

The Victorian Mallee Irrigation Incentive Guideline

2023



Mallee Catchment Management Authority
Looking after our environment together
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“Mallee Irrigation Incentive Program”

In partnership with Mallee Catchment Management Authority, Agriculture Victoria and Victorian Mallee Irrigators.

1. Introduction and Overview

The Mallee Irrigation Incentive Program is a specific program for irrigators in the Mallee Catchment Management Authority (CMA) region. The program aims to encourage better water use efficiency on-farm through improved irrigation management, with result in improved farm production while minimising/reducing impacts on the environment

This program is part of an integrated package of measures to encourage improved planning management of irrigation and drainage systems, and the development of information resources.

It provides financial assistance for improved irrigation management, skills development, system improvements and planning. All financial incentives are based on cost sharing arrangements between the Mallee Irrigation Incentive Program and irrigators.

This project complements and builds on existing work occurring through the Mallee Irrigation Region Land and Water Management Plan, <https://www.malleecma.com.au/strategies/>.

We recommend all people participating in the incentive program consider their investment as part of a complete business plan.

2. Disclaimer

Growers taking advantage of this opportunity are advised of the follow:

- Eligibility Disputes: The final decision on growers' eligibility for incentive payments rests with the Mallee CMA.
- Funding Constraints: Funding is only guaranteed to irrigators who apply for and receive a Letter of Offer on Mallee CMA letter head and enter into a Contract.
- Liability for Loss: No Liability for Loss, however arising, will be accepted by the State of Victoria, its servants, contractors, or by any person connected with the Mallee CMA for any costs, loss or damage incurred by any applicant for incentive payments under the said Program, where an incentive for any reason has or has not been granted.
- Fraudulent Claims: Providing false and fraudulent receipts is considered a criminal offence. If you are found to have made a fraudulent claim you will sacrifice your original claim and the ability to make any further claims with the Mallee Irrigation Incentive Program. Where it is established that landholders have made a claim using false accounts, Agriculture Victoria together with Mallee CMA may initiate proceedings to recover amounts paid together with exemplary or punitive damages.
- Goods and Services Tax (GST) Registration and Australian Business Number (ABN): It is strongly recommended that irrigators provide the Mallee CMA with their ABN and indicate whether or not they have registered for GST. This will ensure the full incentive amount is paid to the claimant. In the event that the irrigator does not provide an ABN, Mallee CMA will be compelled to withhold 48.5% of the incentive payable unless an exemption is provided.
- Review of Guidelines: These eligibility guidelines may be subject to review by the Mallee CMA at any time and without notice.

The applicant agrees that they, entirely at their own risk, use the information obtained from any certified irrigation designers, registered soil surveyors or other approved services or product provided by any person selected by the applicant from a list provided by any Agriculture Victoria Officers or any other authority in the course of making an application. To the full extent permissible at law the Mallee CMA and its agents excludes all warranties express or implied regarding any such services or products. The applicant acknowledges that Mallee CMA and its agents will not be liable for any special, direct, indirect or consequential damages.

3. Eligibility Criteria

Please read through this first to make sure you are eligible for the incentives.

To be eligible:

- the property (Definition: A property is defined as an area of land serviced by one pump, headworks or outlet; or, is under one title (whichever is the larger) is located in the Mallee CMA region - this includes all irrigators from the Nyah Irrigation District through to Lindsay Point on the South Australian Border and Murrayville areas;
- the applicant must be registered with the Australian Tax Office as a primary producer;
- the land has been irrigated and/or licensed and has been irrigated for at least 10 years;
- the applicant may be ineligible if works and services have been started prior to receiving a formal Mallee CMA Letter of Offer and entering into a Management Agreement.
- works that are fully funded or partially funded through other incentive/rebate programs including the Australian Government's On-Farm Irrigation Efficiency Program will not be eligible.
- incentive applicants must adhere to and provide evidence of adherence to the processes, conditions and standards as described in these guidelines or the works will become ineligible and you will no longer receive an incentive payment.

Funds are not guaranteed until a formal Mallee CMA Letter of Offer has been received and the Management Agreement or Contract has been signed by the irrigator and returned to the Mallee CMA. Funding is also subject to a mid-work inspection, a final inspection and verification process.

Please note:

- Funding for Irrigation System Upgrades (active flood/furrow irrigation to pressurised systems) is limited and eligibility will be based on salinity benefit of the upgrade.
 - **Salinity criteria (SIC):** applications from high salinity impact zones and low impact zone L4 will be eligible, while applications from the L1, L2 or L3 zones will need to meet the existing \$800/t criteria using the salt load calculator.

