



**Murray Irrigation**

## **SEASON OPERATING PLAN**

July 2025

[www.murrayirrigation.com.au](http://www.murrayirrigation.com.au)

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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 Irrigation's 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

NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) outlook for the 2025/26 season is for low water availability with the forecast for general security being 39% by 1 November with mean conditions.

Customers opening water account balance on 1 July 2025 is 186GL (24%) including DCCEEW's 1% allocation announcement. Combined deliveries for 2025/26 are forecast to be greater than 150GL and approximately 450GL.

As a result, Murray Irrigation will commence Regular Operation for the 2025-26 season in Mode 2 Dry, where moderate flexibility will be provided to customers with up to 4-day order notification required to enable water savings and efficient operation of the system.

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

### 1.3 Other useful documents

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

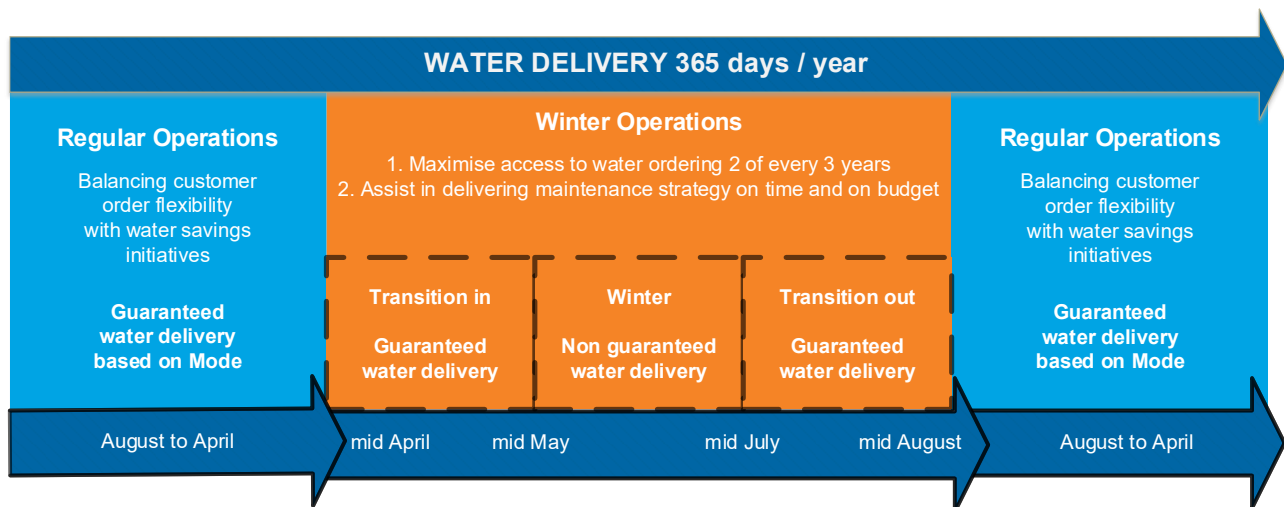
**Water Allocation Report** summarises a customer's water account, including water and delivery entitlements, usage, orders by outlet, crop and party and meter readings. Customers can access this report at any time via the Customer Portal.

## 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 Water Delivery Principles

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

- At all times, safely operating the channel system.
- Ensuring clear communication with customers and stakeholders when moving through the delivery 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 Water Delivery 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	Lodge 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 on Murray Irrigation website and communicated to customers.	4 days
Winter period	May - August	Water delivery orders become non-guaranteed. Supply is dependent on the maintenance area the customer's outlet is in.  In Maintenance areas supply is not guaranteed after the guaranteed dates but opportunistic deliveries may be available as the area is drained.  Delivery in non-maintenance areas subject to the available water in the channel section.	4 days
Transition out of Winter Operation	mid-July to mid-August	Water delivery orders are guaranteed from a date published on Murray Irrigation website and communicated to customers.	4 days

## 2.3 Regular Operation Modes

Regular Operations are undertaken in one of three possible Modes which are influenced by the seasonal conditions and change based on the volume of water in customer accounts which aligns with the predicted water deliveries.

