



25 July 2009

Why the Spin, Minister Wong?

The NSW Irrigators Council is perplexed as to why Commonwealth Minister for Water, Senator Penny Wong, has felt the need to add some spin to her announcement today of the volume of water purchased by the Government in the Murray Darling Basin.

In her statement (accessible [here](#)), Minister Wong advises the results of the purchasing program to date and notes the volumes removed from various states. She identifies the largest purchase – Twynam – and then removes that purchase from her categorisation of state contributions.

Council Chief Executive Officer Andrew Gregson says the result is to significantly understate the contribution of NSW – or to significantly *overstate* the contribution of Victoria.

“Minister Wong says that 55% is from Victoria and 44% from NSW – based on the exclusion of Twynam. But why remove Twynam? Twynam’s entitlements were issued by NSW and so quite clearly must count toward the NSW figure.

“The figures used by Minister Wong are quite clearly misleading – the purchasing program has derived 65% of its water from New South Wales and only 34% from Victoria.

“That is, New South Wales has contributed nearly *twice* the volume contributed by Victoria. What’s wrong with disclosing that figure? Where’s the benefit in skewing the numbers to make it look like Victoria is doing something that it is clearly not?

“Minister Wong needs to acknowledge that New South Wales has done more than any other jurisdiction to assist in meeting Commonwealth objectives.

“Through infrastructure programs this state and its irrigators will continue to contribute. Recognition of that contribution is simple, Minister – how about acknowledging us?

ENDS

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