



NSW IRRIGATORS' COUNCIL

MEDIA RELEASE

19 June 2009

Irrigators Welcome NSW Infrastructure Investment

The NSW Irrigators Council has welcomed Commonwealth Water Minister Penny Wong's announcement that the \$650m Irrigation Infrastructure Operators Investment Program is now open for applications.

Council Chief Executive Officer Andrew Gregson says spending on infrastructure is a sensible way of addressing the needs of the Murray Darling Basin.

"We've maintained all along that infrastructure investment provides the best outcome for all parties – it provides environmental water whilst maintaining the productivity that supports local economies, communities and jobs.

"The key to successful reform of the Basin is to maintain its output whilst using fewer inputs – continuing to grow the same amount of food and fibre whilst using less water. By upgrading infrastructure, we can reduce the amount of water that is lost through evaporation and seepage. That water can be transferred to environmental use with no impact on production.

The Council has noted that separate funding programs for on-farm infrastructure upgrades have still not been rolled out.

"Significant water savings are available on farm across the Basin – that's why we worked with Governments of all flavours to have significant funds set aside for them. If Governments – State and Commonwealth – are serious about sensibly addressing the issues of the Basin, then these funds must flow immediately."

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