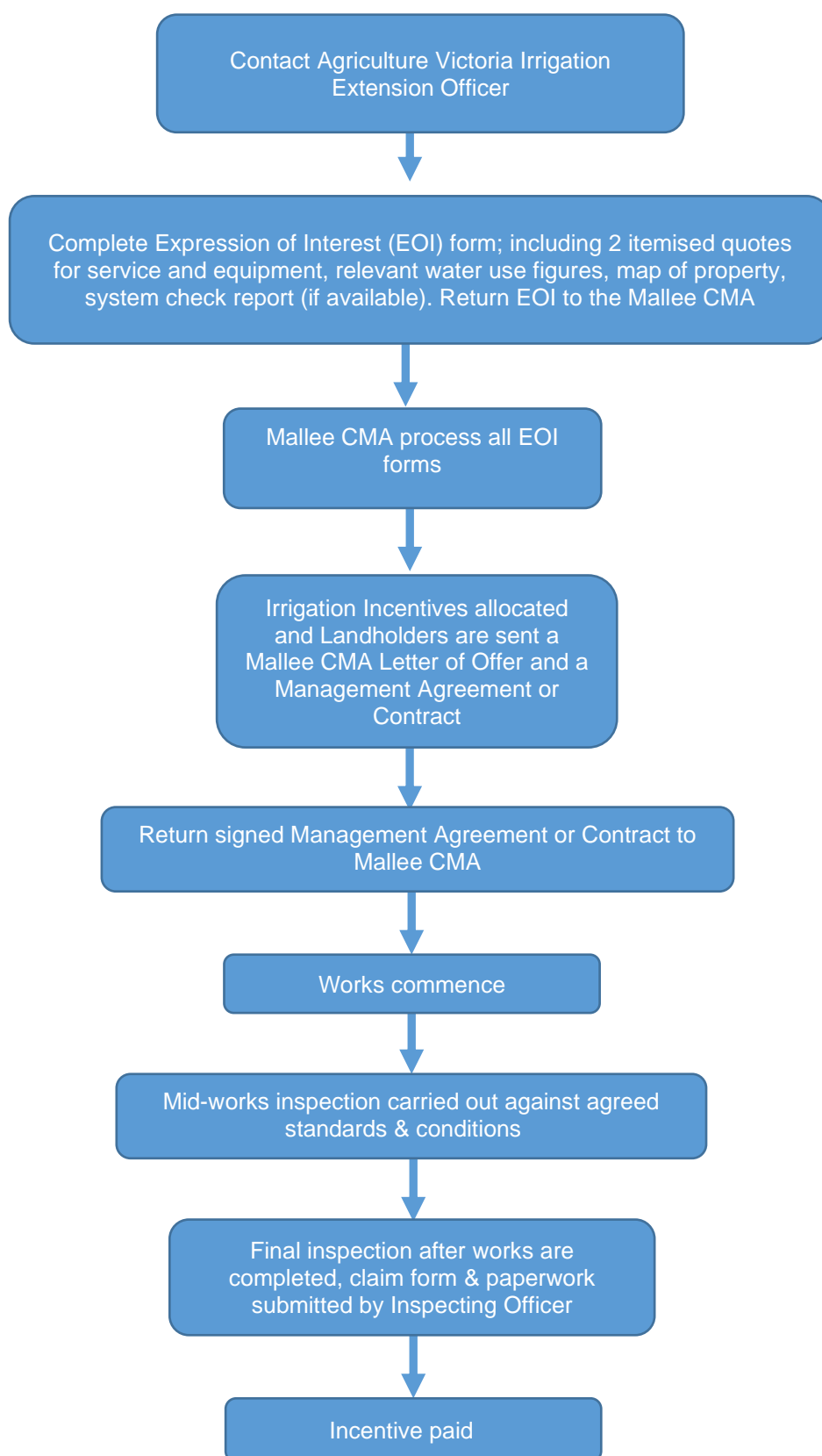
If you find you are not eligible for this irrigation incentive program contact the Agriculture Victoria Irrigation Extension Officer on (03) 5051 4500 to find out if you are eligible for any other available funding.

Other specific eligibility criteria and requirements apply to some of the incentives. Please read the guidelines for each incentive you are claiming for.

