

## CQA Water Price Path Review

Please find enclosed my submission re water pricing.

### **1. Insurance costs**

Insurance costs are excessive. During the six years in which claims were made after the 2011 and 2013 floods, insurance payouts were \$625,900. However, during that same period, Sunwater paid \$1,235,400 in premiums for BP dam. These floods were catastrophic and I would expect that claims as a result of these floods represent one of the highest periods of claims made against insurance. This indicates that dam insurance costs are excessive.

### **2. IGEM**

Bjelke Petersen dam is of great benefit to the whole community in many ways but especially as a key factor that helps control flooding. If BP dam had not been installed, my wife and I would have been swept away with both Barambah and Barkers creek systems coming down at once. By holding back the majority flood waters of one system, Barkers, the flooding effect was lengthened over a period of days BUT lowered in height, thus significantly reducing damage to the whole valley.

Even if the dam were to break now, all we would experience is a full creek. At the height of the floods, there were four dam-fulls of water running over it per day. That plus Barambah Creek being at full flood at the same time, is why we had such bad flooding.

### **3. Bathymetric survey**

If the public wants a survey then a survey should be paid for by the public, not by people who do not benefit and can least afford it. It does not have anything to do with the safety of storing water.

### **4. Renewal costs.**

In today's society we almost never save up for a future unknown expense that may never eventuate. Putting money aside may lead to it being siphoned off to other projects in the meantime leaving us, the farmer, having to pay twice for the same project. This has happened before in politics and will happen again. Also, if Sunwater goes broke, all that money would be lost. My solution would be do the project, borrow and pay it off.

### **5. Drought subsidy**

I ask that once the announced allocation drops below 50 % we only pay for the allocation announced for that year so that we are not burdened with paying for product that is not available. If, as the year is played out and more allocation is announced, (as Sunwater is often wont to do), then we would pay more and maybe carryover that we which paid for. But this needs to be under different rules to the current carryover rules

I don't believe it is fair that irrigators should pay for water they don't receive because it is not there to be supplied. I do expect product for my money. With the low allocations at the moment, we are nearly paying the same amount per meg as the towns do for their high security town water.

The towns are paying and getting water. We the farmers are paying but are not getting water. (It's like going into a butcher shop, asking for a kilo of mince, paying for it but not getting any. The shop will not be doing business much longer!) Maybe the town water price needs to go up in times of drought?

Ergon has a drought relief plan so why not Sunwater?

## **6. Sunwater's attitude**

First I would like to acknowledge the fantastic service which our local Sunwater employees provide. They are faultless even in sometimes difficult work conditions.

Also, all my phone calls to head office have always been answered with courtesy and helpfulness.

However, I do have some frustrations. It took Sunwater well over a month to announce carryover this last July. With modern computers etc that information could have been on our desks within 24 hours of 1/7/18 if they were on the ball.

There seems to be a "she'll be right" attitude in Brisbane, a lack of understanding of what is happening out here in the bush, and they get their pay at the end of the week. They are irresponsible with irrigators' money. For example, Sunwater paid a pump repair bill of \$30,000 which the farmer could have done for \$10,000.

Also, in the last meeting we had with them, Sunwater put forward the fact that their spendings had exceeded QCA estimates in all sectors for the last financial year. This shows the complete disregard they have for any attempt to rein in costs.

Sunwater are quite happy to sponsor events like rodeos and TV ads. What has that got to do with water delivery?

Sunwater's invoicing system is inadequate. The invoice is sent at the end of the quarter and it indicates how much carry-over water I have left before evaporation. However, I am not told how much the carry-over has been reduced due to evaporation etc until the end of the following three month billing period. This has led to penalties being imposed for some irrigators. I would like to be given the accurate carry-over amount for the next three months at the beginning of that period.

## **7. BP dam communities**

The benefit of BP dam is tremendous with many jobs having been created. Tractor dealerships, repair shops, tyre shops, IGA etc, etc all benefit tremendously. Murgon is a thriving community, significantly as a result of the dam. Just try driving down the main street most days....the place is pumping. The local IGA is a gold mine. Tourism is expanding. The number of boats on the dam at the weekend has to be seen to be believed. Yet with all this, a handful of the community is required to prop up the financial existence of the dam and it seems that we are continually hammered with so many more excessive costs.

Yours sincerely,

Andrew and Christelle Mayne 08/03/19