 2023

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1 About the Season Operating Plan

1.1 Purpose

This Season Operating Plan, in conjunction with the Customer Service Charter, form Murray Irrigations' commitment to its customers and describes our service levels. The Season Operating Plan is released on an annual basis in line with the Distribution Rules Policy.

Murray Irrigation will keep customers up to date with any changes to service levels, modes, and key dates as we move through the season.

1.2 Executive Summary

Opening allocations for the 2023/24 season have commenced strongly with customers carrying over close to 50% and the Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) announcing an opening allocation of 55%.

As a result, Murray Irrigation will commence Regular Operation for the 2023-24 season in Mode 3 Normal, providing maximum order flexibility for customers with less than one days' notice for orders.

Dates for guaranteed water deliveries in all operational areas will be published in Talking Water and on the website as planning for the transition out of and into Winter Operations is finalised.

This year, Murray Irrigation's operational focus will be on:

- Developing a comprehensive Drainage Action Plan that seeks to systematically address the recommendations of the external review into the 2022 floods, including engagement with key local stakeholders.
- Consolidating the performance of the channel control system by standardising operating procedures and improving responsiveness with the aim of increasing channel reliability and efficiency.
- Implementing and improving alarm management systems and procedures for the channel control system, so we identify and fix any issues before damage occurs.

1.3 Other useful documents

Customer Service Charter describes Murray Irrigations commitment, the service standards customers can expect, the commitment customers make when dealing with Murray Irrigation, and how services are delivered.

Water Allocation Report summarises customers water account, including water and delivery entitlements, usage, orders by outlet, crop and party and meter readings. Customers can access this report at any time via the Customer Portal.

2 Water Delivery

Murray Irrigation is licensed by the NSW Government to divert water from the Murray River system and deliver it to customers through the company’s channel system.

Murray Irrigation delivers water 365 days a year managing the channel system in either Regular Operation or Winter Operations as per the below diagram.

A four-day advance order is placed every day of the year with WaterNSW for a consistent and reliable water supply to customers with WaterNSW orders delivered through the Mulwala and Wakool offtakes.



2.1 Delivery Year Phases

The phases of Murray Irrigation’s Water Delivery year and how the system will be operated are described below.

Phase	Dates	Customer access to water delivery	Order Notice Period
Regular Operation	from mid-August to mid-April	Water delivery orders are guaranteed based on the Mode of Regular Operation	subject to Mode*
Transition into Winter Operation	mid-April until mid-May	Water delivery orders are guaranteed to a date published in Talking Water and on Murray Irrigation website for each operational area.	4 days
Winter period	May - August	Water delivery orders become non-guaranteed with supply dependent on the maintenance area the customer’s outlet is in.	4 days

		Maintenance areas – non-guaranteed until drained Non-maintenance areas - subject to available volume in the area	
Transition out of Winter Operation	mid-July to mid-August	Water delivery orders are guaranteed from a date published in Talking Water and on Murray Irrigation website for each operational area.	4 days

Murray Irrigation applies the following principles in all water delivery operations:

- At all times, safely operating the system.
- Ensuring clear communication with customers and stakeholders when moving through the phases and modes.
- Endeavouring to satisfy customer requirements within operating parameters.
- Supporting the successful delivery of maintenance activities on the company’s channel system.
- Managing supplementary events to maximise the yield of the bulk licence.
- Efficient operation of the channel system by not filling channels where no intentions or demand are demonstrated.

2.2 Guaranteed and non-guaranteed water delivery

Guaranteed water delivery means the dates we deliver water under Regular Operation, when customers can be sure they will get their order within the notice period timeframe, in line with the [Distribution Rules](#).

Non-guaranteed water delivery means access to water orders is entirely opportunistic and subject to the available water in a customer’s channel section.

2.3 Regular Operation Modes

Regular Operations are undertaken in one of three possible Modes which are influenced by the seasonal conditions and change as our potential water deliveries increase.

The Modes describe the pre-set service levels and priorities that the channel system will be operated in, with the aim of balancing customer flexibility, efficiency, and water savings.

