



MEDIA RELEASE

Senator the Hon Penny Wong

Minister for Climate Change, Energy Efficiency and Water

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MORE CONSULTATION FOR BASIN WATER INFRASTRUCTURE CHARGE RULES

A further consultation period will give stakeholders the opportunity to comment on the new water infrastructure charge rules proposed for the Murray Darling Basin.

The water infrastructure charge rules aim to promote greater transparency in setting fees and charges levied on the operation and maintenance of irrigation infrastructure.

The rules will help to ensure that fees and charges payable to operators for water services do not exceed levels required to recover costs.

Following advice from the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC), Minister for Water Senator Penny Wong announced her intention to make the rules.

"These water charge rules will mean greater transparency and consistency in the way fees and charges are levied across the Basin," Senator Wong said.

The advice provided by the ACCC on the water infrastructure charge rules and accreditation of state regulators has been carefully considered by the Government.

The Government intends to adopt the ACCC's recommended three-tiered approach to the regulation of water infrastructure operators in the Basin. The proposed rules also provide for the accreditation of state regulators to undertake price approvals or determinations.

However, the Government has indicated that it proposes to make a number of changes to the ACCC's draft rules. For this reason, a further consultation period will be held on the proposed rules.

Submissions should be lodged by 10 September 2010.

Information about the water infrastructure charge rules and how to make a submission can be found at: www.environment.gov.au/water