



Our Ref: GFF

16 October, 2020

Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal NSW

Via Website: <https://www.ipart.nsw.gov.au/Home/Reviews/Lodge-a-submission?vld=4823b13e-b429-44ef-aafa-142e4f5cd2ea&name=Issues%20Paper%20-%20Review%20of%20WaterNSW%27s%20rural%20bulk%20water%20prices%20-%20September%202020>

Dear Tribunal Member,

On behalf of irrigator farming families in my electorate I write to express concerns regarding the very substantial increase in fees for rural bulk water proposed to be placed on them next year from both WaterNSW and the Water Administration Ministerial Corporation (WAMC).

I am informed by irrigators in the Murray Valley that these fee increases for a typical farming business mean an increase in one year of 28% or an additional \$1,440 on top of already high government charges.

To impose this fee increase to families that are only just beginning to recover from drought combined with historic low water allocations is unacceptable. The greatest portion of these costs comes from proposed MDBA fixed and usage charges - I would question their justification and encourage you to carefully scrutinise.

Of particular note is the benefits to the broader community and to the environment of a regulated river system. It seems to me that irrigators have to keep paying disproportionate costs when they only use a relatively small proportion of the total water.

We urge you to look very closely at the costs proposed by these agencies and consider the views of the stakeholders that are impacted by the hike in fees. This is especially important when we consider the importance of producing food for our country, the economic importance of irrigated agriculture to Australia, economic recovery from drought and the much wider benefits to the community from managing regulated water.

Yours sincerely,

Helen Dalton MP
Member for Murray