Please note:

- **All Expressions of Interest (Eoi) applications are assessed against salinity benefits and water use efficiency criteria.**
- **Eoi applications may be lodged at any time throughout the year, there is no opening or closing timeframes. Only lodge an Eoi when ready to do the works.**
- **Eois that do not include all required information will not be considered.**
- **Eois will only be considered with two (2) itemised independent quotes for works that meet the guidelines;**
- **Applicants are responsible for ensuring quotes and all relevant information is received by the Mallee CMA.**
- **Incentives are not transferrable between properties or between incentive types within the property, if the property changes hands the agreement is considered cancelled and the new property owner must submit a new EOI application.**

4. Mallee Irrigation Incentive Program Process



5. Checklist of Details required to complete the Expression of Interest (EOI) application form

- Name
- Address
- Property location (including block number and street location, Crown Allotment and Section number; and, Lot and Plan number)
- Property plan detailing the location of intended works (example below)
- Property size and size of area to be improved
- Australian Business Number (ABN)
- Current irrigation system and scheduling method
- Irrigation records for the previous 3 financial years, each individual irrigation is required.

Irrigation Records

Lower Murray Water customers can obtain water use records by going to the Lower Murray Water website, water ordering page:

- 1) <https://waterorder.lmw.vic.gov.au/default1.asp>
- 2) For customers within the pumped irrigation districts, click on the 'Log in' link
 - a. Enter your outlet number and PIN as normal when ordering water and login
 - b. Click on 'meter readings' at the top of the page
 - c. Click on 'previous years' to find the correct years readings and print.
- 3) For private diverters click on 'Usage, Trading and ABA Information' and follow the links.

Property Plans


Maps can be hand drawn (see example following) or alternatively those irrigators with computers and access to the internet can produce maps by following these instructions:

- 1) Go to <https://mapshare.vic.gov.au/mapsharevic/>
- 2) Read the terms and conditions and if you agree, accept the conditions by clicking on 'Agree'
- 3) Navigate to your property.

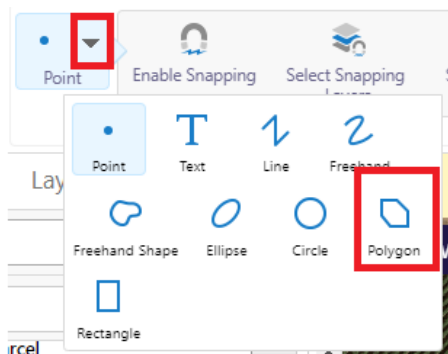


- 4) Under "Tools" tab click Layer list 
- 5) On the left-hand side of the page under layers, scroll to Base Maps and click + and tick on Vicmap Aerial Imagery and tick off Vicmap Cartographical. Also tick on Vicmap Transport labels.



