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07/11/01.

Dear Mr. Parry,

It was with some disappointment that I read the Bulk Water Prices Draft Report. In the view of the Murray Valley Groundwater Users Association, the process did not examine the proposal from DLWC in relation to groundwater anywhere near deeply enough.

Throughout the entire process our greatest difficulty was obtaining any information at all. I approached State Water, the billing arm of DLWC and was given their costs. These came to \$31,000. I then wanted to know what happened to the rest of the money that was charged. I raised this at the Customer Service Committee, and was told the rest went to Resource Management. This struck me as a broad term, so I followed it up. It was extremely difficult obtaining any further information from DLWC. The staff down here at Deniliquin had no idea how to get hold the information required. It was the morning of the Griffith Public Meeting before I obtained a copy of the DLWC figures, and these were from another source entirely. If we had so much difficulty, how did the Ipart Board manage to obtain it?

Once the data was obtained, how do we know the information presented is correct? Did Ipart verify it? For example, the information I have indicates there are 8 Data Collection Product Names. This is interesting because at the Griffith Meeting we were told that the Meter Reading was high at \$800 per meter. This was high because it included some data interpretation. I would have thought that one of the 8 Data Collection categories would have covered this. Perhaps we may have some doubling up in charges here. You could not tell from the information I obtained. Perhaps this should be checked before the Final Draft is released. It was interesting to note Resource Management, as I was told at the CSC Meeting, does not even exist in the Product Codes.

The difficulties we encountered obtaining the information aroused our suspicions. We found the justification for the charges very hard to find, and when analysed, it only added to our suspicions. The above example is what makes us wonder if it really does cost \$687,821.21 to manage Groundwater in the Murray Valley. There are 210 bores, which equates to \$3,275 per annum for each bore. Doesn't that strike you as a little extreme? Have you any facts or figures that justify these costs?

It was also interesting to note that there was no mention of any pumping credits, which should be considered. The latest modelling of underground water in Groundwater Management Area 016 indicates that if current pumping levels are reduced, there would be resulting environmental damage. (Sarji Joseph, Head of Knowledge DLWC Deniliquin will verify this fact). Should this be a consideration before charges are set in concrete for the next 3 years?

My final comment is a repeat of one in my first submission. In the section called "Water Use Compliance", it was stated that to ensure statutory management plans are adhered to there will be enforcement, prosecution and education measures used. I was an educator for 22 years and obtained a Bachelor of Education. However I don't need these qualifications to tell you that this order is entirely inappropriate. Education should be used first. Water is going through astronomic changes and education and tolerance will be the key measures in an effort to achieve the common goal of equitable and sustainable use.

Looking forward to a speedy reply,

Leigh Chappell.  
Secretary  
Murray Valley Groundwater Users Association.