

Lower South Esk Irrigation Scheme

Scheme Performance

By Mat Marston, Scheme Operator

The 2025/26 irrigation season for the Lower South Esk Irrigation Scheme delivered strong overall performance. Total water delivery volumes were higher than the previous year – approximately 4,020 megalitres (ML) of water was delivered this season, compared with 3,691 ML last year.

The season was shaped by dry conditions, including an extended dry period and below-average rainfall. These conditions contributed to sustained demand across the Scheme and supported the decision to extend the irrigation season through to 31 May 2026.

The extended season supported crop and pasture establishment for the coming year, and your engagement helped ensure smooth operation during a demanding period.

Despite the challenging weather, the Scheme continued to operate seamlessly throughout the delivery period.

A key operational issue this season involved differential pressure transmitter faults and level sensor issues, which required attention but did not significantly impact delivery.



The scheme also experienced damage to the main supply line; however, this did not affect dam filling or water delivery.

I would like to thank all irrigators for their cooperation and communication throughout the season. Maintaining strong relationships and sharing information helps ensure the Lower South Esk Irrigation Scheme continues to deliver water where and when it is needed.

Please reach out if you require further information about our Scheme or the content of this end of season newsletter.



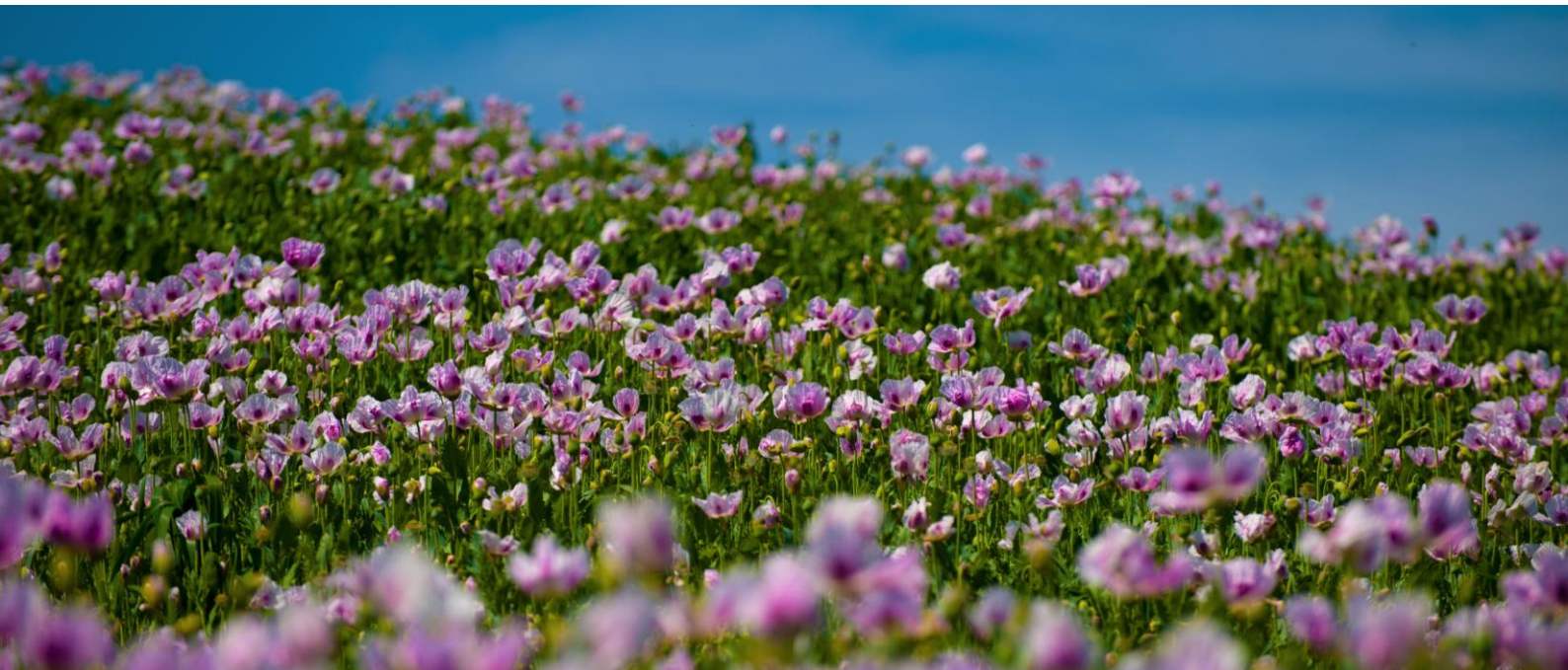
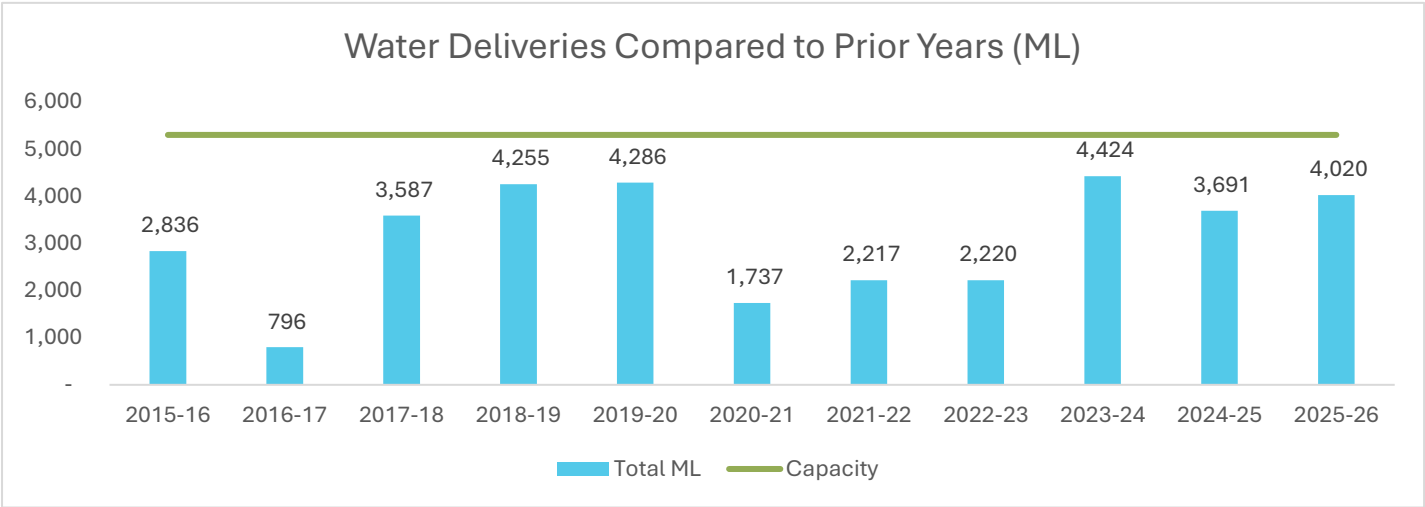
Lower South Esk Irrigation Scheme