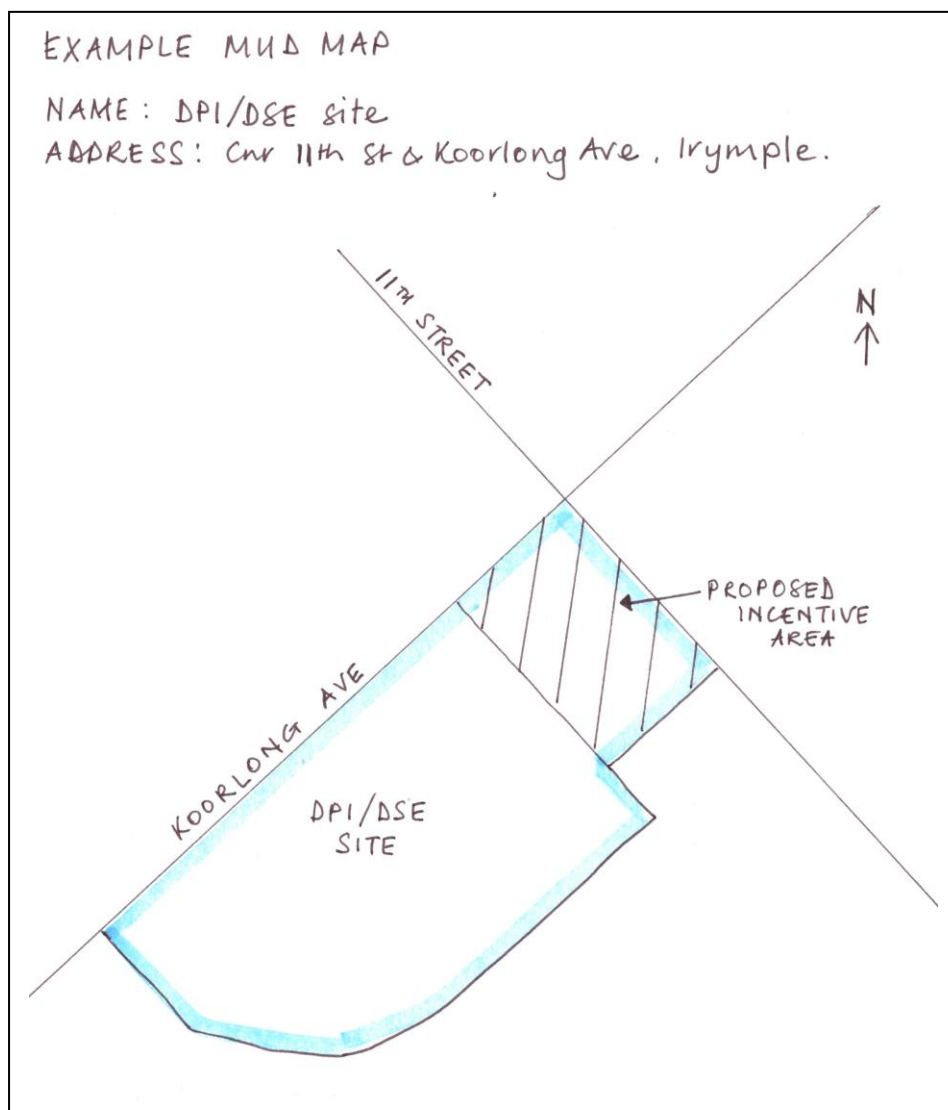
- 6) Click tab "Drawing" for Scheduling Equipment click on point  and place a point in the location of the proposed equipment, Label each by right clicking on point and click **to** add some text.
- 7) For Soil survey or Upgrade please click the arrow next to the dot and select Polygon, draw around proposed area applicable to incentive by clicking on map. Right click on polygon and click add some text to label area.

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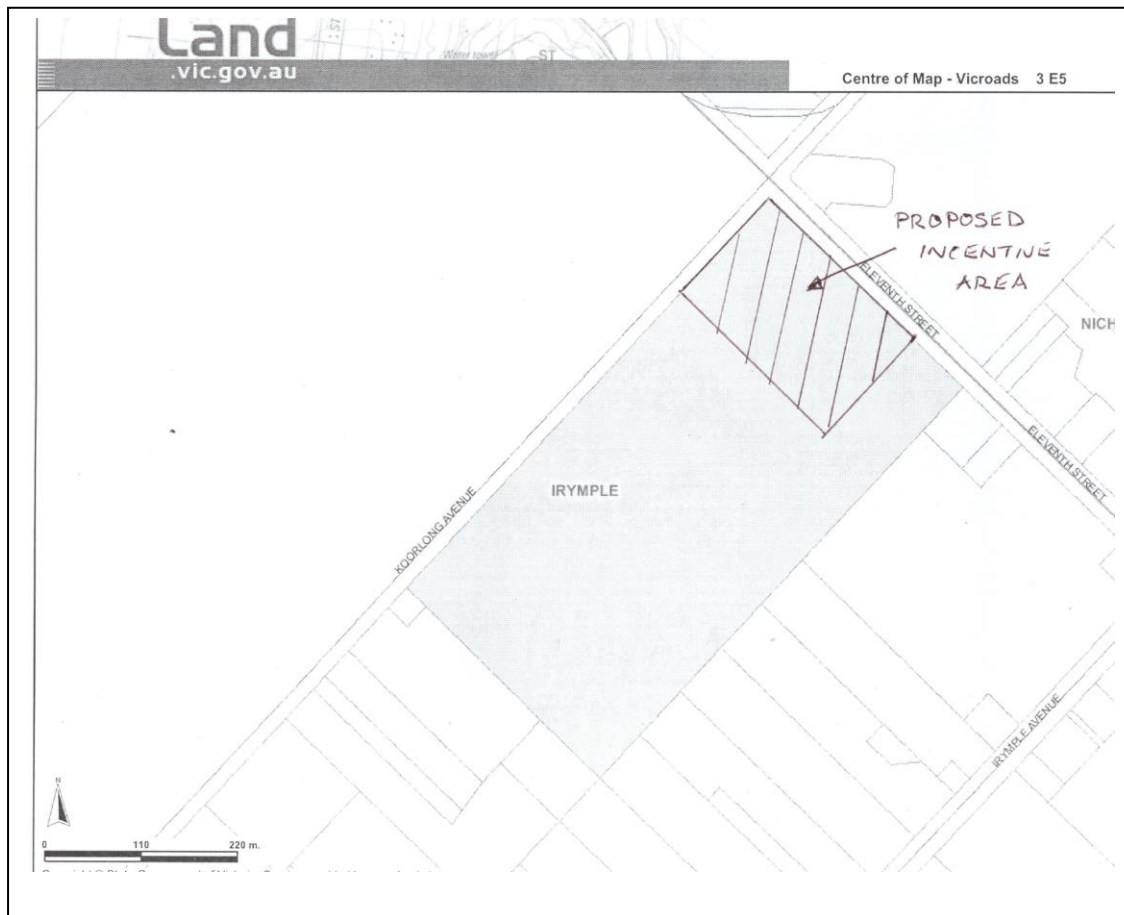
- 8) Click on point or polygon again to deselect it, then click on your property to highlight total property boundary.
- 9) Click export under the tools tab, select JPEG from drop down list and click create image
- 10) Click view image, your map will open in another window, right click on map and click save image as and save the image to your file system.
- 11) Attached Map to your EOI, example 3 shown below.

