

**INQUIRY INTO RATIONALE FOR, AND IMPACTS OF,
NEW DAMS AND OTHER WATER INFRASTRUCTURE IN
NSW**

Name: Name suppressed
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Partially
Confidential

It appears that, for the following reasons, the proposed new Dungowan dam constitutes a political statement rather than an effort to address water security for Tamworth:

A. Financial Aspects

1. Without a current business case/plan underpinning the proposed allocation of \$484million, this funding cannot be justified.
2. The current proposal may have severe financial implications (estimates range from \$2,000 to \$5,000 pa) for Tamworth residents, yet these residents have not been asked to provide their informed consent.
3. No estimated cost re: price of water, allocation to intended users nor any implication regarding final ownership structure have been resolved.
4. No alternative options in respect of the most efficient use of such funds are provided.

B. Environmental Aspects

1. In the absence of climate change modeling, this new dam may not only prove to be a colossal waste of money but also a 'white elephant'.
2. Alternative options, including water saving measures (by individuals, agricultural businesses, irrigators and corporations), water efficiency measures and technology innovations, are not canvassed.
3. Implications for the local fauna (riverine ecosystem) and flora are absent, yet such matters contribute to quality of life issues for local residents.

Summary:

This proposed allocation of about \$484million to the Dungowan dam constitutes a classic example of 'cart before the horse'. Before arriving at an allocation of \$484million to a specific project to address a seeming need (eg. water security for Tamworth) it is absolutely essential to firstly assess the need, to then proceed to evaluate all the parameters (including environmental factors such a climate change with reduced rainfall amounts, prolonged and more frequent droughts) that impact on meeting this need, assess currently available technologies and then map out a range of options that can meet this need on an effective, long term and secure basis as well as being financially efficient. Such an approach underpins all solid business and/or government investment decisions, yet is totally disregarded in this case.

As it stands, the only matter that can be agreed on is that, should this dam ever be built, the proposed \$484million allocation, will prove to be woefully inadequate.