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, delivery efficiency, and water savings.



Season type	Mode*	Predicted volume of water allocated to customer accounts	Operating Priority	Lodge 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 for customers while 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 maintenance program on time and on budget
- Minimise the volume of water lost to achieve the maintenance activities
- Maximise the duration of water access to customers
- Maximise any potential supplementary event
- Provide 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 using the Operational Areas 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 their area is drained 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 Operation, subject to the availability of water in their channel section.

## 2.5 Guaranteed and non-guaranteed water delivery

Guaranteed water delivery dates are the dates customers can be assured they will get their order in full and on time, within the notice period timeframe, in line with the Distribution Rules.

The notice period timeframes will vary dependent on the mode of operation.

Non-guaranteed water delivery means access to water delivery is subject to the available water in a customer’s channel section. Orders may not be delivered in full, and flows may fluctuate based on the water available in the channel section.

## 2.6 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

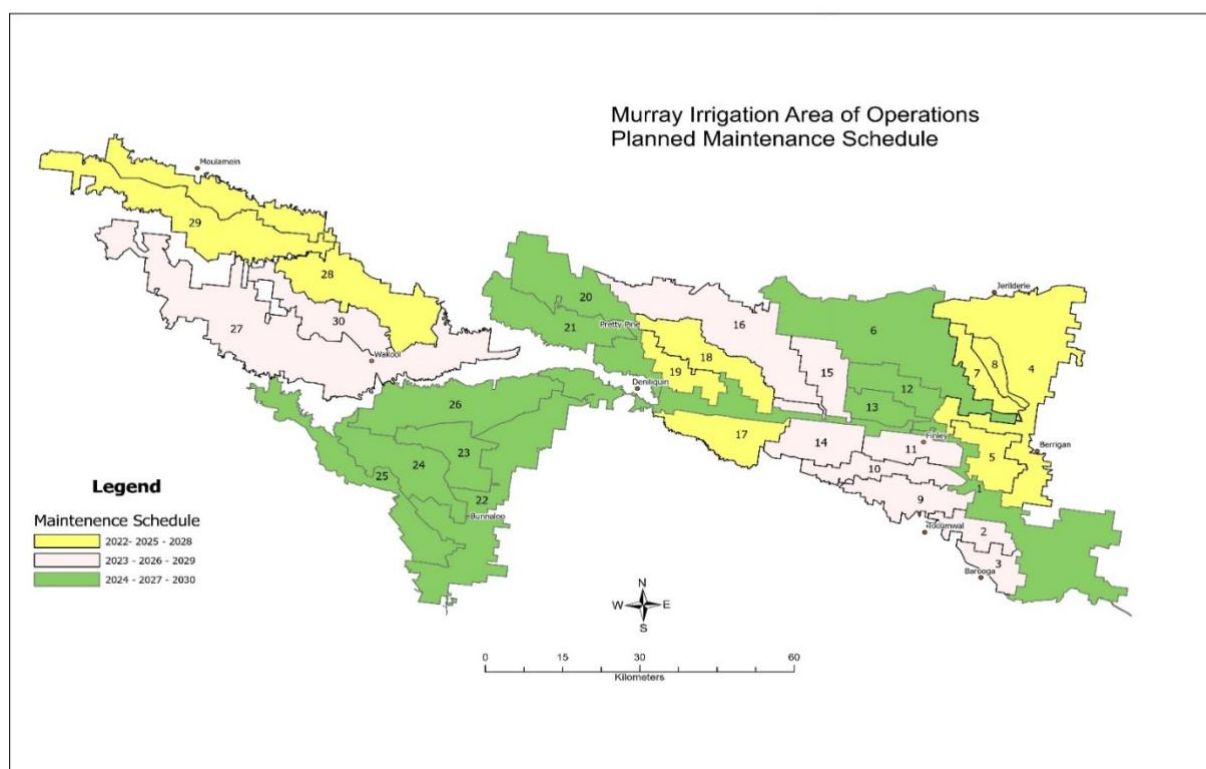
### 3.1 Three-year Maintenance Strategy

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

Murray Irrigation's planned maintenance strategy is implemented as a rolling three-year works program. Planned maintenance activity is conducted on one-third of the system each year enabling customers to access water delivery over winter for two out of every three years, subject to water levels.