Example 1 of a hand drawn mud map



Example 2 of a computer-generated maps with handwritten mark up.

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Example 3 of a computer-generated maps



6. Incentive Types

6.1 Systems Check Incentive process

A 90% incentive (up to a maximum claim of \$990 GST incl) is available for an irrigation system check to measure the efficiency of your current system and recommend where improvements can be made.

Step 1: Expressions of Interest (EOI) forms are available from the Mallee CMA website at www.malleecma.vic.gov.au.

Step 2: Irrigator contacts their irrigation design company or a system check supplier from the Irrigation Australia Ltd Certified Irrigation Designer (IAL CID) approved supplier (see page 12) and obtains a quote.

Step 3: The irrigator completes an 'Expression of Interest' form and forwards it with one itemised quote for the service(s) to the Mallee CMA Email or address listed on the EOI. **Applications will only be considered if accompanied by quotes from approved suppliers. Applicants are responsible for ensuring quotes are included in the application. No partial applications will be accepted.**

Step 4: If funding is approved a formal Mallee CMA Letter of Offer and a Contract will be sent to the irrigator detailing the works agreed to be funded and conditions. To secure these funds the letter must be signed by the irrigator and sent back immediately. In accepting the letter of offer and signing the Contract, the irrigator commits to improving irrigation management, being involved in an evaluation process and participating in an Irrigation Management Course/Refresher.

Step 5: The systems check is completed and a report written by an IAL CID accredited designer. All systems checks are to be completed and claimed by the agreed due date on the works agreement.

Step 6: Irrigator discusses the findings with the designer.

Step 7: When works are completed the Irrigator contacts the Agriculture Victoria Irrigation Extension Officer or Mallee CMA Project Officer. No site inspections are required for this incentive however the final report and data must be provided to the project officer or extension officer for review and verification.

Step 8: Irrigators provide all tax invoice(s), receipts, bank receipts or statement as proof of payment and copy of report to the Agriculture Victoria Irrigation Extension Officer or Mallee CMA Project Officer and sign incentive claim form.

Step 9: Payments will be made according to the value of paid receipts received on completion of the works. However, the total of the incentive payment will not exceed the amount estimated from the original quote, as stated in the Letter of Offer and Contract.

Note: *To be eligible for any incentive payment the irrigator has to complete an approved Irrigation Management Course (IMC). Where attendance at the IMC was more than three years ago, a refresher course is required to be eligible.*

6.2 Scheduling Equipment Incentive process

A 50% incentive is available to purchase and install approved scheduling equipment with the following limits applying according to the size of the area under improvement:

- where the area under improved scheduling is less than 20ha the maximum incentive available is \$11,000 GST inclusive;
- where the area under improved scheduling is greater than or equal to 20ha but less than 40ha the maximum incentive available is \$16,500 GST inclusive; and
- where the area under improved scheduling is greater than or equal to 40ha the maximum incentive available is \$22,000 GST inclusive.

Step 1: Read the Victorian Mallee Irrigation Incentive Guidelines. The guidelines and the 'Expressions of Interest' forms are available at the Agriculture Victoria Irrigation Extension Officer or from the Mallee CMA website at www.malleecma.vic.gov.au Click on grants and incentives tab.

