

Water Determination From June 2016

Everyone needs water.

Collected rainwater is insufficient for total needs.

Therefore water has to be drawn from rivers. The water in rivers is free of charge, supplied by God's grace through rain events and snow melts.

DPI - Water, like the entities before it, sanctioned by IPART levies charges for water, even on unregulated streams such as the Barrington River to which we have an Access Licence in the Manning System.

It is fair that we pay a licence fee to ensure that we have an entitlement to pump water from the river for the purpose of producing food (in our case beef) so that the available water is equitably shared

We have paid a licence fee on our property for over 60 years.

In recent times, as I have pointed out in previous correspondence to IPART and Government Ministers, what is now termed a Water Access Licence has blown out from a five yearly licence fee of \$546 to an ANNUAL fee of \$1,993.60.

What do we receive in return for this charge? NOTHING!

The water is provided free.

In good seasons millions of mega litres of water flow past our property to the sea, and we don't need to irrigate.

In bad seasons, we irrigate sparingly or we would go broke and if it becomes very dry our local Water Users Association determines a programme of irrigation restrictions including times of no irrigation when necessary to ensure a minimum flow past the pumping station at Gloucester, as determined by Mid Coast Water.

That's how it works, very effectively, in country communities.

The last time we were restricted and suffered days of zero water allocation the residents of Gloucester did not even go onto water restrictions.

And that's another point, are all the residents of Gloucester, Wingham, Taree, Great Lakes, etc. who draw water from this source paying \$4.48 per megalitre like food producers are?

Why are irrigators singled out to pay for all the activities of DPI - Water which are for general community benefit? And don't make one bit of difference to irrigators, because due to the season either water is available or it isn't.

And we pay a huge amount for a water access licence whether the water is available or whether it isn't, or whether we use it or whether we don't.

The rates quoted in DPI-Water's submission include a minimum annual charge of \$150.00. That's something like a fee we used to pay for a five year licence. Why are we charged any more?

The other \$1843.60 we pay is purely a tax on food production.

The water in the river system is allocated, the Water "Sharing" (rather Trading) Plan is in place, there is nothing more to pay and the water is FREELY available.

Please remove this overbearing impost from farmers who are endeavouring to provide food for the world at a ridiculously low price.

I emphasise:

Everyone needs water so remove this discriminatory tax from irrigators.