

**Submission
No 98**

INQUIRY INTO WATER AUGMENTATION

Name: Mr Anthony Nicholls

Date received: 10 December 2016

General Purpose Standing Committee No. 5

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to this inquiry.

Firstly I would like to commend the NSW Office of Water for their management of the Burrinjuck Dam storage level during September and October 2016. Through diligent releases of water into the Murrumbidgee River between regular rain events, they were able to avoid a major downstream flood and minimize damage to property and crops.

In regard to the terms of reference relating to this enquiry I would like to consider point 1(d), which refers to flood history and the financial and human cost.

I am one of many farmers who grow crops and livestock along the Murrumbidgee River floodplain. Our property is near Gundagai. While we accept the inevitable risk of flooding, when it does happen, we stand to lose significant amounts of income through loss of crops and potentially livestock. In some cases it can take more than a year to fully recover. There is also a clear human cost which is the mental stress of dealing with large losses and then the huge extra amount of work required to clean up, re fence and re plant. Erosion of soil due to fast moving water is also a large risk.

I believe that an assessment of dam storage level management could improve the chances of mitigating major flood events and reducing the huge cost to farmers.

We would like to see the Office of Water make earlier releases from Burrinjuck Dam under certain circumstances. These circumstances would include; when the catchment area is near to saturation, a wetter than average year is being experienced, and a further major rain event is forecast.

This would increase the chances of not getting the dam to maximum capacity but greatly reduce the risk of losses to farmers. I believe this is an acceptable sharing of risk.

Yours Sincerely,
Anthony Nicholls