Note: A valid irrigation system check and a soil survey is required in order to qualify for a scheduling equipment incentive. Mallee CMA define a system check as 'valid' if it has occurred within a 2-year window prior to the application date. The system check will not be required if it is part of a new irrigation system altogether. As EOI applications may be lodged at any time throughout the year it is recommended that applicants lodge their EOI forms when they are ready to do the works.

Step 2: Irrigator contacts scheduling equipment providers and obtains at least two (2) itemised quotes for the equipment.

Step 3: Irrigator completes an 'Expression of Interest' form and forwards it with the itemised equipment quotes to the Mallee CMA email address or postal address listed on the EOI.

Applications will only be considered if accompanied by 2 independent itemised quotes from approved suppliers. Applicants are responsible for ensuring itemised quotes are attached to the Expression of Interest prior to submitting to the Mallee CMA. No partial applications will be accepted.

Step 4: 'Expressions of Interest' are assessed against salinity benefit, water use efficiency and eligibility criteria.

Step 5 If funding is approved, a formal Mallee CMA Letter of Offer and a Contract will be sent to the irrigator detailing the works agreed to be funded and conditions. To secure these funds the Contract must be signed by the irrigator and sent back immediately. In accepting the Letter of Offer and signing the Contract, the irrigator commits to improving irrigation management, being involved in an evaluation process and participating in an Irrigation Management Course/Refresher.

Step 6: The irrigator can commence installing the equipment to manufacturer's specifications. The irrigator will need to contact the Agriculture Victoria Irrigation Extension Officer or Mallee CMA Project Officer to arrange a mid-works inspection to ensure works are aligned with the agreed standards and conditions. An inspection form will be completed.

Step 7: Irrigator contacts Agriculture Victoria Irrigation Extension Officer or Mallee CMA Project Officer to make an appointment when works are completed.

Step 9: Final site inspection by the Agriculture Victoria Irrigation Extension Officer and Mallee CMA Officers to verify equipment is installed according to set standards and conditions.

Step 10: Irrigators provide all tax invoice(s), receipts, bank receipts or statement as proof of payment and copy of report to the Agriculture Victoria Irrigation Extension Officer or Mallee CMA Project Officer and signs incentive claim form.

Step 11: Payments will be made according to the value of paid receipts received on completion of the works. However, the total of the incentive payment will not exceed the amount estimated from the original quote, as stated in the Mallee CMA Letter of Offer and Contract.

Note: to be eligible for any incentive payment the irrigator has to complete an approved Irrigation Management Course (IMC). Where attendance at the IMC was more than three years ago, a refresher course is required to be eligible.

6.3 Soil Survey Incentive process

A 50% incentive payment (to a maximum claim of \$5,500 GST incl) to undertake a soil survey, backhoe hire, purchase an aerial photo, have a report generated and any reasonable cost associated with developing a soil survey report.

Step 1: Read the Victorian Mallee Irrigation Incentive Guidelines. The guidelines and the 'Expressions of Interest' forms are available from the Agriculture Victoria Irrigation Extension Officer or from the Mallee CMA website at www.malleecma.vic.gov.au

Note: An irrigation system check is required in order to qualify for a soil survey. As EOI applications may be lodged at any time throughout the year it is recommended that applicants lodge their EOI forms when they are ready to do the works.

Step 2: Irrigator contacts soil surveyor(s) from Victorian Mallee Registered Soil Surveyor list (See Appendix 7.1 for full list) and obtains at least two (2) quotes for the intended work; including, a soil survey, backhoe hire and an aerial photo (if needed).

Step 3: Irrigator completes an 'Expression of Interest' form and forwards it with at least two quotes from independent providers for the service to the Mallee CMA email address or postal address listed on the EOI. **Applications will only be considered if accompanied by 2 itemised quotes from approved suppliers. Applicants are responsible for ensuring itemised quotes are attached to the Expression of interest prior to submitting to the Mallee CMA. No partial applications will be accepted.**

Step 4: All 'Expression of Interest' applications are assessed against salinity benefit, water use efficiency and eligibility criteria.

Step 5: If funding is approved a formal Mallee CMA Letter of Offer and a Contract will be sent to the irrigator detailing the works agreed to be funded and conditions. To secure these funds the letter must be signed by the irrigator and sent back immediately. In accepting the Letter of Offer and signing the Contract, the irrigator commits to improving irrigation management, being involved in an evaluation process and participating in an Irrigation Management Course/Refresher.