Season type	Mode*	Predicted volume of water allocated to customer accounts	Operating Priority	Order Notice Period
Drought	Mode 1	0 ML – 150,000 ML	water saving critical	6 days
Dry	Mode 2	150,001 ML – 650,000 ML	balance flexibility and water savings	4 days minimum
Normal	Mode 3	650,001 ML – 1,100,000 ML	customer order flexibility	Up to 1 day

2.4 Winter Operations

Winter Operations describes how the channel system will be operated during the winter period. It aims to increase the duration of water ordering accessibility while integrating water delivery opportunities and supporting the three-year rolling maintenance strategy.

The Winter Operations focuses on:

- Reducing the impact of the maintenance strategy on customers
- Assisting in delivering the strategy on time and on budget
- Minimise the volume of water lost to achieve the maintenance activities
- Maximise the duration of water access to customers
- Supporting the successful achievement of the maintenance strategy
- Maximising any potential supplementary event. Providing certainty for customers when placing orders, by advising both ‘guaranteed’ and ‘non- guaranteed’ supply periods for water delivery.

To support the maintenance strategy, the channel system has been divided into maintenance areas and non-maintenance areas based on the three-year cycle.

Customers can find the Operational Area their outlets are in and the years the area is closed for maintenance by checking the “My Outlets” tab on their [Customer Portal](#).

Customers who are in a non-maintenance area can place a non-guaranteed order during Winter Operations.

2.5 Stock and Domestic supply over winter

It is the customer’s responsibility to maintain adequate stock and domestic storage until Regular Operation commences in both maintenance and non-maintenance areas.

3 Maintenance Strategy

The Maintenance Strategy is used by Murray Irrigation to efficiently upgrade and maintain infrastructure across the channel system. The Strategy aims to balance maintenance activities, increase customer access to water during winter and retain water in the system.

The ongoing three-year rolling planned maintenance program means one third of the system is closed for maintenance each year so that customers can access water delivery over winter for two out of every three years.

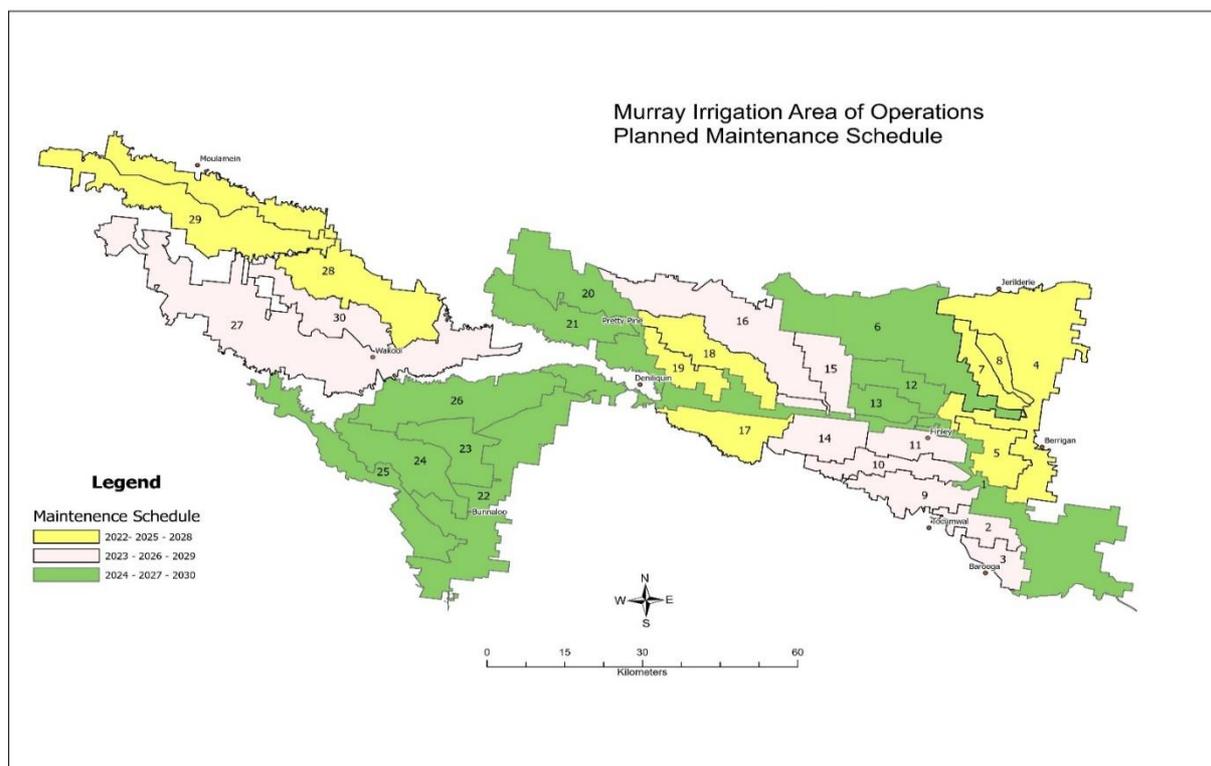
The Maintenance Strategy provides more ordering flexibility for customers whilst maximising efficiencies in our works program. It provides customers in non-maintenance areas the opportunity to irrigate further into the Autumn/Winter period, subject to water levels.

