

**Submission  
No 5**

**INQUIRY INTO ADEQUACY OF WATER STORAGES IN  
NSW**

**Name:** Mr John H Jury

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14 JUL 2012

TO Standing Committee on State Development

RE Adequacy of water storages in NSW.

I submit my views on your points of reference.

(a) The insufficiency of stored water was highlighted during the previous ten years drought. A Minister for Utilities was asked during the end of that period 'why haven't more dams been built'? His reply was 'what is the use of building dams when there is no rain'. More dams are needed to contain some of the millions of acre feet of water running back into the ocean.

Our population is growing and droughts will occur in the future. In 1877 it was reported in Australian newspapers that the colonies were suffering from a severe shortage of water following a long drought. The marshes had dried up.

(b) Models can only be based on the results of a large amount of research during the periods of development of the various industries using water and the rate of growth of the population.

© Storage management practices must be centred on metering and charging for the water used. It will be necessary to merge riparian rights with this policy. On behalf of the general economy the government could meet half of the costs.

Too much has been said about the environment relating to rivers. Much has been said about healthy rivers. Rivers are nature's drains to get surplus water back to the ocean.

(d) All National Parks should be declared water conservation areas, and where the terrain is suitable, at least one dam is built in each NP.

(e) Half of Europe has water which must be boiled before drinking.

(f) The two major problems which must be solved are Finance and Politics. Firstly, long term financing of expenditure on the capital works of dams must be reintroduced. For a hundred years this was the way all utilities were created, not out of revenue. The present practice of selling assets so as to be able to build another has resulted in the mess of companies involved with electricity. Each has to pay for its capital and pay a dividend to the government. Sydney water has to pay an annual dividend of two hundred million dollars to the State Government. Is this where all water supplies are going?

Secondly, to illustrate the political aspect of future utility works, the Upper Mangrove Creek Dam site was moved from a point downstream to a point in the upper area of the creeks, catchment. The thought was that in the adjacent National Park, waters could be directed back to the dam. Its catchment area now is 100 square km and it has never been more than half full. Recently a \$120 million pipeline was completed which has to pump water about 25 km up a valley then up an escarpment till it can flow down into the dam. Who is going to pay the electricity bill? The Government? It was a previous Premier who stopped the use of the NP as a water collecting area for the dam.

Another example of political interference in infrastructure was when building a dam in the Hunter region was cancelled. A brief note in a newspaper said the Liberal party had agreed with the Labour party on reading a government assessment. After two letters and 3 phone calls to the local members' office, I was told that if it proceeded it was likely that three Greens would be elected in the forthcoming election. That was the last State election.

What hope for infrastructure in the future?

FROM John H. Jury

Retired now, I have worked in four local councils, where apart from general works, one distributed electricity, two produced and distributed gas, and two had water supply and sewage works.

Sincerely J.H.Jury.

29/06/2012.