

Author name: B. Betland

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Your submission for this review:

Dear IPART Review Team, I am writing as an irrigation farmer directly affected by the proposed pricing determination for WaterNSW rural bulk water services. I appreciate the opportunity to provide feedback on the draft report currently under consultation. I strongly oppose the principle that water users should bear the full cost recovery for services provided by WaterNSW, as currently required by the State Government. In my view, this approach fails to acknowledge that many of the costs embedded in WaterNSW's operations arise from regulatory, planning and administrative functions that serve the broader public interest not just the needs of irrigators. Over time the expansion of WaterNSW and broader water sector bureaucracy has significantly increased operational costs, often in areas that benefit the general community (such as environmental management, compliance frameworks and public reporting.) Expecting water users to absorb these costs through increased pricing is inequitable and places an undue burden on farmers who are already facing volatile production conditions, rising input costs and market uncertainty. Also another area of inequity of concern is the huge variation of supply charges between valleys which is not only unfair and discriminatory but puts irrigators in the Lachlan valley at a huge disadvantage over those in the Murrumbidgee an example. The State Government has a responsibility to contribute funding towards the elements of the water management system that serves the wider public good such as a strong viable irrigation farming industry which ensures food security and contributes to a strong and healthy community. Cost sharing between users and the State should be structured accordingly, rather than relying solely on pricing mechanisms that shift the full financial responsibility onto a narrow user base. I urge IPART to challenge the underlying policy assumption of full user pays cost recovery and to recommend a more balanced funding model that recognises the broader community benefit of many water management functions. Thank you for your consideration of this submission. Sincerely, [REDACTED]