

Review of Prices for Water NSW.

Rural Bulk Water Services from 1 July, 2017

Water Issues Paper September, 2016

Why is there another review, with three more public hearings?

We attended two of the three previous “Consultations” at Tamworth and Sydney where the comments from we Water Users were politely received but ignored, because the prices which were “determined” were no different from those initially requested by Water NSW and to which those who attended objected.

Water Licence charges for coastal irrigators remain grossly unfair.

Why are farmers expected to pay for Water NSW’s activities rather than equitably distributing costs to all water users?

As pointed out by my wife, Shirley, at the Tamworth meeting charging licence holders for access to water which doesn’t exist in dry river beds is fraud.

Equally, when on the coast we experience low flows and in some streams cessation of flows there is nothing Water NSW can do to provide the water for which they are charging.

We pay, but don’t have water to use anyway.

We can use water for irrigating only when there is sufficient flow in the river and in times of low flow we regulate and cease our irrigating to ensure sufficient flow for all users including coastal towns downstream.

The question which Water NSW (under whatever previous names) refuses to answer is, What does Water NSW actually spend each year in the Manning Valley?

The best information I have been able to obtain is that the Manning Valley costs are included in the total Hunter Valley costs.

If that is how general Water NSW costings are, then Water NSW is very inefficient and has no basis to be charging the exorbitant prices it does.

IPART makes a determination and Water NSW charges water users and refuses to be accountable with itemised costings claiming that they are charging the amount set by IPART.

So we users cannot obtain an itemised account for the amount charged as happens with any other service or commodity purchased.

The nature of those charges levied by NSW Water is a Tax; otherwise they are unethical and fraudulent.

As I suggested at the Sydney Consultation on the draft pricing, the impost of water pricing levied on farmers at present should be spread equitably across all water users, resulting in a very nominal increase per household for urban dwellers and providing a nominal base charge plus usage charge for farmers.

Before the advent of IPART and “full cost recovery” we paid a 5 year irrigation licence which was in the order of \$540 (total for the 5 years).

In recent years we have been paying in excess of \$1,800 per annum whether we use the water or not and whether the water is available or not.

Your pricing strategy must be changed radically to make your charges fair to **ALL** water users.

I suggest that coastal water users cost Water NSW very little as the water in coastal streams is from natural sources over which Water NSW has no control and for which there is no cost either to users or the community in general, let alone Water NSW,

Some comments on the key issues:

1. No, different situation, what infrastructure is there anyway?
2. No, see above.
3. N/A

4. No
5. No, see above.
7. Don't know, costs not itemised against activities.
8. Don't know, because we have no idea what those employed in the Bureaucracy actually do. Perhaps you could reduce staff.
9. What capital expenditure? None in the Manning Valley.
10. Capital expenditure is clearly not specific, like the costs per Valley. Say what you spend capital on and a comment can be made.
11. Ditto
12. Ditto
32. No. If you set a fair charging procedure across all water users you would only need a minimum charge of \$100 plus usage charge.
40. No, see above.
41. No, see above.
43. No.
45. Yes.
46. No charge.
47. No.
48. Yes.
51. No.
55. Yes, greatly. Be specific. Understand that we can't set prices to cover us for all conditions. Our incomes rise and fall according to the weather. So should your charges.

56. Courtesy of the taxpayer, as should occur with this whole wasted exercise.
We pay taxes to have Government services provided, not to be taxed
again for the services.

57. Ditto.

58. Ditto.

Newman Patmore
Barrington.