



**** ITEM FOR DISCUSSION AT COUNCIL**

South West Water Users _____ is requesting that the New South Wales Irrigators' Council put the following subject on the agenda (under Items For Discussion) at the next Council Meeting 8 / 3 / 18

The subject we wish to present to Council for discussion is:

The need for Council to incorporate concepts of whole of river connectivity into the current water debate generally and into WRP's specifically.

Background details:

The Water Act specifies the priority of access to water. The River and Stock and Domestic use are followed by a collection of irrigation products under decreasing levels of priority.

Current arrangements have no ability to implement this on the whole river system as there is no connectivity along the whole river in any operational sense under current WSP's.

Critical Incident Policy as well as Cultural and Environmental concerns will inevitably require the ability to manage individual flow events in a real time context along the entire river. Metering and telemetry are mandatory components of this but so is a structure which puts decisions into a whole of river context.

This subject affects the following (irrigators, organisations, areas):

All Council members on The Darling River System are directly involved. The entire NSW Irrigation Industry is adversely affected by the public perceptions which will arise if this issue is not constructively addressed.

The key points for discussion at the meeting are:

- 1) Connectivity along the Darling system will be required by WRP's. This was acknowledged at the State-wide SAP in December. In practise it will at least be incorporated into The Critical Incident Policy structure.
- 2) Connectivity is required for base river flows as well as to give primacy to stock and domestic use. It is likely to be significant component in issues around cultural water and river ecology.
- 3) It will logically require the ability to manage individual flow events in a 'whole of river' context.

Desired Outcome / Way Ahead:

Council should be seen to be proactively involved in what is a very basic component of water access and river management. It is a mandatory component of acknowledging the rights of access to water along the entire system.

Item will be presented by: Alan Whyte
(Member or Delegate)

Submitted the 7th day of February 2018