3.1 In season works

Critical unplanned maintenance, known as 'In season works', will occur throughout the year and may be required in non-maintenance areas during winter in some years.

Channels may be closed for maintenance where no customer orders or intentions are registered. Customers are encouraged to participate in Water Intention surveys or place orders as early as possible to aid this process.

A map describing the planned three-year maintenance schedule defined by Operational Area can be seen below. Customers can view the maintenance areas and maintenance year for their outlets via their 'My Outlets' tab on their [Customer Portal](#).



3.2 Drainage Water

Customers may have access to drainage water, as defined in Murray Irrigation's [Distribution Rules](#), at times where critical maintenance activities are required. This could include during Winter Operations or when In-Season Works are undertaken.

Eligible customers who receive drainage water:

- Will be notified and provided with information on how to access drainage water. Any ordered volume and flow are not guaranteed and is considered opportunistic.
- Drainage water delivered to a customer will not be debited from the customer's water allocation account.
- Usage fees still apply to drainage water deliveries, which are also included within the 120% Delivery Entitlement trigger for the Casual Water Usage Fee.
- Customers who are on 'Stop Supply' for financial reasons are not eligible to access drainage water.

3.3 Draining in Maintenance Areas

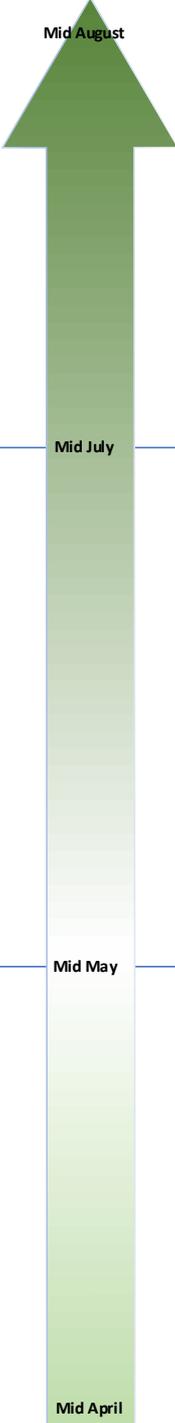
Draining in maintenance areas will be undertaken in the following priority order:

1. Delivering to requested orders
2. Using accredited escapes
3. Providing opportunistic drainage water to customers
4. Non-accredited escapes.

