

# Natural Resources Access Regulator

The Hon. Dr. Amanda Cohn MLC  
Chair, Portfolio Committee No.2  
NSW Parliament House  
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Dear Chair

## Correction to transcript: NRAR Chief Regulatory Officer: Grant Barnes

### Portfolio Committee No2: Water, Housing, Homelessness, Mental Health, Youth, the North Coast

I recently appeared as a witness at the 22 August 2025 Budget Estimates hearing for Portfolio Committee No.2: Water, Housing, Homelessness, Mental Health, Youth and the North Coast on behalf of the Natural Resources Access Regulator (NRAR). I seek to correct two misstatements I made during this testimony.

On page 16 of the uncorrected transcript for this hearing I answer a question from the Hon. Rose Jackson MLC as follows:

*The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: I can ask Mr Barnes in relation to whether it has issued a stop work order to a government agency before. I will just clarify, Ms Overall, whilst the stop work order was issued to DCCEEW, it was not issued to the Water Group; it was issued to CPHR, the New South Wales environmental water holder. That is under Minister Sharpe. But, Mr Barnes, have you ever issued a stop work order to a government agency previously?*

*GRANT BARNES: No, we have not.*

I misheard the Minister's question as "....have you ever issued a stop work order to another government agency?", and on review of the transcript I understand the question accurately. I can

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confirm that NRAR has previously issued a stop work order to the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service in relation to the initial NRAR investigation into water use at Toorale National Park.

On page 67 of the uncorrected transcript for this hearing I answer a question from the Hon. Cate Faehrmann MLC as follows:

*Ms CATE FAEHRMANN: Thank you. That's the clearest answer I think we've had all day. Blueberries, Mr Barnes.*

*GRANT BARNES: That's hardly a segue.*

*Ms CATE FAEHRMANN: It's not a segue. NRAR did a compliance audit of blueberries back in 2020. It was blueberry farms, I should say, not the berries themselves. It found that quite a few were not compliant. Out of 31 farms inspected around the Coffs Harbour region during the first two stages of the clampdown, 28 were alleged to be noncompliant with water laws. That was the case at the time?*

*GRANT BARNES: At the time. Yes, that's correct.*

*Ms CATE FAEHRMANN: What's the update on that?*

*GRANT BARNES: In relation to your question from the previous hearing, we explored those open directions. Now I can say that there are four remaining directions that have not been complied with and are now subject to escalated enforcement action.*

I can confirm that there are three remaining directions that have not been complied with and are now subject to escalated enforcement action.

Many thanks for your assistance correcting these misstatements.

Yours sincerely

Grant Barnes

Chief Regulatory Officer

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