

## Lower Darling Options Analysis

# Stakeholder Brief

Dates: 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> of August 2018

### Scope of the Lower Darling Options Analysis Project

The Department of Industry – Water has identified the need for a strategic analysis of the feasibility of a range of options to address water security issues in the Lower Darling catchment. This analysis will identify options which warrant further analysis and options which should be excluded from further investigation.

Multiple factors contribute to long-term water security concerns in the Lower Darling. One is the proposed reconfiguration of the Menindee Lakes as part of the Menindee Lakes Water Savings Project (the Project) put forward by the NSW Government as a supply measure proposal under the Sustainable Diversion Limit Adjustment Mechanism (SDLAM) for the Murray-Darling Basin Plan.

The Project is a package of proposed operational changes and infrastructure works that together will deliver water efficiency savings, better river operations, and improved environmental outcomes.

Early consultation with stakeholders and the community has raised a number of concerns which need to be addressed as part of the Project to better understand potential impacts on the Lower Darling.

### Deloitte Advisory – independent analysis

The Department has engaged Deloitte to conduct an independent analysis of the costs, benefits and feasibility of a range of options to address water supply changes in the Lower Darling catchment resulting from the Menindee Lakes Water Savings Project.

This analysis, which will include hydrologic modelling, will identify which of the options warrant further analysis and which option(s) should be excluded from further investigation.

The level of existing analysis to date on each of these options varies, and the Department understands that challenges exist with all options.

The options will need to be considered against the overall objectives of capacity and reliability of water supply, including quality; affordability; and efficiency.

Deloitte's analysis will determine the feasibility of the identified options, with an intention of identifying option(s) which warrant further investigation.

It is envisaged that the shortlist of options identified through this project would proceed to a detailed business case process.

### Scope of the Lower Darling Water Supply Report

Deloitte is in the early stages of its engagement with the Department of Industry - Water. At this stage, Deloitte's scope includes:

- Identifying which of the options warrant further analysis and which option(s) should be excluded from further investigation
- Assess the benefits and the feasibility based on engineering requirements
- Assess hydrological risks using available models
- Initial cost analysis of the options
- Identification of any major issues which may impact on deliverability or the ability to obtain necessary approvals under the *Environment Planning and Assessment Act 1979* or other key legislation

Deloitte's report will be delivered to the Department in September 2018.

## Purpose of this meeting

The purpose of this meeting relates to seeking input on a number of long term water supply options for Lower Darling users, including:

- Introduce an initial six water supply options for Lower Darling water users
- Identify any additional options or alterations to existing options that should be considered in the report
- Understand stakeholder views on the scope, risks or opportunities of each of the options being analysed.

## Current list of options

The following is the initial list of six options that have been identified for consideration:

1. Structural adjustment package for the buy-back of water entitlements adversely impacted by the Menindee Lakes Water Savings Project. This option would be supplemented by one of the following infrastructure solutions:
  - a) Pipelines to Pooncarie, down from Weir 32 and up from the Murray River, to maintain stock and domestic water supply
  - b) A pipeline from the Murray River up to Weir 32 to maintain stock and domestic water supply
2. Infrastructure works to create more on-farm storage
3. Infrastructure works for in-stream regulators, which includes the following two sub-options:
  - a) Four in-stream weirs along the Darling River at Ashvale, Jamesville, Ringwood and downstream of the Great Darling Anabranh
  - b) The four in-stream weirs proposed in 3(a), above, and 13 Tallywalka boreholes
4. Pipeline to connect Pooncarie to the Wentworth to Broken Hill (W2BH) Pipeline
5. Pipeline infrastructure work to service all entitlements and users, which includes the following two sub-options:
  - a) Pipelines to Pooncarie down from Weir 32 and up from the Murray River to supply all entitlements and users
  - b) Pipeline from the Murray River up to Weir 32 to supply all entitlements and users.
6. Re-scoping the Menindee Lakes Water Savings Project to maintain a drought reserve, maintaining the Lower Darling's long term reliance on the Menindee Lakes system, which would likely have flow-on impacts to the water savings that could be achieved.

## Key questions for stakeholders attending consultation

1. Please confirm the stakeholders that you represent.
2. Have you previously been involved in developing options or discussed the presented options to supply Lower Darling water users an alternate solution?
3. Are you familiar with the Menindee Lakes Water Saving Project and the preliminary Business Case that was publicly released?
4. Can you confirm the water entitlements you hold and identify your access location on the map?
5. Are there any additional options, or alterations to existing options, that you believe should be considered within this report?
6. What are key considerations for each of the proposed options?
  - a. How would the proposed option impact your stakeholder group?
  - b. What are the risks or opportunities of the options?

## Other opportunities for input

The Department will provide further opportunities for input and feedback following this initial consultation period, including follow up phone calls, email correspondence and ongoing consultations from Department of Industry – Water representatives.