

Roger Griffiths – Gannawarra Shire Manager of Economic Development.

We've seen it all. Since water trading started in 1995, we held about 350,000 megalitres, then, within our municipality, we have probably hold about half of that now. We've had dairy farmers walking off farms, we've had businesses close, our schools probably reduced by about 70% in some cases, and we've had to work out how to try and diversify our local economy, which is based on agriculture.

Greg Milner – table grape grower and irrigator (Irymple)

I think the narrative has to change in relation to the farming community, that we are now important food producers for this nation. And if the government of the day think that taking 450GL out of the system won't impact the food production in this region, then they're kidding themselves.

Geoff Rollinson – Gannawarra Shire CEO

It's ironic that the biggest issue facing Australia at the moment is cost of living pressures. Yet we've got a government that's hell bent on driving cost of living up by taking water away from the producers. It's just so bizarre. It's it, I find it. Interesting. The other thing I find interesting is the, the science. I put it akin to if my wife was to say to me how many litres of paint would require paint this room and I said, I need about 50 litres of paint. And I started painting and I got finished, got the job done in 40 litres thought I'll go back and get another 10 litres. it's just mind blowing for mine.

Frank Dimasi – Mildura grower and Chair of Lower Murray Water Strategic Advisory Committee

We've seen water prices increased quite substantially in our district. In fact, this region is the most expensive place to do business with your irrigation in the country. Even though it was one of the first established in the country. Every millilitre of water that leaves this district It has unmeasurable and measurable effects around the nation. This this area, the Sunraysia district from Nyah to the South South Australian Border produces about \$9.2 billion worth of export income. It's the engine room that helps pay the bills.

Alan Whyte – Lower Darling irrigator

I would suggest that water buybacks have become I guess, more significant is largely (because of) the inability to do the 450 gigs of water without adverse impacts

Peter Gordon, Gordon Agencies (water broker)

I can't understand how this law is in place with the Coalition, then the next minute the Labor government is in power and they change the law to take 450gl. I can't see the advantage of the government buying the water back. Because it doesn't stay in the system. It goes out of the system, and it's finished. And people don't have access to their water. So the water market goes up because there's less water in the system to trade or people to use

Nathan Hancock – CEO Citrus Australia

We very much oppose buybacks over and above the limit that was previously said, we understand that with some flexibility for businesses who do want to accept (but) we don't want to see wholesale discharge of water out of the consumptive pool. The point I'd make is that we're seeing the influence of buybacks across the system already with the increasing production of things like citrus and almonds, where it's deemed that those crops can pay more for water to be profitable. But I put to you that the last couple of seasons for the citrus industry and perhaps others in the in the basin have been very difficult.

Hugh Baird – CEO Mildura Fruit Juices Australia

I think you've got to divide this current water scenario into two sections. One is, why is it being put in place? And the other is does it actually achieve the strategic direction that is required? And I don't think it achieves either, it achieves one (thing) and that is political.