



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Standing Committee on Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

MEDIA ALERT

Issued:

Inquiry into future water supplies to look more closely at scientific evidence

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.

The Committee was scheduled to table its report early in 2004.

However in reviewing the evidence gathered to date, the Committee has identified a need to further assess the scientific knowledge that is available to policy makers and planners before it finalises its report and recommendations.

The Committee Chair, Mrs Kay Elson MP, says the inquiry has generated considerable interest around Australia, with 180 submissions received from concerned organisations and individuals.

"This is a subject of vital interest for Australia's future. 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.

"The Committee believes that gathering the additional evidence will make the final report even more constructive. This is such an important subject that we must get it right", said Mrs Elson.

This will mean the report will likely be tabled mid-year.

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

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/wateringq/index.htm