The Maintenance Strategy aims to provide greater ordering flexibility for customers whilst maximising efficiencies in our works program.

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](#).



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

### 3.2 In season maintenance 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.

### 3.3 Draining Principles

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.

### 3.4 Drainage Water

In line with priority three above, customers may have access to opportunistic drainage water, at times where maintenance activities are required. This could include during Winter Operations or when In-Season Works are undertaken.

Murray Irrigation's Distribution Rules defines Drainage Water as "water to be drained from the Company's works for the purpose of enabling the Company to carry out maintenance on its works".

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.
- Delivery fees apply to drainage water metered through an outlet and is included within the 120% Delivery Entitlement trigger for the Casual Water Usage Fee.
- Customers who are on 'Stop Supply' are not eligible to access drainage water.




### 3.5 Escape Water

Based on priority four of the Draining Principles above, Escape Water is when a landholder's outlet or an escape structure is used to drain water where critical maintenance activities are required.

If a landholder's outlet is used the metred usage is zeroed out on the landholder's water allocation account.

As a result, Escape Water has no impact on the customer's water allocation account and delivery fees are not charged.

## 4 Appendix 1 – Regular Operations

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

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> <div>Transition out of Winter</div> <div> <div>Mid August</div> <div>Mid July</div> <div>Mid May</div> <div>Mid April</div> </div> </div>		<p><b>Transition out</b></p> <p><b>Level of service</b> - Non guaranteed, service level negotiated with Customer Experience.  <b>Order notice period</b> - 6 days Order notification required.  <b>Water Intentions</b> - Channels with no water intentions will not be supplied or Maintained at irrigation levels.  <b>Diversions</b> - When available, used to maximise supplementary events and satisfy demand.</p> <p><b>Maintenance Areas</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Channels filled dependant on Regular Operation Mode for the new season.</li> <li>Priority to complete required works.</li> </ul> <p><b>Non Maintenance Areas</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Channels filled dependant on Regular Operation Mode, utilising water in the system.</li> <li>Non guaranteed deliveries utilising water in the system.</li> </ul> <p><b>Stock and Domestic supply</b> - Customer responsibility to maintain adequate stock and domestic storage until regular operations commence.</p>
		<p><b>Non guaranteed water deliveries</b></p> <p><b>Level of service</b> - Non guaranteed, service level negotiated with Customer Experience.  <b>Order notice period</b> - 4 days Order notification required.  <b>Water Intentions</b> - Channels with no water intentions will not be supplied or maintained for irrigation.  <b>Diversions</b> - If available, used to meet shortfall in supply.</p> <p><b>Maintenance Areas</b>  Channels drained in line with principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Orders</li> <li>Accredited Escapes</li> <li>Opportunistic drainage water</li> <li>Non accredited escapes.</li> </ul> <p><b>Non Maintenance Areas</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Channels with water intentions raised to full supply, utilising water in the system</li> <li>Non guaranteed deliveries utilising water in the system.</li> </ul> <p><b>Stock and Domestic supply</b> - Customer's responsibility to maintain adequate stock and domestic storage until regular operations commence.</p>
		<p><b>Transition in</b></p> <p><b>Level of service</b> - Two changes per day with a moderate level of flexibility, depending on Mode.  <b>Order notice period</b> - 4 days Order notification required, depending on Mode.  <b>Water Intentions</b> - Channels with no water intentions will not be maintained at irrigation levels.  <b>Diversions</b> - Minimised, used to meet shortfall in supply.</p> <p><b>Maintenance Areas</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Channel preparation for maintenance activities</li> <li>Customer orders to be satisfied</li> <li>Opportunistic drainage water may be available.</li> </ul> <p><b>Non Maintenance Areas</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Air space to be created in channels with no water intentions</li> <li>Guaranteed water deliveries.</li> </ul> <p><b>Stock and Domestic supply</b> - Customers to plan for stock and domestic requirements to prepare for non guaranteed water deliveries.</p>