



## **The Goulburn Valley Environment Group Inc.**

**House of Representatives Standing Committee on the Environment and Energy**

**Inquiry into the management and use of Commonwealth environmental water.**

The Goulburn Valley Environment Group (GVEG) values highly the role and performance of the CEWH in delivering the valuable environmental water resources of the Murray Darling River systems. We believe it critical that the CEWH maintains its independence and is allocated sufficient funding to carry out its responsibilities. We offer the following brief comments in relation this this current inquiry.

1. Maximising the use of environmental water for the protection and restoration of environmental assets;
  - (a) **the performance of the CEWH and consequently the effectiveness of environmental water is being restricted by the inaction Victorian and NSW Governments to implement constraint management strategies. These strategies are a requirement of the Basin Plan and essential for the efficient use of CEWH water.**
  - (b) **The Victorian Government has also been requested by the CEWH to remove feral horses from the Barmah National Park. Despite years of consultations these horses remain a major threat to wetlands in this Ramsar listed site.**
2. Considering innovative approaches for the use of environmental water; and options for improving community engagement and awareness of the way in which environmental water is managed: **The partnering with community based NGO's should be further considered as a means of both linking the CEWH to local communities and achieving value for effort in watering wetlands that may not naturally benefit from environmental watering's.**

Yours sincerely,

**John Pettigrew GVEG President**

***Protecting the environment for generations to come***