



Australian Government

WATER for the FUTURE

Irrigation Modernisation Planning Assistance

The well being of Australia's population and environment depend on the good management and wise use of our water resources in the face of a prolonged drought and long-term climate change.

Water for the Future is a 10 year initiative to help Australia prepare for a future with less water. The *Sustainable Rural Water Use and Infrastructure Program* will direct \$5.8 billion towards key rural water projects to improve the efficiency and productivity of water use and management. This will help secure a long-term sustainable future for irrigation regions and return water to the environment.

Water for the Future will provide new impetus to the *National Water Initiative* and strengthen its role as the blueprint for continuing water reform. The key objectives of the *National Water Initiative* are to improve the efficiency of water use and establish clear pathways to return all water sources to environmentally sustainable levels of extraction.

Modernisation plans are an important mechanism to ensure irrigation water providers consider their future business in a strategic, integrated manner.

What are the aims of the Irrigation Modernisation Planning Assistance program?

Irrigation Modernisation Planning Assistance provides an opportunity for irrigation water providers who operate water delivery systems within the Murray-Darling Basin to obtain assistance for the development of a modernisation plan.

This funding is made available with the objective of assisting irrigation water providers to identify and consider a range of options available to increase the efficiency of their irrigation systems and adapt to a future with less water.

How much funding is available?

Under this round, the Australian Government has made up to \$2 million available for eligible projects under this program. This assistance offers eligible applicants funding of up to \$350,000 to complete a modernisation plan.

Assistance is available for planning exercises to be completed within 12 months of entering into a Funding Agreement.



Water channel from the Macquarie River, NSW (D Markovic & DEWHA)

Who can apply?

To be eligible for assistance, an applicant must:

- own or operate infrastructure within the Murray-Darling Basin for the purpose of delivering water to other persons for the primary purpose of agricultural irrigation;
- be a legal entity capable of entering a Funding Agreement with the Australian Government (note: unincorporated associations are not eligible);
- be registered with the Australian Taxation Office for Goods and Services Tax purposes with a valid Australian Business Number (ABN); and
- provide a 20 per cent cash co-contribution to the total cost of the modernisation planning exercise. (Funding from State or other Australian Government funding sources will not be considered as eligible co-contributions.)

Water for the Future is preparing Australia for a future with less water. The 10-year initiative is addressing four key priorities:

- Taking action on climate change
- Using water wisely
- Securing water supplies
- Supporting healthy rivers

What is an Irrigation Modernisation Plan?

The scope and detail of a modernisation plan will vary with the particular characteristics of the irrigation district to which it applies. It is expected however, that a modernisation plan will consider the issues affecting the irrigation district in a strategic, integrated manner, including but not limited to:

- the structure and governance arrangements of the irrigation water provider;
- planned investment in existing irrigation assets in the irrigation district including supply infrastructure through upgrading, replacement or reconfiguration of the assets;
- customer base and relationships with other water users from the same water supply;
- the opportunities to improve knowledge of water use in the system through improvements to metering;
- existing irrigation infrastructure, efficiency of the water delivery system, and opportunities for efficiency improvements, including a quantification of estimated water savings from the options explored;
- the future strategy for the irrigation water provider and the irrigation district in the short term (to 2012) and long term (to 2030).

The modernisation plan can also consider other issues of specific importance to the irrigation district.



Murrumbidgee irrigation, NSW (M Mohell & DEWHA)

MORE INFORMATION

For more information on Irrigation Modernisation Planning Assistance visit: www.environment.gov.au/water/programs or email: waterplanenquiries@environment.gov.au

Alternatively, you can write to:

Irrigation Modernisation Planning Assistance
Water Efficiency Division
Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts
GPO Box 787
Canberra ACT 2601

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