



# QUEENSLAND FARMERS' FEDERATION

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## Submission

28 September 2017

Committee Secretary  
Senate Standing Committees on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport  
PO Box 6100  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Via email: [rrat.sen@aph.gov.au](mailto:rrat.sen@aph.gov.au)

Dear Sir/Madam

### ***Re: Senate inquiry into 'The Integrity of the Water Market in the Murray-Darling Basin'***

The Queensland Farmers' Federation (QFF) is the united voice of intensive agriculture in Queensland. It is a federation that represents the interests of peak state and national agriculture industry organisations, which in turn collectively represent more than 13,000 primary producers across the state. QFF engages in a broad range of economic, social, environmental and regional issues of strategic importance to the productivity, sustainability and growth of the agricultural sector. QFF's mission is to secure a strong and sustainable future for Queensland's farmers by representing the common interests of our member organisations:

- CANEGROWERS
- Cotton Australia
- Growcom
- Nursery & Garden Industry Queensland (NGIQ)
- Queensland Chicken Growers Association (QCGA)
- Queensland Dairyfarmers' Organisation (QDO)
- Burdekin River Irrigation Area Irrigators Ltd (BRIA)
- Central Downs Irrigators Ltd (CDIL)
- Bundaberg Regional Irrigators Group (BRIG)
- Flower Association
- Pioneer Valley Water Cooperative Ltd (PV Water)
- Pork Queensland Inc.
- Queensland Chicken Meat Council (QCMC)
- Queensland United Egg Producers (QUEP)

QFF welcomes the opportunity to provide comment to the Senate inquiry into 'the integrity of the water market in the Murray-Darling Basin'. QFF understands that the Senate moved that the following matters be referred to the Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport References Committee for inquiry.

The united voice of intensive agriculture





- a. the allegations of theft and corruption in the management of water resources in the Murray-Darling Basin,
- b. the investigation and public disclosure by authorities, including the New South Wales Government and the Murray-Darling Basin Authority, of reported breaches within the Murray-Darling Basin, including the Barwon-Darling Water Sharing Plan,
- c. the actions of member states in responding to allegations of corruption and the potential undermining of the Murray-Darling Basin Plan,
- d. the use of Commonwealth-owned environmental water for irrigation purposes, and the impact on Basin communities and the environment,
- e. the operation, expenditure and oversight of the Water for the Environment Special Account, and
- f. any other related matters.

QFF understands that the Interim Report of the Matthews Inquiry into Water Administration and Compliance, recently delivered to the NSW Government, made recommendations to improve compliance with the regulations of the take of water for irrigation in NSW. Matthews recommends a range of measures to make the NSW arrangements more transparent, independent and effective.

QFF supports the need for metering in all irrigation areas across the states to be able to accurately measure water take and effectively manage compliance. Irrigators depend on robust and transparent regulation to help them manage their use of water, so compliance arrangements must have high standards of transparency and be well managed to ensure the system has the confidence of irrigators and wider community.

On 14 August 2017, the Queensland Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines, the Hon. Dr Anthony Lynham, announced an independent review was underway into rural water metering, stating that “effective metering and measurement is key to managing water resources and providing scientific integrity to water planning”.

QFF strongly supports this initiative, which will provide an independent metering review and examine the maintenance and operation of meters and water use reporting. The review will work with the findings of any national inquiry and provide its initial findings by November 2017.

QFF provides this submission without prejudice to any additional submission provided by our members or individual farmers. If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact Dr Georgina Davis at [georgina@qff.org.au](mailto:georgina@qff.org.au).

Yours sincerely

Travis Tobin  
Chief Executive Officer