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MEDIA RELEASE

SA WATER LAUNCHES STONE DUMPING BARGE AT BERRI

SA Water has this week launched a purpose built vessel into the River Murray at Berri as part of a project to ensure the long term security of the Locks and Weirs and other structures on the River.

A large flat-top aluminium barge has been designed and built to allow stone to be placed where there is erosion of the riverbed near the structures.

SA Water's Manager River Murray Operations Brenton Erdmann says the project is significant for SA Water.

"Over the years there has been a considerable amount of scouring downstream of the Lock and Weirs as a result of the turbulence when water flows over the structures. If left unchecked this could ultimately cause concerns for the long term stability of the structures," Mr Erdmann said.

SA Water, through its River Murray Operations, has commissioned the construction of the barge so that rock can be loaded onto it and taken out onto the river and placed into the eroded areas.

The work undertaken will ensure the long term security of the structures.

"The Barge has been designed to carry up to 100 tonnes of rock that can be dropped down a chute onto the river bed," he said.

"SA Water has worked closely with South Australian company Maritime Constructions to refine the conceptual design of the vessel and to work through any issues related to construction," he said.

The barge has been funded by the Murray-Darling Basin Authority and has been designed so that it can be broken down into sections that can be transported by road to any location along the length of the River Murray and work at any of the MDBA structures.

The vessel, named the Niell Solly, has been assembled from three modules and was launched at Berri Slipway.

"Niell Solly is a long term local Riverland resident who worked in the River Murray Operations section of SA Water for over 40 years and has been instrumental in many of the major initiatives and changes to the way the River Murray structures are now operated and maintained," Mr Erdmann said.

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