Water Delivery

The 2025/26 summer irrigation season ran for 211 days, opening on 1 October 2025 and closing on 31 May 2026.

100 per cent of the Scheme’s water allocation was available and approximately 4,020 ML of water was delivered during the summer season.

The volume delivered represents a 76 per cent utilisation rate of the Scheme’s 5,298 ML total summer capacity.



Lower South Esk Irrigation Scheme

Asset Renewal Levy (ARL)

The ARL makes provisions for major asset repairs and replacements required to ensure the continuing operation of the Scheme.

The table below shows the asset renewal works completed or expected to be completed prior to the next season:

Facility Name	ARL Task Description
Milford pump station	Replace thermistors on the pump and refurbish
Milford pump station	Refurbish the discharge valve
Milford Dam	Dam asset renewals

Repairs and Maintenance

The table below shows the general repairs and maintenance completed or expected to be completed prior to the next season:

Maintenance Task Description
Electrical switchboard periodic maintenance inspections
Weed and vegetation management
Pipe damage repairs
Dam surveillance
Dam repairs and maintenance



Lower South Esk Irrigation Scheme

Farm Water Access Plan Audits

Tasmanian Irrigation is about to commence the annual Farm Water Access Plan (Farm WAP) audit process to maintain compliance and environmental excellence. Farm WAPs are property-specific documents that guide the responsible use of irrigation water and protect the long-term productivity and environmental values of irrigated farmland.

Audits are randomly selected and generally involve around 10 to 15 per cent of irrigators in each scheme who have used more than five megalitres (ML) of water during the season. If selected, irrigators will be contacted to arrange a suitable time for the audit. To help spread audits across a broader range of properties, irrigators who were audited last season and those currently awaiting updated Farm WAPs will not be included in this year's audit program.

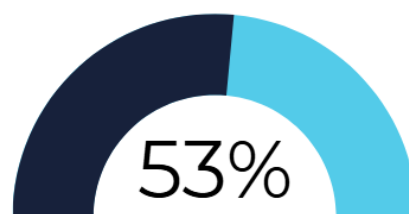
Audits generally involve a site inspection; a discussion with the landholder or irrigation staff; and a review of relevant records and documentation. To help the audit process run smoothly, now is a good time for irrigators to revisit their approved Farm WAP and confirm that irrigation activities align with the approved plan. Common issues identified during audits include irrigation occurring outside approved Farm WAP areas or incorrect dam and storage information.

For assistance or questions, contact the Farm WAP Team on (03) 6398-8433 or email FarmWAP@tasirrigation.com.au.

Dam Update – Milford Dam

Tasmanian Irrigation took the opportunity to harvest water from rivers into storages during recent rainfall events, boosting dam levels across the State. With long range forecasts pointing to drier-than-average conditions ahead, making the most of rainfall events to replenish our dams is more important than ever.

At the end of June, Milford Dam was at 53 per cent of capacity. The current volume is 3,171 ML, compared to the total volume of 5,996 ML. Dam levels are updated daily on Tasmanian Irrigation's website here: [Dam Dashboard - Tasmanian Irrigation](#).



Milford Dam –
current percentage of capacity

Get in Touch

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