

NSW SUSTAINING THE BASIN *Irrigated farm modernisation*

Update Bulletin 20

June 2014

This bulletin provides updates on the NSW Sustaining the Basin: Irrigated Farm Modernisation (STBIFM) project. This project is funded by the Australian Government's 'Sustainable Rural Water Use and Infrastructure' Program.

The bulletin will keep interested stakeholders informed of key dates and activities for the duration of the project. It will also alert you to opportunities for training and learning more about emerging issues and technologies.

DPI encourages you to be involved and stay informed using this service. You can, of course, unsubscribe at any time.

For more detailed information on any aspects of the project please send an email to IFM.info@dpi.nsw.gov.au or visit www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/info/sustainingthebasin

Dates announced for IFWUEA workshops

STBIFM is now in the IFWUEA development stage and DPI has organised a series of workshops across the project region for irrigators eligible for Round 3 and their irrigation consultants to understand the new requirements.

All participators and their consultants planning to undertake an IFWUEA are encouraged to attend.

Workshop dates

Tuesday 22 July	9.00-11.00 am	Smithurst Meeting Room, next to Gunnedah Town Hall, 144 Conadilly Street, Gunnedah
Tuesday 22 July	3.00-5.00 pm	Wee Waa Bowling Club, 69 Alma Street, Wee Waa
Wednesday 23 July	9.00-11.00 am	Lucerne Room, Goondiwindi Training & Technology Centre, 15-21 Russell St Goondiwindi

Key dates to remember

- 29 August – close of IFWUEAs
- 17 October – close of Round 3

Time is running out to get an Irrigated Farm Water Use Efficiency Assessment (IFWUEA) done so don't delay.

Contact your [local project contact](#) or irrigation consultant to discuss ASAP.

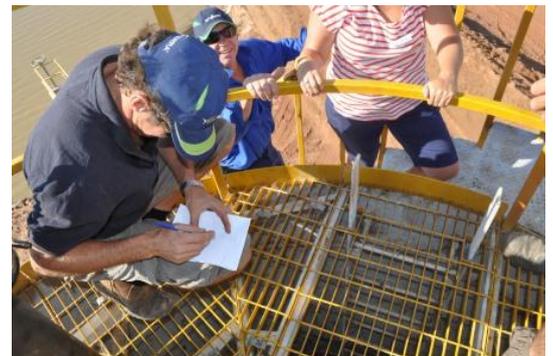
[Janelle Montgomery](#), Border Rivers, 0428640990

[Bill Williamson](#), Namoi Valley, downstream of Narrabri, 0427660618

[Stuart Bray](#), Namoi, upstream of Narrabri, 0409837833

[Peter Smith](#), Peel and upper Namoi, 0411128437

[Edward Joshua](#), Macquarie, 0428285987



Changes to IFWUEAs for Round 3

Completing an IFWUEA of on-farm irrigation losses is now a prerequisite of applying for infrastructure funding.

The IFWUEA incentive available through STBIFM covers 80% of the costs to a maximum of \$2000 per farming business for preparing the IFWUEA.

The purpose of the IFWUEA in Round 3 is to identify where on-farm irrigation water losses occur and provide a quantification of those losses.

This information will then assist irrigators to develop a funding proposal for infrastructure modernisation which addresses the on-farm irrigation water losses within their enterprise.

The IFWUEA will become a component of any infrastructure funding application and will be used during the assessment of a subsequent infrastructure application to ensure proposals address losses identified in the IFWUEA.

DPI is obligated to return value for money to the Australian Government in recovering water and the new IFWUEA process strengthens the due diligence of achieving this while assisting irrigators to make real savings on farm.

Not convinced of the benefits of using an IFWUEA to plan?

The professional advice provided through the IFWUEA process has assisted many current participants to determine the potential for on-farm irrigation modernisation on their farm.

IFWUEAs to date. . .

Completed	Total
Number of IFWUEAs completed	88
Total area of irrigated land (ha)	17,949
Potential total annual water savings (ML) identified in IFWUEAs	15,366

*That's 15.3 GL of water savings or **'new' water that could be used for extra production.***



Robert Hoogers, STBIFM IFWUEA Coordinator discusses the level of investigations required for a sub-surface drip project funded in Round1 with Harley Crawford of "Brigendoon" near Narromine. Image: A. McCaffery

Robert Hoogers, IFWUEA Co-ordinator for Round 3 says the feedback from participants in Rounds 1 and 2 regarding the value of their IFWUEA has been very positive.

"By far, most of the successful projects were underpinned by good information from completing an IFWUEA."

"Some of the participants actually spent a lot more than the incentive provided to complete the investigations they felt were necessary to develop their projects."

"It was important for them to make sure everything was optimised in the planning to reduce the risk involved," Mr Hoogers said.

The take home message is . . .

Talk to the experts and seek their advice – every situation is different

Every situation is different and deciding what is needed starts with planning and good advice.

Working out where on the on-farm losses are occurring and quantifying them provides a base from which projects can be developed to address these losses.

Why use a consultant?

Craig Saunders and Robert Gracie didn't have the benefit of an IFWUEA incentive but they both sing the praises of their irrigation consultants.

Craig Saunders, an irrigator from St George in QLD, supports the concept of seeking professional advice.

Mr Saunders (pictured right), who has been developing his property with a pipe through the bank (PTB) irrigation system, says it's imperative to talk to the experts when you have a problem.

"If you don't know what's happening with the water on your field, then employ someone to help you."

"It's the best thing I ever did," Mr Saunders said.

Mr Saunders employed a hydrologist to help design an irrigation system that addressed his in-field water losses. These losses were creating waterlogging problems and costing productivity.

"The consultant is not employed all the time now but we have a conversation as we go along and we win with both water savings and increased yield," Mr Saunders said.

[Watch](#) the Craig Saunders story.

Same irrigation system, but different

Robert Gracie of 'Katoota' (pictured below) also near St George in QLD has also used professional advice to develop his system of smaller diameter pipes to water his fields of red brown earth more frequently.

The main difference between Robert Gracie's 'Katoota' and Craig Saunders 'Teoh' is that Mr Saunders is using 250mm pipe every 12 metres, and Robert is running a 50mm pipe every metre on his red soils, and every two metres on his black soils.

The key to Robert Gracie's irrigation design is that he can manipulate the infiltration rates to suit his soil type and minimise his irrigation losses.

[Watch](#) the Robert Gracie story.



Craig Saunders, 'Teoh', St George QLD says if you don't know what is happening with the water on your farm then employ someone to help you. Image S. Priest

What should I do now?

Eligible irrigators for Round 3 should have received an IFWUEA information pack in the mail.

The **Warranty Letter** included needs to be returned to DPI ASAP to initiate the IFWUEA process. DPI will not accept IFWUEAs where the warranty has not been submitted.

Irrigators **must** engage a suitably certified or accredited irrigation consultant to prepare and/or certify their IFWUEA before submission to DPI by **29 August 2014**.

Currently, eligible participants in STBIFM R3 (i.e. those in the Lower Namoi or NSW Border Rivers water management areas) who have a valid Project Number **must** also submit a certified IFWUEA before submitting an infrastructure application in Round 3.

All previous work undertaken by former Approved Irrigation Consultants (AICs) in Rounds 1 and 2 will be accepted by DPI.

DPI advises all eligible irrigators who are unsure if their IFWUEA meets the standards or that their irrigation consultant holds the appropriate industry certification to contact:

[Robert Hoogers](#), 0427 208 613.

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