



**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STANDING COMMITTEE
ON REGIONAL AUSTRALIA**
INQUIRY INTO THE PROPOSED MURRAY-DARLING BASIN PLAN

Chair: Mr Tony Windsor MP

INQUIRY INTO THE PROPOSED MURRAY-DARLING BASIN PLAN
The River, Our Future, Your Say

Regional Australia Committee announces interim findings

Today, Chair of the Regional Australia Committee, Mr Tony Windsor MP has announced that he has written on behalf of the Committee to the Minister for Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities, Tony Burke and the Minister for Regional Australia, Regional Development and Local Government, Simon Crean to raise concerns about a number of urgent issues that have arisen in the Murray Darling Inquiry to date.

The Committee is seeking that the Ministers investigate:

- the impact of the so called 'Swiss cheese' effect of water buy backs on irrigation districts and that, with urgency, more strategic buy back arrangement be considered;
- the impact of the current taxation arrangements on irrigators as a result of water reform such as grants for investments in water efficiency;
- the implications of the Murray Darling Basin Authority's consideration of overbank flows in their modelling of the water requirements of the environmental icon sites and, in consultation with stakeholders, opportunities for engineering alternatives.

Mr Windsor said that it is a consensus view of the Committee that these issues be addressed as a matter of priority and so has taken the unusual step of raising these issues prior to tabling its report, due in May 2011.

For media comment: contact the Chair's media advisor, Graham Nuttall on 0412 916 040.

For information on the inquiry: contact the Secretariat on (02) 6277 4162, email ra.reps@aph.gov.au or visit the Committee website at <http://www.aph.gov.au/mdj>