

24 December 2010

Submission No: **SOS**
Date Received: **04/01/2011**
Secretary: **SC**

Committee Secretary
House of Representatives Standing Committee on Regional Australia
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Sir

Re: Inquiry into the impact of the Murray-Darling Basin Plan

I would like to submit a brief response to the Parliamentary inquiry into the recently released "Guide to the Proposed Basin Plan" and wish to register concerns relating to the Guide. This response has been prepared at a management level and has not been endorsed by the elected body of the Wagga Wagga City Council due to time constraints. The concerns are outlined as follows:

- a lack of consultation with Council, key stakeholders and the community in developing the Guide;
- a lack of consideration of the socio-economic impacts which will ensue if the subsequent Plan adopts the Guide's proposals;
- potential reductions in town water supplies;
- a significant reduction in food and fibre production;
- the obviously inaccurate determination of job and economic losses;
- insufficient consideration given to alternative, engineering options;
- a total reliance on largely unsubstantiated science, based on modelling of **regulated** river systems without historical benchmarks for such systems;
- no consideration of compensation to the general community and its associated businesses and industries.

While Council fully supports the overall objectives of improving the ecology of the Basin's river systems, it is considered that the emphasis on significant reductions in surface water diversions is too simplistic.

We are extremely concerned that such proposals will:

- have a seriously adverse impact on the economy and growth prospects for Wagga Wagga and the surrounding region;
- have serious flow-on community impacts;
- cause a loss of services and potentially a reduction in the standard of living of our residents;
- limit the availability of water for irrigating sporting fields, parks and open spaces, further impacting on our community's standard of living.

As a result of the above issues and concerns, Council would like to be closely involved in the consultation processes for the Murrumbidgee Region and we request a seat at any round table discussions and/or deliberations.

Yours faithfully

Phil Pinyon
General Manager