

9 February 2010,
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The Productivity Commission,

Submission re; "Recovering Water in the Murray-Darling Basin."

For the "Recovering Water" plan to be effective there must be precise metering and adequate monitoring of all water taken, diverted, collected and/or stored, whether from rivers, etc., groundwater, or above ground floodwater. Accurate metering must be installed/determined at the initial point of water being taken, diverted and/or collected, for every license holder. Such water, also including that as put into storage, (eg, in onfarm dams); in any 12 month water year period, must not exceed the quantity of water which the license holder is entitled to use in such 12 month water year period. Such metering, together with continuing monitoring, would ensure that water transmission losses, eg, ground infiltration and evaporation, are accounted for and that no more water is taken than for which a license permits.

Whatever conditions, regulations, etc, which apply for "Recovering Water in the Murray-Darling Basin", must consistently be implemented on all consumptive water users, who have a license, allocation or authorisation, regardless of whether they are individuals or companies, environmental water holders, or Governments and/or their authorities, etc,. The relevant Water Acts must be ammended such that Governments are not exempted.

As State Water Plans are supposedly to be consistant with the Basin Plan, the Murray-Darling Basin Authority must have the necessary powers to enforce such, including nominated penalties for non-compliance.

When licenses, etc, are transferred, either through sale, or by arrangement for infrastructure upgrades, such water must retain the characteristics as to percentage able to be used in a particular water year, to remain as for that of irrigators, in the area/State from which it originates. This would apply to not only environmental licenses but also any which Government may acquire and then use, eg, for cities, industry, essential human needs, etc.

Currently the water year is July 1 to June 30 the next. Given that "regular" rainfall in the southern catchment, is normally mainly through autumn, winter and spring, a more definite idea of water available for consumption, is generally known by October, As such to assist with easier water useage planning, the water year should commence on October 1 and end as of the following September 30.

Thankyou.

Yours sincerely,  (Tom Loffler)