



Clerk Assistant (Committees)
House of Representatives
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Re: Standing Committee on Regional Australia

Inquiry into the impact of the Murray-Darling Basin Plan in Regional Australia

I am writing to you with reference to your proposed visit to Deniliquin and public meeting on Monday 24th January 2011. I ask your permission to attend the public hearing on behalf of my business Mainland Finance and our clients.

Our business has offices in Deniliquin, Bendigo, Gunnedah, Wagga and Port Macquarie and apart from Port Macquarie our remaining offices all fall within the Murray Darling Basin. There is no doubt that the final plan will have an effect upon our clients and our business, the very fact that there is a high level of uncertainty within these communities is in its self stifling any recovery from what has been a long and debilitating drought.

Based upon our own business experience in these regional areas over many years it would appear to me that the extent of social dislocation and the full extent of potential jobs losses have been grossly underestimated. If the recent experience inflicted upon our community by closure of the red gum forests and ancillary industries is in any way an indication as to how this plan will be implemented and how communities may be compensated, then we are a long way from providing an equitable and constructive solution to issues that are confronting your committee.

I look forward to your response in due course.

Harold Clapham
Mainland Finance - Deniliquin