



LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE NO 7 – PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT

**MEDIA RELEASE**  
**REPORT TABLED - INQUIRY INTO RATIONALE FOR, AND**  
**IMPACTS OF, NEW DAMS AND OTHER WATER**  
**INFRASTRUCTURE IN NSW – PART 1**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**18 March 2021**

An Upper House inquiry into the rationale for, and impacts of, new dams and other water infrastructure has today released Part 1 of its final report. The inquiry was established in August 2020 to examine a number of new water infrastructure projects proposed by the NSW Government. This report examines the proposed raising of the Wyangala Dam wall project. Part 2 will examine the other projects identified in the inquiry terms of reference.

The Chair of the committee, Ms Cate Faehrmann MLC said:

'There is no doubt that there is a need to ensure reliable water supply for the Lachlan Valley. However, this Inquiry the Government has not demonstrated that raising the Wyangala Dam wall is a cost-effective or sustainable solution to achieve this'.

'The Minister for Water committed to this project without a business case or environmental assessment. Two years later we still don't have either, yet many witnesses provided evidence that they assumed the dam was going ahead despite this'.

'The Committee heard from many witnesses about the negative impacts of dams on downstream communities and ecosystems. The threats that raising Wyangala Dam's wall posed to internationally significant wetlands and threatened bird species was particularly compelling'.

'Alternative options to addressing water security in the Lachlan Valley were not given due consideration before the government announced it would raise the Wyangala Dam wall, and the evidence received during the Inquiry about the potential cost blowout of the dam was concerning'.

'This was largely a consensus report which is important. However, there are two Dissenting Statements included at the back of the report which outlines points where consensus was not reached between members on key points'.

'The committee has made 8 findings and 4 recommendations, and ultimately recommended that the NSW Government address the significant concerns raised during the Inquiry in the final business case and any environmental studies. This recommendation was passed with the support of all members after a recommendation for the Government to not proceed with the project due to the significant and persuasive arguments against it did not receive majority support', Ms Faehrmann said.

The report is available on the [committee's website](#).

–ENDS–

*For further information, please contact the office of Committee Chair, Ms Cate Faehrmann MLC, on (02) 9230 3771 or 0487 247 960.*