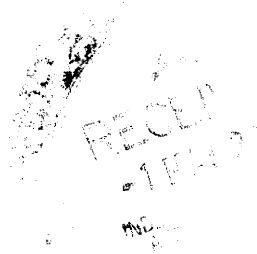


Peppercorn Ridge
Bombala Rd
CANDELO 2550
20 April 2001

Mr J E Dulley
General Manager
Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART)
Level 2
44 Market St
SYDNEY NSW 2000



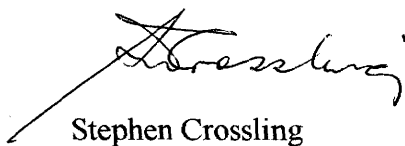
Dear Mr Dulley

I am writing to you about a radio interview I caught the tail end of a few days ago in which a representative of the Department of Land and Water Conservation (DLWC) was attempting to justify a substantial increase in water charges over the next few years.

I hold an irrigation licence on an unregulated stream. Each year about August I get an account based on the water allocation not use. The account is paid in September but the next January I get a statement saying I have a nil balance. I think this is most inefficient as I already know that I have paid the account. There is no other business with which I deal, that some four months after paying an account, goes to the trouble and expense of preparing and posting a nil balance statement. Now I am directly paying for under this dubious cost recovery guise. I realise that as a Government department they can justify a lower standard of efficiency than a private business but I request your comments on your impression of this nil balance procedure.

You would be aware that the DLWC does absolutely nothing to provide water for those people drawing from an unregulated stream. I would have liked to irrigate for the past 7 weeks as our pastures were going dry and I have calves to finish. There has been no water to pump yet I am still paying for water. The creek is regularly in a low flow state and I am unable to pump just when the pasture needs some water. So much for the user pays principle. When it does rain for the creek to flow so I may irrigate I will of course not need to irrigate because it has just rained which of course is part of the Catch 22 big circle theory. I would like to know if you have considered applying true user pays charges for unregulated streams. That is, you pay for what you use up to your allocation. I realise that the current charges are set to largely pay for the DLWC bureaucrats for whatever it is that they do and a flat charge regardless of use is much easier to establish and budget for but it is certainly not user pays.

Yours sincerely



Stephen Crossling