



Thursday, 1 May 2014

Barmah Choke restrictions are likely to return

NSW Water Commissioner David Harriss today reminded all water users in the NSW Murray Valley that the relaxation of the trade restriction around the Barmah Choke was a temporary measure and to be aware that restrictions are likely to resume in the future.

Mr Harriss said that the trade restriction had been relaxed in 2007 to assist water users during severe water shortage and conditions have allowed the relaxation to continue in recent years

Mr Harriss reminded water users that the Government amended the water management zones some years ago, defining what is considered to be above and below the Barmah Choke.

“All licences held within Murray Irrigation Limited are classed as being in the *upper management zone*, that is above the Choke, whilst the *lower management zone* or below the Choke are licences held in the Murray River at Picnic Point, the Edward – Wakool River system and Gulpa, Colligen and Neimur systems,” Mr Harriss said.

“Some property owners could access water from MIL canals **and** natural rivers downstream of the Choke and could readily trade from their MIL holding to their river account.

“However, some of these rivers are now classified as downstream of the Choke, meaning that their trade from MIL would now be across the Choke and subject to restriction when these are required.”

‘Since 2007, the relaxed trade rules around the Barmah Choke have enabled water to be traded from upstream to downstream of the Choke. However, the circumstances allowing this continued relaxation are reviewed regularly and water users need to be aware that there is always the potential for the restriction to be reinstated.’

“With Menindee now in NSW control and supply to South Australia coming from water held in Hume and Dartmouth dams, trade restrictions may become necessary to meet peak demands downstream of the Barmah Choke.

All trade applicants must consider the potential for restriction when applying to trade from upstream, including from Murray Irrigation Limited, to a point below the Choke.

Ends

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