

AN INFORMATION BULLETIN FROM HARVEY WATER

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IRRIGATION REVIEW

IRRIGATION REVIEW IS A STRATEGIC VIEW

The government review of irrigation was tabled in the Lower House recently.

It represents a strategic, or long term, view of where irrigation and the management of the state's irrigation water resources are heading. It has 9 main directions and over 80 recommendations.

HARVEY WATER INVOLVEMENT

Harvey Water has been keenly interested in this review since the start and put in a comprehensive submission on behalf of shareholders. We have remained involved in the process at all times and have received a number of briefings along the way as well. We are confident the process has been fair and open and that our voice has been heard.

Harvey Water's view of the outcome is that it presents a big advance on the previous management of irrigation water resources. There are some changes involved which is normal for a review of this type. By and large we see the changes as being positives rather than problems. You can't always get everything you want. For example, the access to water in perpetuity under a license is a major step forward of great benefit and assurance for irrigators. We will continue to work to get the best possible result for irrigators.

IMPLEMENTATION

The task now is to work with the Implementation Committee to turn the recommendations into reality over time. We expect this to remain an open process with plenty of further discussion over the coming years.

NATIONAL WATER INITIATIVE

It also seems to more or less conform with most of the goals of the National Water Initiative (NWI) which sensibly apply to this state and not the Murray-Darling. If that is seen to be the case by the Federal Government, some of the \$2 billion NWI funds might then be more readily available in WA. This would be a major positive outcome.

COLLIE RIVER IRRIGATION DISTRICT

There is one section which speculates on the future of the Collie River Irrigation District. The strategic proposal there is that some or all of the Collie district could be closed down and the water used for other purposes, for example sent to the IWSS.

Harvey Water wishes to make absolutely clear to Collie irrigators that this is not something which has come from the cooperative. It is not something we have suggested, proposed or had any hand in promoting. It seems to have its origins in the Review team and has been developed without any involvement of the cooperative.

Our position is always that, first, we get the water salinity down to give the irrigators a fair go at developing alternative enterprises. That is why the cooperative was so keen to invest in the Collie River Salinity Recovery Project to get it up and running as soon as possible. We don't see that water quality improvement and trial of new ideas can take anything less than 5 years.

Collie shareholders can be assured that any suggestions as to the future of the Collie district, if they are different to what is happening now, will involve them in full discussions from the beginning. Harvey Water has no right to set any changes in land and water use and will not do so, except if irrigators want that to happen.

Please be assured that the review outcomes are only recommendations, they are not rules, regulations or law. They are open for discussion and debate and we will be doing that on behalf of irrigators. Collie irrigators could also be directly involved if it was in their best interests.

WANT MORE INFORMATION ?

Harvey Water also suggests that the best sources of facts, and not rumours, are your Directors and senior management staff, Geoff Calder, Steve Iceton and Jane Fetherstonhaugh.

The Irrigation Review has been posted on our web-site www.harveywater.com.au for those that are interested.

The Review team can also be contacted in the Office of Water Strategy in the Department of Premier and Cabinet.