

IREC Chairman Report

IREC Annual General Meeting – 2008

Another year has quickly passed, however the “dryness” continues to stay with us. It is surprising to see the number of rice crops being grown in the MIA with general security allocations at 12%.

The year began with Bryan Clark, our Executive Officer, resigning to take up a position with the Grain Growers Association. Bryan left the organisation in a more organised state than when he began and was able to introduce new sources of funding during his time with us. In view of our declining income base and member activity the executive instigated a strategic planning meeting facilitated by Scott Vaessen from Booth Associates.

Following on from this Marg Andreazza was employed as part time Executive Officer to liaise with the IREC executive member groups about the future of IREC and organise the continuing IREC functions. Marg, together with Hayley, organised a very successful Irrigators Showcase dinner as well as the Irrigation GRDC Update which followed on the next day.

The IREC executive spent much time deliberating the future function of IREC and advertised widely for comment from their members. The September meeting of the executive agreed to the motion listed in the agenda which will be voted on later this afternoon.

A number of projects which IREC has been managing have been completed which will allow Hayley to do some part time work with Murrumbidgee Horticulture Council. We also continue to provide the secretarial services and financial management of the Irrigated Cropping Forum.

Our final three employees from the rice research program (Colin Dunn, David Troidahl and Glen Warren), finished working with NSW DPI in July after many years of loyal service. Felicity Pritchard who was employed as the Oilseed Development Officer under a GRDC funded program administered by IREC completed that project in September.

2009 will mark the 70th year since the inception of IREC. There would be very few farmers who have been operating longer. The resolution to be put to this meeting is a reflection of the changes which have occurred in recent times in the weather and within organisations which service irrigators and indeed with irrigators themselves. Irrigators are well served by their commodity groups, however I do believe that issues will arise in the future which will require a united approach across groups which IREC can effectively achieve.

I would like to thank the executive, the sub committees, our sponsors, Lucy Kealey, Murrumbidgee Irrigation for our premises, and all who helped out with IREC this year. Hayley and Marg have combined well as a team this year and we wish Marg all the best with her studies next year. We are very fortunate to have Hayley in the office and I would like to thank her sincerely for her efforts on behalf of both IREC and ICF.

Peter Draper
Chairman