

15 November 2005

Mr Jim Cox  
Chief Executive Officer  
Independent Pricing & Regulatory Tribunal  
Level 2, 44 Market Street  
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Re: Macquarie Valley Water Price Increases

Dear Mr Cox

We, as Riparian Irrigators in the Macquarie Valley, are alarmed at the proposed increase in water charges. The prospect of water charges increasing from \$3.95 to a massive \$10.07 per megalitre on the Macquarie comes as a severe shock indeed. It comes at a time when we can't possibly afford it. We have endured drought for near on three years with no crops to speak of; been inundated by plague locusts; suffered extreme fuel prices and continual increase in rates and vehicle registrations – you name it we've copped it. This will be the icing on the cake.

When you have a small property of some 582 hectares as we have just out of the township of Warren, with these ever increasing charges it seems time to give it all away. The Ewenmar Creek which divides our property has been dry resulting in myself and other property owners having to get water pumped in for our stock at some considerable cost.

It appears that you people (IPART) have not taken any notice of irrigation representatives which have been in consultation with you. In fact, it appears that you have taken the side of bureaucrats who have no idea of the costs we irrigators are facing. Further, the water which is going to the Macquarie Marshes is not being charged to these private landholders – this increase should have been passed on to them to make things more equitable.

It is clear that the "cash strapped" lemma Government finds country people and in particular irrigators, soft targets when they need a cash injection – after all, NSW stands for Newcastle, Sydney and Wollongong – stuff the rest!

How about some parity for irrigators?

Yours faithfully

Ronald & Rodney Thornton  
RIPARIAN IRRIGATORS – MACQUARIE VALLEY