

19<sup>th</sup> October, 2009

Mr James Cox  
Acting Chairman and C.E.O.  
Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal,  
P.O.Box Q290,  
QBV Post Office. NSW 1230



**Submission to IPART- Bulk Water Prices from 2010.  
Peel Valley Irrigation, Threatened Severe Pricing Increases.**

Dear Sir,

The Tamworth and surrounding District has been dependent for many years on the Peel River Valley and its contributing streams, not only for Tamworth and Villages water supply but, since the District was opened up many decades ago, for Industries such as Lucerne and Fodder production and considerable Dairying enterprises, Abattoirs, a substantial Malt Factory and various other Industries including Poultry.

Throughout those many years the Tamworth people have done a lot through self-help to build and maintain a reliable water supply using Dams and Wells which, by and large, were created and maintained by the local people's initiative. There have been two Dams Viz. Moore Creek Dam on Moore Creek on the northern edge of Tamworth, commissioned in 1898 and eventually silted up with granite sand, and the Dungowan Dam to the north east of Dungowan Village, built and subsequently commissioned by Tamworth Municipal Council in 1957. However the necessary pipeline was not connected until March, 1960. These Dams were supplemented for many years by wells in the alluvial flood plain also provided and maintained by Tamworth Council's own initiative.

A long awaited announcement was made in 1975 that Chaffey Dam at Bowling Alley Point would be built with a capacity of 62 megalitres. This after the site had been rejected years before. When the NSW Government eventually built the larger Chaffey Dam on the Peel River Tamworth City Council also contributed considerable monies for its construction.

Throughout all these decades substantial Industrial and Commercial enterprises have been fostered and maintained, due, in part at least, to the spirit of the people and the existence of reliable supporting infrastructure.

State Water's alleged intention to dramatically increase the price of bulk water could effectively price many enterprises out of business, therefore fracturing the economy of this demonstrated initiative of a vital inland community. If allowed to proceed to such a huge per megalitre increase and in light of the NSW State Government's prolonged lack of action in upgrading and extending Chaffey Dam, there is little doubt that Tamworth's economy could suffer very badly.

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**TAMWORTH**

Box 7006, New England M.S.C., 2348  
Phone: (02) 6768 3111  
Admin. Fax: (02) 6762 3369  
Operations Fax: (02) 6762 3370

**QUIRINDI**

P.O. Box 88, 2343  
Phone: (02) 6746 1833  
Fax: (02) 6746 1582

**GUNNEDAH**

P.O. Box 596, 2380  
Phone: (02) 6742 0644  
Fax: (02) 6742 3497

**NARRABRI**

P.O. Box 74, 2390  
Phone: (02) 6792 1966  
Fax: (02) 6792 1491

**WEE WAA**

Boolcarrol Road, 2388  
Phone: (02) 6795 4305  
Fax: (02) 6795 4799

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It seems hard to believe that more has not been done in harvesting from the huge amounts of water that run off at flood times, particularly catching and turning back the huge volumes of flood water that run into the sea.

My Credentials for writing this letter? I commenced farming on a mixed farm at Bithramere in 1948. Our family purchased another larger property in 1951, also a mixed farm. In 1957 we purchased an additional farm on the Peel River, growing irrigated lucerne hay and other crops. We subsequently added an adjoining river farm as a leasehold for six years.

In 1965 one of my brothers and I saw the opportunity to acquire a franchise for John Deere Farm Equipment in the Tamworth District. Our Business grew and eventually serviced the districts of Tamworth, Quirindi, Gunnedah, Wee Waa and Narrabri. For a period of three years we also serviced Walgett.

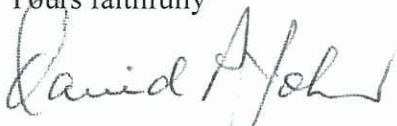
For many of these years our staffing level has remained fairly constant at 120 people. We have almost reached forty five years in business and consequently feel that we are very conversant with farming practices in our overall areas of responsibility.

Additionally, from 1974 to 1995 I served as an Alderman / Councillor with Tamworth City Council, serving eight years as Deputy Mayor and, from 1987 to 1995 serving eight years as Mayor.

Why Elected Government Members and their comrade bureaucratic Department members think they are gifted to dictate issues like water pricing without exhaustively considering the effect of their deliberations on country people's lives beggars belief.

It is well past time Governments should look back and evaluate the missed opportunities and acknowledge the unbelievably derelict way our infrastructure needs have been mishandled in recent decades and vow to begin making reparation and not grossly overcharge for water, the life-blood of the land.

Yours faithfully



David P. John OAM  
Managing Director