

State Water Corporation Price Review 2010,  
Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal,  
P.O. Box Q290,  
QVB Post Office, NSW. 1230.

Submission to IPART – Bulk Water Prices from 2010.

I wish to object most strongly to the proposed increases in regulated surface water for the Peel River. These Prices are unreasonable in the extreme and will make irrigation in the Peel River Valley unviable for most, if not all irrigators.

Most of the water that we use is actually unregulated water. ie. It is water that does not come from Chaffey Dam. It is water that has entered the system below Chaffey. When this parcel of water lands on the ground it has a certain value and when it enters the Peel River this particular parcel of water escalates in value and then continues to vary in price until it gets to South Australia. (should it make it). The value of this parcel of water in the Peel River bears no resemblance to the value of this parcel elsewhere. In the Peel River this parcel of water is treated as being Regulated water and set at an incredibly high value.

Water from the Peel River tops up the aquifers in the Peel basin which is then extracted as Groundwater at only a fraction of the cost that the Regulated users would expect to pay. Alternately if it is not used in the Peel Valley it flows into the Namoi River where some may be used to irrigate at a considerably cheaper rate than the Peel. Is this fair to have a different price for a parcel of water depending on where it is extracted?

The Government talks of level playing fields however having different prices for water is anything but fair. Our commodity prices reflect what we were receiving ten years ago but our input costs have risen at an alarming rate. This is putting undue stress on irrigators and in turn leads to depression.

Farming and irrigation is difficult, profits are dwindling (if there at all) and spare time is almost gone. Of course there is a flow on effect to the businesses of the Peel valley – they must suffer too. It is time that the cost of water was uniform. There is only one bucket and many irrigators are using this and paying different amounts for the same commodity.

Please consider the pricing issue carefully because there are not a lot of options.

Yours faithfully,

Thomas Woolaston.  
Director  
Stratharlie Pastoral Company P/L