IPART : <u>Water Management Charges Review for the Peel Valley Regulated and Ground Water Users</u>.

Hay production remains the main source of income for the majority of the Peel Valley irrigators.

There is an absolute upper limit to the price at which a bale of hay can be sold. With the spiraling increase in electricity and fuel prices it is imperative that water costs be kept at a responsible level to ensure sustainability of the industry and assurance of future livelihood for irrigators.

Price rises requested by the NSW Office of Water of four times those of the 06-10 period are anything but responsible! This will initiate the beginning of the end for Peel Valley irrigators as full cost recovery is sought by this department.

When developing the Peel Valley Water Sharing Plan the NSW Office of Water had a major input and is therefore completely aware that their setting of long term average annual extraction levels at twenty percent and a fourfold increase in prices amounts to absolute stupidity – but still they have pressed ahead with this request.

To charge such a high price compared with other inland valleys and failing to be able to deliver eighty percent of the product on a regular basis amounts to robbery and incompetence. No private enterprise business would be allowed to conduct itself in such a disgraceful manner. There would be a government inquiry.

<u>The NSW Office of Water proposed metering service water charges</u>

My present annual meter maintenance costs are virtually nil. This government department intends installing new whizbang meters requiring little maintenance and offering higher efficiency, and the cost – up to seven hundred dollars per annum. Isn't this just a backhanded way of increasing water costs?

In summary, there is no way the irrigators should be punished for the incompetence of government departments and yet this is what is being proposed in this entire money-grabbing scheme.

This industry's survival depends on responsible pricing .Please act responsibly.
Yours sincerely,
Doug White.