



NSW IRRIGATORS' COUNCIL

## *MEDIA RELEASE*

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### State Water IPART Delay “Treats Irrigators with Contempt”

NSW Irrigators Council believes that stakeholders have been kept in the dark by State Water and poorly treated by IPART over a delay in access to the State Water submission to the independent pricing authority.

IPART has commenced the process of setting prices for access to bulk water for 2010 – 2014. A submission from State Water – which will seek particular pricing details and on which stakeholders will comment – was due last Friday (11 September).

Irrigators Council Chief Executive Officer Andrew Gregson says stakeholders – including his group – are not allowed access to the document.

“State Water and IPART tell us that the submission has been lodged, but that we’re not allowed to see it until the NSW Budget Committee approves it on Wednesday.

“As far as we’re concerned, until the document is available to us then this process can’t commence. We believe that State Water has not met the timeframe obligation and IPART should respond accordingly.

“Telling us that a submission is lodged yet not letting us see it is treating us with contempt.

“We’ve planned our resource commitment to enable a meaningful response on behalf of the 12,000 Water Access License holders in NSW in the timeframe allowed for months.

“State Water knew that their submission had to be approved by the Budget Committee and they knew the submission deadline. They should either have had the document to the last Budget Committee meeting or they should have advised IPART – and stakeholders – that they would not be meeting the deadline.

“Claiming to have met the deadline when stakeholders are not able to consider the submission – and the fact that the Budget Committee might change it – is contemptuous in the extreme. IPART should respond to this situation in a similar fashion to their response to the Department of Water.”

ENDS