

FIRST ROUND CONSULTATION – ISSUES ARISING

(This note records issues identified, and views expressed, by stakeholders present at the meeting. The Authority is yet to form any opinion on them. As appropriate, issues will be addressed in proposed Issues Papers and in the Authority's reports)

Scheme: Mareeba Dimbulah

Date: 17-May-2010

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Technical Issues

- The scope of the proposed ABARE consultancy on Capacity to Pay was queried. It was stated that ABARE did crop – wide analysis and there was doubt as to its capability to address; Capacity to Pay of specific schemes or groups of producers.
- Gravity - fed water should be looked at differently from pumped water.
- Queried whether Riparian rights provided Free Water?
- Areas with re-lift water now receive concessions from Government. Will QCA address this?
- The region had been tobacco – oriented, but now featured various horticulture crops which were of marginal economics. Irrigators stated that this situation prevented any capacity to pay. The Scheme's extent is large area and the productivity of the soil varies considerably across the same crops, influencing capacity to pay.
- Recreational use costs to SunWater are of note and local authorities, as elsewhere, are very reluctant to take over.
- Weed control was a significant cost to SunWater and customers.
- A significant proportion of SunWater's irrigation customers were domestic – type users on rural lots, who pay an access charge, receive poor quality irrigation water for their uses and who regard their charges as expensive. Farm Irrigators regard these users as not contributing to the economy, using water for domestic gardens, etc.

Scheme Specific Issues

- Upgrading of Tinaroo Dam – would the current upgrading costs be included in the 2011-16 review?

Other Issues

- The desire for local management was raised as an issue.