Step 6: Soil survey works can commence. This is to be undertaken by a Victorian Mallee Registered Soil Surveyor (See Appendix 7.1 for full list). The irrigator will need to contact the Agriculture Victoria Irrigation Extension Officer or Mallee CMA Project Officer to arrange a mid-works inspection to ensure works are aligned with the agreed standards and conditions. An inspection form will be completed.

Step 7: Irrigator discusses results with the soil surveyor. Results are in the form of recommendations and a written report. Irrigator contacts Agriculture Victoria Irrigation Extension Officer or Mallee CMA Project Officer to make an appointment when works are completed.

Step 8: Final site inspection by the Agriculture Victoria Irrigation Extension Officer and Mallee CMA Officers to verify works are completed according to set standards and conditions.

Step 9: Irrigators provide all tax invoice(s), receipts, bank receipts or statement as proof of payment and copy of report to the Agriculture Victoria Irrigation Extension Officer or Mallee CMA Project Officer and signs incentive claim form.

Step 10: Payments will be made according to the value of paid receipts received on completion of the works. However, the total of the incentive payment will not exceed the amount estimated from the original quote, as stated in the letter of offer and contract.

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Note: to be eligible for any incentive payment the irrigator has to complete an approved Irrigation Management Course (IMC). Where attendance at the IMC was more than three years ago, a refresher course is required to be eligible.

6.4 Irrigation System Upgrade Incentive process (active flood/ furrow to pressurised only),

An incentive is available for up to 25% of the cost of an irrigation system upgrade (including costs associated with headworks and fieldworks) with the following limits applying per property size, this is only for proven properties that are converting from flood or furrow systems that have been actively irrigated in the past 12 months.

- where the size of the upgrade area is less than 20ha the maximum incentive available is \$11,000 GST incl;
- where the size of the upgrade area is greater than or equal to 20ha but less than 40ha the maximum incentive available is \$22,000 GST incl; and
- where the size of the upgrade area is greater than or equal to 40ha the maximum incentive available is \$33,000 GST incl.

Step 1: Read the Victoria Mallee Irrigation Incentive Guidelines. The guidelines and the 'Expressions of Interest' forms are available from the Mallee CMA website at: www.malleecma.vic.gov.au

Step 2: Irrigator contacts service providers for at least two (2) itemised quotes for a soil survey, scheduling equipment and the new pressurised system upgrade.

Note: A soil survey and scheduling equipment are both required in order to qualify for an Irrigation System upgrade. As EOI applications may be lodged at any time throughout the year it is recommended that applicants lodge their EOI forms when they are ready to do the works.

Step 3: Irrigator completes an 'Expression of Interest' form and forwards it with the quotes for the system to the Mallee CMA email address or postal address listed on the EOI. **Applications will only be considered if accompanied by 2 itemised quotes from approved independent suppliers. Applicants are responsible for ensuring itemised quotes are attached to the Expression of interest prior to submitting to the Mallee CMA. No partial applications will be accepted.**

Step 4: All Applications are assessed against salinity benefit and eligibility criteria.

Step 5: If funding is approved a formal Mallee CMA Letter of Offer and a Contract will be sent to the irrigator detailing the works agreed to be funded and conditions. To secure these funds the agreement or contract must be signed by the irrigator and sent back immediately. In accepting the Letter of Offer and signing the Contract, the irrigator commits to improving irrigation management, being involved in an evaluation process and participating in an Irrigation Management Course/Refresher.

Step 6: Soil survey carried out by the registered provider (see soil survey guidelines).

Step 7: Irrigator discusses soil survey findings with the Agriculture Victoria Extension Officer. Officers to review and verify soil survey report.

Step 8: Irrigator re-evaluates original quote, design and scheduling equipment placement; and, decides on appropriate irrigation system that suits management needs based on the soil survey results.

Step 9: Irrigator takes Soil Survey to the IAL CID accredited irrigation designer.

Step 10: Irrigation upgrade and scheduling equipment installation can commence. The irrigator will need to contact the Agriculture Victoria Irrigation Extension Officer or Mallee CMA Project Officer to arrange a mid-works inspection to ensure works are aligned with the IAL standards and conditions. An inspection form will be completed.

Step 11: Irrigator contacts Agriculture Victoria Extension Officer or Mallee CMA Project Officer to make an appointment when works are completed.

Step 12: Final site inspection by the Agriculture Victoria Irrigation Extension Officer and Mallee CMA Officers to verify works are completed according to set standards and conditions.

