

Att: Chief of Staff; News Editor; Producer
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For immediate release

Media Release

Drought Relief Water reaches Coal River Valley

Drought relief water is now flowing to farmers in the Coal River Valley, in South East Tasmania.

Since March the Rivers and Water Supply Commission has been planning and constructing a 5.4 km pipeline from the Hobart Water mains near Richmond, to a storage dam at Nocton Park, near Campania.

The Chairman of the Rivers and Water Supply Commission, Mr Scott Ashton-Jones, said that he is delighted that water is making its way to the Coal River Valley thanks to both Hobart Water's provision of water and the hard work of contractors and Commission staff.

"The current drought is unprecedented in its longevity and severity; this is the first time that I can remember that the Craighourne Dam hasn't been able to deliver water to farmers.

"The economy of the Coal River Valley has been transformed since the Craighourne Dam was commissioned in the mid 1980s and the value of investment and the resulting jobs in the region needs to be protected.

"That is why the Tasmanian Government has committed \$500,000 to fund the pipeline delivering the relief irrigation water, and Hobart Water has allocated an additional 500ML of water this winter to the 1500 ML already being supplied." Mr Ashton-Jones said.

The Chief Executive Officer of Hobart Water, Dr. Christine Mucha said that Hobart Water was pleased that it was able to supply additional water to help the farmers in the Coal River Valley.

"The supply is possible as Hobart Water is able to provide additional water during winter when consumption on the eastern shore reduces significantly.

"This is not possible during summer periods when the system is constrained due to the potential impact upon Councils' supplies." Dr. Mucha said.

ENDS

Media contact: For further information or interviews, please contact **Richard Gerathy** on **0419 203 075** or **6224 7818** or Hobart Water's Marketing & Community Relations Manager, **Tiziana Botti** on **6233 2230** or **0409 421 080**.

Questions and Answers:

What agricultural operations are in the irrigation district?

Significant agricultural operations in the area include Houstons Farms lettuces, extensive vineyard and orchard operations

When was the Craighourne Dam built?

Craighourne dam was built over 20 years ago and this is the first time it has been this low (less than 4% capacity).

Has Hobart Water had a significant impact on the relief supplies?

Without Hobart Waters' cooperation and State Government assistance the emergency pipeline would not have been possible.

Will the relief water supplies replace the regular irrigation supplies?

The relief supplies will only provide irrigators with approximately half their annual allocation and therefore it is still going to be a difficult year without substantial rainfall filling Craighourne Dam.