



Senator Barnaby Joyce
Shadow Minister for Regional Development, Infrastructure and Water
Leader of The Nationals in the Senate
LNP Senator for Queensland

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WONG WASTES WATER MONEY

Reports in the Australian Financial Review today confirm that Penny Wong is presiding over a water buy back scheme that is frittering away money. Senator Joyce said “reports suggesting that Penny Wong has overpaid to the tune of \$40 million and that some water sellers are getting special deals fuel the confusion and uncertainty surrounding Senator Wong’s plan for the Basin. Who expects irrigators to invest in water-saving technology in this climate of confusion?”

Senator Joyce spoke yesterday to a number of irrigators and farmers. These initial discussions have confirmed reports in the media today. The Government is not providing sufficient feedback on the status of some farmer’s tenders. As the Productivity Commission reported last year, Senator Wong’s scheme has also failed to recognize the effects on local communities of farms closing down. Senator Joyce will be travelling along the Basin over the next few weeks to get first-hand experience of these impacts.

Senator Joyce reiterated that he has no problems with the buying of water, or moving towards to a nationally coordinated use of water from the Murray-Darling Basin. “We need a water policy that balances that provides jobs in regional areas, guarantees food security for all Australians and protects the environment. Current policy appears to ignore this triple-bottom line approach” Senator Joyce said.

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