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Your submission for this review:

Water NSW should NOT be allowed to raise its prices anywhere near what they are seeking, for the following reasons, 1. Water NSW does not supply a quality product. The water is contaminated by salt from tributaries and from water released illegally by some mine sites. The quality of the water is recorded regularly by Maitland Council, and those results are available online to verify. The depth of water of the Hunter River at Luskintyre is subject to the downriver movement of a sand plug from the major floods of the 1950's. Water NSW does not do anything to alleviate this problem. I recently waited a week for water levels to rise enough so that I could pump stock water with a 2 inch foot valve. 3. DPIE changed the law on our requirements to pump water, and all licences (except stock and domestic) needed to have an AS4747 meter, telemetry, certification and earthworks done to use our water, deeded to us by the State Government. This work would have cost us \$10 to 15 thousand dollars to pump a couple of hundred dollars worth of water. This was economically unsound, and as such, we have not been able to use irrigation for the past 4 years. Despite this, we and all other small licence holders have been paying increasing fees and charges on something we were legally not allowed to touch. There was no consultation in this process. 4. Consultation. There is no consultation between Water NSW, DPIE (or whatever they are now known as), NRAR and water users. There is a group who meets to hear what those bodies are going to do, but no election that I know of takes place to place persons in those positions to represent water users, and those meetings are one way information flows. Consequently, water users get told what will be done, but have NO input into the programs, other than to fund them through increased fees and charges. Water Users don't know if works proposed are put out to tender, whether equipment is bought, leased or hired, in fact if any attempt is made by these organisations that we fund, are making any effort to streamline costs to minimise pricing on us. Water NSW is quite capable of sending out bills and a glossy brochure to licence holders, but it does no financial analysis to us, licence holders, who contribute to its works and maintenance program. 5. Water NSW and the State Government charges licence holders monies for maintenance and upgrades to the dams and other works. Other users pay nothing. Those who go wakeboarding, canoeing, fishing, sailing or swimming on the dams we use, pay nothing. The costs are spread unfairly. These dams are a state asset, but not all of the states citizens pay. We, the water licence holders are being asked to pay more and more each year, for what is a poor quality product. These costs need to be spread over the whole community, or the cost of food production will make agriculture in this state unsustainable. With rainfall becoming more erratic, there will be a time when this water, deeded to us, will be essential to overcome the effects of global warming. It is already difficult to establish summer and winter feed crops without irrigation, because of the DPIE'S ridiculous metering policy, don't price it out of existence. 6. Waste. Water NSW is a State Government owned monopoly. Their is no scrutiny of its spending by water users. We cannot determine if it is spending money in a cost effective or timely manner. I know that they are wasting money by the machines they drive around the district in, for example, a dual cab Toyota Landcruiser utility, when a less expensive vehicle could do the job. Water NSW also mails out a "Customer Newsletter" with each bill. This is a coloured document. It is one page and usually has the same information repeated over and over. Websites, compliance...blah,blah, blah. This is mailed to all who receive paper bills...at what cost and to what benefit ? None. How many people work for how many hours to concoct this literature? Could it not be black and white, could it no be once a year ? These are just two examples of waste in this organisation, undoubtedly there are many more, but those largesses will not be eliminated if IPART continually grants increases in water fees and charges to Water NSW. It is time that Water NSW looked to improve its financial efficiency, just as we, the water license holders have to do, everytime Water NSW is granted an increase. (I assume you understand that primary producers are price takers, not price makers, and that the market does not grant us an increase in commodity prices when we have to pay more for inputs like water). In summing up, we are not getting what we pay for, either by legislation (metering rules), or by water quality. We have no input into the decision making as to how Water NSW will spend our contribution, or any capacity to review their expenditure. Only water licence holders pay the fees to maintain and upgrade the dams and facilities, why ? We can't afford this.



