

# Optional preferential voting



**Murray Irrigation**

Murray Irrigation Limited uses an optional preferential voting system for its Member Director elections, as required by the company's Constitution.

This means that shareholders (also known as members) have the choice to express a preference for **one**, **some**, or **all** of the candidates in a ballot.

In other words, shareholders need indicate only a first preference for their vote to be valid (see *example 1*). All further preferences are optional (see *examples 2 & 3*).

## BALLOT CARD

*Example 1*

- ☐ Nominee A
- ☒ 1 Nominee B
- ☐ Nominee C

## BALLOT CARD

*Example 2*

- ☒ 2 Nominee A
- ☒ 1 Nominee B
- ☐ Nominee C

## BALLOT CARD

*Example 3*

- ☒ 2 Nominee A
- ☒ 1 Nominee B
- ☒ 3 Nominee C

## Counting of votes

Murray Irrigation's system of vote counting (which was approved by shareholders in 2002) is consistent with systems previously used in NSW Local Government elections (see *Local Government (Elections) Regulations 1998* (NSW) sch 1).

Under an optional preferential voting system, candidates must achieve an 'absolute majority' to be elected (that is, 50 percent plus one of the formal votes cast) or they must be the last candidate standing after the distribution of preferences.

The counting of votes is conducted over respective 'rounds' for each vacancy. First preference votes are counted and, unless an absolute majority is established, the candidate with the fewest first preference votes is excluded from that round of voting. The next preference of each shareholder who voted for the excluded candidate is then allocated to the remaining candidates. This process is repeated until a candidate with an absolute majority is established for that particular round. If a shareholder who voted for an excluded candidate did not express a next preference, that vote is 'exhausted' and it is not distributed to any of the remaining candidates.

The candidate who achieves an absolute majority (or is the last candidate standing after the distribution of preferences) secures the vacancy for that round of voting and is elected.

From there, the next round of counting commences, with the excluded candidates from the first round included. For obvious reasons, the successful candidate from the previous round is excluded and the next preferences of the shareholders who voted for the successful candidate are allocated to the remaining candidates.

As there are two vacancies in Murray Irrigation's 2025 Member Director election, there will be two vote-counting 'rounds'.



# Murray Irrigation

## Example

To illustrate how this system of voting works, let's say that four candidates - Nominee A, Nominee B, Nominee C and Nominee D - are up for election to fill two vacancies.

Let's also say that 2,000 formal votes are cast. Therefore, to fill the first vacancy, one of the candidates must win at least 1,001 votes (or must be the last candidate standing after the distribution of preferences) to be elected.

Of the first preference votes, Nominee A receives 900 votes, Nominee B receives 200 votes, Nominee C receives 600 votes and Nominee D receives 300 votes. As the candidate with the fewest votes, Nominee B is excluded and the second preferences of Nominee B's voters are distributed. Of Nominee B's 200 votes, 150 voters gave their second preference to Nominee A. So, in this example, Nominee A now has 1,050 votes. Nominee A has achieved an absolute majority and wins the first vacancy.

A second round of counting is then conducted to fill the second vacancy. Nominee B is included again, while Nominee A is excluded and the second preferences of Nominee A's voters are distributed to the remaining three candidates. The same process is repeated until a second candidate achieves an absolute majority (or is the last candidate standing after the distribution of preferences) and claims the second vacancy.

## How many votes each shareholder has

In a ballot, each shareholder has one vote for each landholding of which the shareholder is the registered proprietor (as required by Murray Irrigation's Constitution). This is the case irrespective of the number of shares held by the shareholder, and includes individual landholdings which were amalgamated after 3 March 1995 (i.e. shareholders have one vote for each landholding which may have been amalgamated into one parcel of land).

As required by the company's Constitution, a shareholder voting who is entitled to two or more votes:

1. need not cast all their votes; and
2. may cast their votes in different ways.

Therefore, each individual vote is allocated a unique login for electronic voting. These unique login details will be outlined in letters from Murray Irrigation's independent service provider, Vero Voting.

This separation of voting details ensures that shareholders are able to cast their individual votes however they choose.

For more information on Murray Irrigation's Director Elections and how the voting system works, email [companysecretary@murrayirrigation.com.au](mailto:companysecretary@murrayirrigation.com.au) or call **1300 138 265**