



The Hon Niall Blair MLC
Minister for Primary Industries
Minister for Lands and Water

IM15/18635

Senator Anne Ruston
Chair
Environment and Communications Legislation Committee
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600
ec.sen@aph.gov.au

Dear Senator

Inquiry into the Water Amendment Bill 2015

Thank you for your letter of 18 June 2015 concerning the Water Amendment Bill 2015 and the proposed amendments.

In principle the NSW Government does not object to the proposed cap on buybacks or the extension of measures for achieving additional water recovery to include off-farm measures. However there remain issues more broadly around the Commonwealth's water recovery approach.

The Commonwealth should be focusing on gap bridging water savings infrastructure projects or gap reducing SDL supply measure adjustments to meet the water recovery target. The NSW Government does not support any further non-strategic open buybacks.

Similarly the NSW Government concern is with the need for an additional 450 GL of water to be recovered. The Commonwealth should first demonstrate the outcomes that are being achieved with the current volumes of environmental water before embarking on further water recovery.

The objective of achieving the recovery with neutral or improved socio-economic impacts is vitally important. I would expect that the criteria for the recovery program would be brought forward for the state jurisdictions' review.

Yours sincerely

The Hon Niall Blair MLC
Minister for Primary Industries
Minister for Lands and Water

30 JUL 2015