

DROUGHT IMPACTS OBERON DAM LEVELS

05 March 2009

The Fish River Customer Council today said that management of the ongoing drought is one of its highest priorities in working with State Water Corporation.

The Customer Council is comprised of local government representatives from Oberon and Lithgow councils, along with Delta Electricity, the Sydney Catchment Authority and State Water.

State Water's Water Delivery Manager for Fish River, Sri Sritharan said providing drinking water to the community remains top priority in the Customer Council's drought management strategy.

"We want to reassure the communities of both Oberon and Lithgow that the drought management strategies developed and implemented by the Customer Council ensure highest priority for people's drinking water and is on track. The focus for the Customer Council is to extend the delivery of town water supplies as long as possible.

"Town water supplies will have priority during the current drought and be delivered first before other water user needs are met.

"With Oberon Dam at 14.9% capacity, there is more than three years water for Oberon and for those parts of the Lithgow Local Government Area that are supplied from Oberon Dam, primarily Portland, Wallerawang, Cullen Bullen and Glen Davis," Mr Sritharan said.

"It must be remembered that Lithgow Council also has its own Farmers Creek supply as well as the existing Clarence Colliery transfer system."

Both SCA and Delta Electricity have other sources of supplies and have been scaling back their reliance on Fish River Water Supply as the storage level at Oberon Dam continues to fall. SCA has not taken any water from Fish River Water Supply since Nov 2008.

The Fish River Customer Council is meeting regularly to review the situation and effectively manage the worsening drought.

"All Fish River Customer Council members are pursuing recycling and reuse initiatives and water reduction strategies to ensure every drop counts," Mr Sritharan said. "State Water wishes to acknowledge all council members' hard work to reduce their water consumption, in some cases by up to 15%, which is easing the pressure and helping with the drought planning."

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