



MEDIA RELEASE

20 February 2019

Water the lifeblood of MIA

Politicians were told loud and clear how important water is to the future of the MIA at the State Pre-Election Water and Energy Forum hosted by NSW Farmers in Griffith last night.

The major concern raised by those in attendance was surrounding reports that the cap on buybacks could be scrapped, and Murrumbidgee Irrigation calls on State and Federal politicians of all persuasions to strongly oppose any such moves.

“We can’t afford for the goalposts to keep shifting and need to take the politics out of the Basin Plan,” Murrumbidgee Irrigation CEO, Brett Jones, said.

“Buyback is a blunt instrument that hurts communities and any further recovery should only be taken through water savings projects and infrastructure upgrades.”

“Investment in infrastructure programs supports communities and will enable us to continue to be as efficient as possible and improve our water management.”

Mr Jones thanked Minister for Primary Industries, Niall Blair, Shadow Minister for Water, Chris Minns, and The Greens MLC, Justin Field, for taking part in the forum, and asked that they act on the concerns raised about removing the cap on buybacks.

“Murrumbidgee Irrigation have always supported the triple bottom line outcomes of the Plan,” he said.

“We want a Plan that gives us healthy rivers, healthy communities and a continuing capacity to produce food and fibre for the nation.

“Not a plan that focuses on numbers and water recovery at all costs.”

Mr Jones added that he has been disappointed by the recent attacks being levelled at irrigators throughout the Murray Darling Basin.

“This crusade against hard working irrigators needs to stop,” he said.

“Irrigation is the lifeblood of the MIA, and a critical input for agriculture.

“This continuous campaign to brand the farming community as environmental criminals is just plain insulting.

“We all want a healthy working basin to support the growth and opportunity in our region, and have always been intent on protecting, promoting and enhancing the natural assets of this region.”

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