



# The Yanco Creek & Tributaries Advisory Council Inc.

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Liz Cullen  
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Dear Liz,

## **STATE WATER OPERATING LICENCE SUBMISSION**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on State Water's Operating Licence.

### **YANCO CREEK AND TRIBUTARIES ADVISORY COUNCIL**

We are a constituent Group of the Murrumbidgee Private Irrigators who in turn are a member of the New South Wales Irrigators Council. We are in agreement with both of their submissions and wish to make comment on areas of particular interest to us.

### **STATE WATER CORPORITISATION**

We are in support of State Water being corporatized especially in regard to the establishment of corporate governance management functions that will ensure State Water's activities are subject to a transparent and accountable governance regime. We believe that this will make State Water an efficient and effective water distribution business.

### **REGULATORY POWERS AND PROVISION OF INFORMATION**

We believe that State Water must be enabled to enforce compliance with its operational requirements for water ordering, extraction, metering, transfers, payments and site safety. This is critical in a system such as the Yanco Creek System where there are long delivery times and small allocations. We have had several instances where irrigators have pumped water they had not ordered and this meant there was not enough water to fulfill orders further downstream. In fact the creek ran dry. In one instance an irrigator was supposed to be able to pump 25 megalitres a day and the creek was little more than a series of puddles. As a body we have supported State Water when it has been investigating these incidents however this can not be allowed to continue.

State Water must take action quickly and decisively in these instances. It should not have to go back to DIPNR and ask for DIPNR to intervene. State Water should be able to apply sanctions immediately.

We strongly believe that State Water should be in control of all specialized measuring equipment (telemetry and SCADA) needed to run its operations. State Water needs real time information and as information provided by telemetry and SCADA is vital then the management of this should reside with State Water.

### **SYSTEM PERFORMANCE**

We support the introduction of objective, measurable performance standards and performance indicators that clearly and unambiguously demonstrate State Water's management of its asset base and associated water delivery, monitoring and service delivery systems. This should also include management of natural waterways which State Water uses to deliver water. The Yanco Creek System was handed over to State Water in 1980 by a Trust that carried out necessary maintenance of the creek and its environs. The Creek has suffered over the last 25 years from a lack of management. Thankfully this is now being rectified and we are working with State Water to remedy the issues we have with water delivery in the creek system. System performance measures should be at a low enough level for the likes of our group to be able to gain meaningful information in the management of the Creek System.

### **CUSTOMER SERVICE COMMITTEES**

We support the current structure of the Customer Service Committees (CSC) being retained. The CSC's have played a significant role in ensuring that State Water interacts directly with its stakeholder base. It has also been useful in assisting State Water to gain valuable feedback on a number of initiatives. A weakness however has been the lack of business information. If the CSC's are to be retained then State Water must make a commitment to provide up to date and relevant information to these bodies. All costs associated with CSC's should continue to be met by State Water as part of its ongoing business activities.

The Yanco Creek and Tributaries Advisory Council has had a representative on the Customer Service Committee and we have found it a useful vehicle for discussing our issues and also the issues with delivery of water across the valley. We are keen that our voice not be lost.

We also support the establishment of a Customer Charter. The Charter must include a detailed commitment by State Water to measurable and accountable customer service obligations. The document must also clearly outline State Water's expectations of its customers. State Water must report against the Charter and face sanctions for non-delivery of the obligations contained in the Charter.

### **STATE WIDE COMMUNITY CONSULTATION COMMITTEE**

We do not support the establishment of a State Water Specific State-wide Community Consultation Committee. The needs of customers and stakeholders will differ from valley to valley and this will not be adequately reflected by a State-wide Community Consultation Committee. This is also contrary to the Government's desire to see "local" management of government activities and policies such as natural resource management of which State Water is a significant player. A State-wide Committee would result in consultations being undertaken with individuals and groups significantly removed from day to day operations of State Water and the customers it serves. This is also somewhat of a duplication of the existing CSC's. State Water meets regularly with the Chairmen of the CSC's and this is a far more useful way of undertaking community consultation.

Yours Sincerely

Lee A. Furness  
***Executive Officer***