Step 14: Irrigators provide all tax invoices, receipts, bank receipts or statement as proof of payment and copy of report to the Agriculture Victoria Irrigation Extension Officer or Mallee CMA Project Officer and signs incentive claim form.

Step 15: Payments will be made according to the value of paid receipts received on completion of the works. However, the total of the incentive payment will not exceed the amount estimated from the original quote, as stated in the Letter of Offer and Contract.

Note: to be eligible for any incentive payment the irrigator is required to complete an approved Irrigation Management Course (IMC). Where attendance at the IMC was more than three years ago, a refresher course is required to be eligible.

6.4.1 Irrigation Australia Ltd (IAL) contact details

Irrigation Australia's website maintains a list of their Certified Irrigation Designers. It can be found at www.irrigation.org.au

Alternatively, the Agriculture Victoria Extension Officer will have a full list of Irrigation Australia Ltd Certified Irrigation Designers.

7. Claiming Process

7.1 Inspection

As part of the compliance procedure, a mid-works inspection is required to ensure works are aligned with the agreed standards and conditions. The site visit will be performed by the Mallee CMA project officers in conjunction With Agriculture Victoria Extension Officers and an inspection form will be generated. Please contact Agriculture Victoria Extension Officer to arrange an inspection. All systems, equipment and applications must be made available to the inspecting officers.

7.2 Claim form

Once the works are completed, a final inspection will occur. A claim form will be provided and is to be completed and signed by the landholder, the Mallee CMA project officer and the Agriculture Victoria extension officer. The following items will need to be provided for the claim to be considered valid.

- Mid-works inspection report signed off by inspecting officers.
- Completed claim form.
- Provide a copy of the System evaluation report, Soil Survey Report, and Irrigation scheduling equipment records. Ongoing scheduling equipment records must be kept for at least two years following the completion of works and be made available to the MCMA upon request.
- Bank receipts or statement as proof of payment. Mallee CMA will no longer accept invoices that are paid in cash directly to the service provider.
- All itemised invoices associated with works, invoices should only include items associated with the incentive works, if there are multiple properties claiming incentives, separate invoices for the works on each property must be provided.

7.3 Payment

Once a claim has been received all service providers will be contacted to confirm payments have been made in full on all invoices and confirm the amounts match the received bank receipt or statement amounts. Only when this has been confirmed will a claim be paid.

8. Appendices

8.1 Appendix 1 - Registered Soil Surveyors

Please note: this is a list of every soil surveyor who have gained registration. This list is not maintained or updated by the Mallee CMA, as such irrigators are advised to make their own enquires about the availability of these service providers.

Registered Soil Surveyors

Jenny Hanna

PO Box 361 Gumeracha SA 5233
Ph: (08) 8389 1963 Fax: (08) 8389 1963
Mobile: 0427 891 963

Rodney Haywood

RB & SR Haywood
149 Bookpunong Terrace Loxton SA 5333
Ph: (08) 8584 6901 Fax: (08) 8584 6901
Mobile: 0429 673 147

Geoff Kew

Kew Wetherby Soil Survey & Land Evaluation
7452 Main South Rd
Second Valley SA 5204
Mobile: 0409 690 469
geoff@soilprofile.com.au

Kym Luitjes

Sunraysia Environmental
3 The Crescent Mildura Vic 3500
Ph: (03) 5023 3643 Fax: (03) 5021 3440
enquiries@sunenv.com.au

Wendy Meech

WJB Consulting
PO Box 181 Roseworthy SA 5371
Ph: (08) 8524 8501 Fax: (08) 8524 8501
Mobile: 0428 877 558
wjb.consulting@bigpond.com

Jeff Mitchell

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John Rasic

6 Sugar Court Flagstaff Hill SA 5159
Ph: (08) 8377 2988 Fax: (08) 8377 1488
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Trevor Sluggett

Soil Agronomist
Total Eden – Renmark
230 Renmark Ave Renmark SA 5341
P: 08 8586 6777 M: 0427 861 295
E: riverland@totaleden.com.au

Ian Sluiter

PO Box 698 Merbein Vic 3505
Ph: (03) 5025 6500 Fax: (03) 5025 6500

Shane Waechter (Renmark)

Agri Exchange
2/89 Pine Ave Mildura Vic 3500
Mobile: 0427 716 214
peter.keynes@costagroup.com.au

Ken Wetherby

KG & CV Soil Survey Specialists
PO Box 59 Cleve SA 5640
Ph: (08) 8628 5038 Fax: (08) 8628 5031
Mobile: 0427 895 017
Wetherby1@bigpond.com