



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Standing Committee on Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

MEDIA ALERT

Issued: 19 August 2003

Snowy Hydro and Engineers Australia to appear at inquiry into future water supplies for Australia's rural industries and communities

Public hearing in Canberra, Wednesday 20 August, 2003

The House of Representatives Agriculture Committee is examining the role of the Commonwealth in ensuring adequate and sustainable future water supplies for communities and industries in rural and regional Australia.

This Wednesday (20 August) the committee will conduct the twentieth public hearing of its inquiry. Appearing will be representatives of Snowy Hydro and Engineers Australia.

Snowy Hydro's submission (No. 55 on the Inquiry web site) draws attention "to the benefits that cloud seeding in the Snowy Mountains could offer to the river health/resource availability of the River Murray."

Engineers Australia (formerly known as Institution of Engineers Australia) made a major contribution to the water debate by co-sponsoring the 1999 report '*Water and the Australian Economy*'. In its submission to this Inquiry (no. 102) Engineers Australia recommends that the Commonwealth builds on the research and development base it already has by providing funding for more research into the impact of rural water usage on biodiversity, and into better farming practices and irrigation methods. This should be combined with a comprehensive upgrade of irrigation infrastructure.

The Committee Chair, Mrs Kay Elson MP, says the inquiry has generated considerable interest around Australia, with more than 160 submissions received from concerned organisations and individuals.

All submissions appear on the inquiry website at:
www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/primind/waterinq/subs.htm

Media and the public are most welcome to attend the public hearing, details of which appear below.

PUBLIC HEARING: 5pm, Wednesday 20 August 2003
WHERE: Committee Room 1R3, Parliament House, Canberra
Scheduled Witness:
5.00pm Snowy Hydro
5.45pm Engineers Australia

A transcript of the hearing will appear on the inquiry website a few days after the hearing.

For media comment, please contact:

Mrs Kay Elson MP, Chair, House Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Committee, on (02) 6277 4274

For background information, including the full terms of reference and copies of submissions, please contact the Committee secretariat on (02) 6277 4500 or visit the Inquiry website at www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/primind/waterinq/index.htm