

**Submission
No 78**

INQUIRY INTO WATER AUGMENTATION

Name: Mr Greg Sandford

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Groundwater is a resource that has been managed poorly in the past, but has huge untapped potential if managed correctly. I recently returned from a Farm study tour of USA, and much of their irrigated land is sourced from underground. Any long term plan for water supply for NSW must include Groundwater. Case Study Groundwater reductions in the Murray Valley The NSW Govt [under orders from the Commonwealth] recently compulsorily acquired 68% of Groundwater entitlements in the Murray Valley. Even though the High Court of Australia ruled our Groundwater entitlements were PROPERTY no compensation was paid. A socio economic study was not done, even though it is compulsory The science was wrong, the Govt knew it, and yet they still proceeded. the purpose of the cuts was to achieve balance i.e. the amount extracted equals the amount entering. The CSIRO report states that maximum extraction is now 28% of recharge. There was no community consultation Many farmers had their entitlements mortgaged to the Bank. They lost their entitlements, up to 85% in places, so lost equity in their loan. Many lost their farms, I know of 2 that took their lives. The committee needs to recommend a thorough study of our Groundwater reserves. The water taken off irrigators needs to be returned and a new allocation implemented based on Groundwater levels, as is the case with Dam levels for surface irrigation. Regards Greg Sandford