



The Place To Be

# Media Release

From the Department of Sustainability and Environment

---

Monday 4 July 2005

## **DSE COMMITTED TO MAINTAINING SECURITY OF SUPPLY**

The Department of Sustainability & Environment (DSE) has reiterated its commitment to work closely with irrigators on the Broken System to ensure the security of the existing water supply prior to the decommissioning of Lake Mokoan.

Last week's irrigators meeting in Benalla provided an opportunity for irrigators to hear from members of Lake Mokoan Irrigation Advisory Committee and DSE regarding the work that has been jointly undertaken to date.

DSE North East Regional Director, Kevin Ritchie, said consultation carried out with the community prior to the granting of the Bulk Entitlement for the Broken System in December 2004, had determined a reliability of supply of licence volume of 80 percent.

"This level of reliability was also confirmed during consultation with irrigators and the community when the study of the options for the future of Lake Mokoan was carried out."

Mr Ritchie said subsequent to these processes, GMW and DSE had undertaken a model re-calibration to better reflect recent improvements to water delivery management, allocation policy and operational rules implemented during the drought period.

The result was a re-estimation of the reliability of supply over the past 112 years of record to 91 percent.

Broken irrigators have received 100 percent of their water right ever since Lake Mokoan was commissioned in the 1970s.

The modelling replicates this but also shows prior to that irrigators would have received less than their water right for nine years due to drought, even if Mokoan had been in operation.

"The most significant impact on reliability was the extreme and extended drought period during the 1940s, which would have left both Lake Nillahcootie and Lake Mokoan dry for several years," Mr Ritchie said.

"There have been repeated assurances by Government to the local community that the security of supply to irrigators in the Broken system will be maintained," Mr Ritchie said.

Following last week's meeting there is an understanding that Government and irrigators will continue to work together to identify suitable off-sets to maintain the current security of supply.

"DSE is committed to working with irrigators to ensure that projects outlined in the Government's White Paper 'Our Water Our Future' provide certainty for the local irrigation industry," Mr Ritchie said.

-ENDS--