



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Standing Committee on Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

MEDIA ALERT

Issued: 13 August 2003

Irrigation, environment and NSW local government groups at inquiry into future water supplies for Australia's rural industries and communities

Public hearing in Sydney on Friday 15 August

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

As part of its inquiry, the Committee will visit **Sydney** on **Friday 15 August** to gather evidence from peak bodies. This will be the 19th public hearing of the inquiry.

Four environmental groups (see below) made a joint submission and will appear together. Evidence will also be taken from the Australian Water Association, NSW Irrigator's Council, NSW local governments, and the Twynam Agricultural Group.

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.

"Getting water management right, which includes the balance of allocations between different users, is crucial not only for the prosperity of rural Australia, but the nation as a whole," Mrs Elson said.

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

PUBLIC HEARING:

**Friday, 15 August 2003 from 9.00am to 3.00pm at Commonwealth Parliament Offices,
Level 8, 70 Phillip St, Sydney**

Scheduled Witnesses:

- 9am, Australian Water Association
- 9.45am, Environmental Groups (World Wide Fund for Nature, Australian Conservation Foundation, Nature Conservation Council of NSW, Inland Rivers Network)
- 10.45am, NSW Irrigator's Council
- 11.30am, Local Government Association of NSW and the Shires Association of NSW
- 1.30pm, Irrigation Association of Australia
- 2.15pm, Twynam Agricultural Group

For **media comment**, please contact:

Kay Elson, House Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Committee Chair, on (07) 3807 6340

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/index.htm