

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STANDING COMMITTEE
ON REGIONAL AUSTRALIA**

INQUIRY INTO THE WATER AMENDMENT (WATER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT SPECIAL ACCOUNTS) BILL 2012

*Chair: Mr Tony Windsor MP
Deputy Chair: Mr Steve Gibbons MP***INQUIRY INTO THE WATER AMENDMENT (WATER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT SPECIAL
ACCOUNT) BILL 2012****Regional Australia Committee calls for clarity in the
Water Special Account Bill**

The House of Representatives Standing Committee on Regional Australia has today tabled its report into the Water Amendment (Water for the Environment Special Account) Bill 2012. Though supporting the intent of the Bill, the Committee's report recommends that the Bill be amended to provide clarity.

The Bill establishes a \$1.77 billion special account for infrastructure improvement projects that seek to improve water efficiency in the Murray-Darling Basin. It is anticipated that these projects will inject a further 450GL of environmental water into the Basin.

'In its previous reports on the Murray-Darling Basin, the Committee recommended that infrastructure improvement works be conducted to improve the water efficiency of the Basin. The Committee is pleased to see that the Government is acting upon this recommendation', Chair of the Committee, Tony Windsor MP said. 'However, provisions of the Bill are not clearly worded, particularly those relating to the Commonwealth's purchase of water access rights'.

The Committee's report recommends that provisions of the Bill be amended to provide clarity to the Bill, specifically that the Special Account will not be used by the Commonwealth to fund general water buybacks. The Committee also recommends that the Government amend the Bill to clarify the objective and intent of the Bill.

The report is available from the Committee's website – www.aph.gov.au/ra.

For media comment: contact the Chair's media advisor, Graham Nuttall on 0412 916 040.
For information on the inquiry: contact the Secretariat on (02) 6277 4162 or 0407 406 337, email ra.reps@aph.gov.au or visit the Committee website at <http://www.aph.gov.au/ra>