

NSW RURAL WATER PRICES RELEASED

The Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) today released its final decisions on the prices that WaterNSW can charge for its monopoly rural bulk water services from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2021.

IPART Chair Dr Peter Boxall said these decisions will result in significant reductions in the overall revenue that WaterNSW can collect from its customers across the State, with bill impacts depending on location and the type of licence held.

WaterNSW's operating costs have decreased substantially since the last determination, with the savings to flow through to customers from 1 July 2017.

"Consistent with our draft determination released in March 2017, most WaterNSW rural customers will see their bills either fall, or increase at or below the rate of inflation under our decisions," Dr Boxall said.

"For many customers, the savings resulting from our final decisions are greater than those announced in the draft determination in March, particularly for water users in the North Coast, South Coast and Peel valleys, where we have made changes to the tariff structures after receiving stakeholder feedback."

Dr Boxall said that while WaterNSW's entitlement charges and usage charges are falling in most valleys, charges to be passed through for the Murray Darling Basin Authority (MDBA) are rising, and this will have a large impact on customers in the Murray valley in particular.

"We have reduced the amount WaterNSW can collect to cover the costs of the MDBA and the Border Rivers Commission in response to concerns about lack of transparency, but even with this reduction, bills for high security customers in the Murray valley will increase by 16.9% over the next four years, which is about 7% above inflation," Dr Boxall said.

WaterNSW delivers bulk water to irrigators and other licence holders on regulated rivers across NSW. It operates 42 large dams and weirs, and delivery infrastructure, to deliver water to around 6,300 customers.

The report for the WaterNSW price review is available on IPART's website <<http://www.ipart.nsw.gov.au>>.