4 Appendix 1 – Regular Operations Diagram

REGULAR OPERATION	
Balancing customer flexibility and water savings	
Potential Deliveries	Operational Parameters
<p>Mode 3 - Normal</p>  <p>1,100,00ML</p> <p>650,00ML</p>	<p>Mode 3 - Normal</p> <p>Level of service - Two changes per day with maximum potential of further order flexibility.</p> <p>Order notice period - Up to one day order notification required.</p> <p>Channel Levels</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full Supply Level (11.38 -11.44) - Most channels will be operated at this level. • Preservation Level(11.21 -11.37) - May be used temporarily when no demand or intentions in the channel section. • Stock and Domestic Level (11.00 -11.20) - May be used temporarily when no demand or intentions in the channel section. • Drought Level (0.00 -10.99) - May be used temporarily when no demand or intentions. <p>Stock and Domestic supply - As normal.</p>
<p>Mode 2 – Dry</p>  <p>150,00ML</p>	<p>Mode 2 – Dry</p> <p>Level of service - Two changes per day with moderate potential of further order flexibility.</p> <p>Order notice period - 4 days minimum order notification required. Where possible orders will be satisfied earlier.</p> <p>Channel Levels</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full Supply Level (11.38 -11.44) - Channel sections with current or future orders will be operated this level. • Preservation Level(11.21 -11.37) - Channel sections upstream of reoccurring orders and channels required for efficient system operation. • Stock and Domestic Level (11.00 -11.20) - Channels with S&D outlets and demand. • Drought Level (0.00 -10.99) - Channels or spurs with no S&D outlets and no water intentions. <p>Stock and Domestic supply - Contact Customer Support if inadequate level for S&D supply.</p>
<p>Mode 1 - Drought</p>  <p>0ML</p>	<p>Mode 1 – Drought</p> <p>Level of service - Two changes per day with minimum potential of further order flexibility.</p> <p>Order notice period - 6 days Order notification required.</p> <p>Channel Levels</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full Supply Level (11.38 -11.44) - Channel sections with current or future orders will operate at this level. • Stock and Domestic Level (11.00 -11.20) - Channels may be operated at this level where S&D water has been requested. • Preservation Level (11.21 -11.37) - Channels that require this level for efficient system operation. • Drought Level (0.00 -10.99) - Small channels or spurs with no S&D outlets and no order intentions may be operated at this level. <p>Stock and Domestic supply - Contact Customer Support to arrange supply. Customers may be required to pump from channels or have water delivered. Channels may be pulsed at intervals.</p>

5 Appendix 2 – Winter Operations Diagram

WINTER OPERATIONS Reduce the impact of the maintenance strategy on customers Assist the strategy to be delivered on time and on budget	
Typical timeframes	Operational Parameters
<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg); font-weight: bold; margin-right: 5px;">Transition out of Winter</div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Mid August</p> </div> </div>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Transition out</u></p> <p>Level of service - Non guaranteed, service level negotiated with Customer Operations. Order notice period - 6 days Order notification required. Water Intentions - Channels with no water intentions will not be supplied or maintained for irrigation. Diversions - When available, used to maximise supplementary events and satisfy demand.</p> <p>Maintenance Areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Channels filled dependant on Regular Operation Mode. Priority to complete required works. <p>Non Maintenance Areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Channels filled dependant on Regular Operation Mode, utilising water in the system. Non guaranteed deliveries utilising water in the system. <p>Stock and Domestic supply - Customer responsibility to maintain adequate stock and domestic storage until regular operations commence.</p>
<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg); font-weight: bold; margin-right: 5px;">Non guaranteed deliveries</div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>Mid July</p> </div> </div>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Non guaranteed water deliveries</u></p> <p>Level of service - Non guaranteed, service level negotiated with Customer Operations. Order notice period - 4 days Order notification required. Water Intentions - Channels with no water intentions will not be supplied or maintained for irrigation. Diversions - If available, used to meet shortfall in supply.</p> <p>Maintenance Areas Channels drained in line with principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Orders Accredited Escapes Opportunistic drainage water Non accredited escapes. <p>Non Maintenance Areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Channels with water intentions to be raised to full supply, utilising water in the system Non guaranteed deliveries utilising water in the system. <p>Stock and Domestic supply - Customers responsibility to maintain adequate stock and domestic storage until regular operations commence.</p>
<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg); font-weight: bold; margin-right: 5px;">Transition in to Winter</div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>Mid May</p> <p>Mid April</p> </div> </div>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Transition in</u></p> <p>Level of service - Two changes per day with a moderate level of flexibility. Order notice period - 4 days Order notification required. Water Intentions - Channel with no water intentions will not be supplied or maintained for irrigation. Diversions - Minimised, used to meet shortfall in supply.</p> <p>Maintenance Areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Channel preparation for maintenance activities Customer orders to be satisfied Opportunistic drainage water may be available. <p>Non Maintenance Areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Air space to be created in channels with no water intentions Guaranteed water deliveries. <p>Stock and Domestic supply - Customers to plan for stock and domestic requirements to prepare for non guaranteed water deliveries.</p>