

10 April 2012

Ms S Dunstone
Acting Committee Secretary
Senate Environment and Communications
Legislation Committee
Via email: ec.sen@aph.gov.au

Dear Ms Dunstone

Inquiry into the National Water Commission Amendment Bill 2012

The National Farmers' Federation (NFF) thanks you for the opportunity to make a submission on the above Bill.

The NFF is an organisation that advocated for the establishment of the National Water Initiative (NWI), which led to the National Water Commission in 2004. While the NWI remains the blueprint for water reform in Australia, it should be noted that full implementation remains incomplete.

The NWC remains an appropriate body to continue oversight of the NWI and other matters that may be assigned to it by Governments in the future.

NFF welcomes the Bill that will continue to see NWC provide independent oversight on water reform in Australian. Importantly, the Bill provides flexibility to the NWC to determine, in conjunction with jurisdictions and stakeholders, the most appropriate forward work program that will deliver the high-level water reforms that Australia aspires to.

NFF understands that the NWC budget will be appropriated annually from the Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Populations and Community. It would be hoped that the appropriation is sufficient to ensure that the NWC is able to conduct its functions in a timely manner and not compromise the water reform effort. To this end, particular attention should be paid to the relevant provisions in the Bill.

The NFF looks forward to continue working constructively with the NWC over the coming years.

Yours sincerely

MATT LINNEGAR

Chief Executive Officer