
Unfortunately, I am only one person and unlike Hunter Water(HW), I do not have the manpower to submit an in-depth argument against the construction of the half a billion dollars Belmont Desalination Plant.

My main argument here is cost of living.

We are talking increases of an average of \$86/ year for 5 years in a time that we are already experiencing cost of living pressures. Also, those are not the only increases.

HW, seeks further increases in administering and operational expenses as well.

For what benefit? Well, to compliment the existing supply by 15% or 30 million litres per day. One, however, does get the impression, that, the evidence supplied by HW, is used to make the situation imperative that we must act. It speaks of the 3 year drought, well, being a resident of this area, I can recall that we managed through a 7 year drought. Furthermore, the graph on page 21/327, the trend appears to be downwards, but, they have the future trend as increasing. To me, this indicates that, no matter what argument is presented, it will be a pre- determined outcome as IPART is simply a remote arm of the Government.

I reside in Maitland, 50km up the valley from Newcastle. I will not receive one drop of water from the construction of this plant , however, I am expected to help pay for this, not for 5 years, with CPI increases forever.

I don't quite understand that Sydney's Desal Plant cost \$1.8billion and residents pay \$22/y and the life expectancy of this plant being just (25-30) years. I realise it is of smaller scale, but, when you consider the life expectancy and cost together with the projected climate change offering extreme weather in the form of floods, I believe it is not financially viable for the benefit of so few.

After receiving advice that , Hunter Water, has around 600 000 consumers , approximately 272 000 properties that pay rates, only 15%,that is, around 40 000 properties will receive direct benefit in times of crisis, all for a cost of \$500 000 000(half a billion dollars) for 30years at best, costing huge amounts in electricity as the Solar panels that we are also paying for will not provide the plant with enough energy as these only operate when the sun shines, on average 6 hours per day.

I honestly believe, that this project is not necessary at this time and money would be better spent in building dams as water storages. Consumers are already feeling cost of living with record numbers of small businesses folding.

John Alterator

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NSW.

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