

SUNRAYSLA

RURAL WATER AUTHORITY



ABN 66 437 870 613
2115-2117 Fifteenth Street
PO Box 817 Irymple
Victoria 3498 Australia
Telephone: (03) 5021 9777
Facsimilie: (03) 5021 9778
Email: water@srwa.org.au

File: R:50

Monday, 29 April 2002

Project Manager - VRHS
Jane Doolan
Catchment and Water division
Department of Natural Resources and Environment
P.O. Box 500,
EAST MELBOURNE, VIC., 3502

Dear Jane,

Congratulations on the completion of the Draft Victorian River Health Strategy (VRHS). Please see the following comments:

Scope of our Comments.

The Sunraysia Rural Water Authority region has one main river, being the Murray. Our comments essentially focus on the issue of river flows and inputs that determine water quality, which effects this River.

While the Lindsay River flows through our region it is of minor significance to this Authority's customers' irrigation requirements.

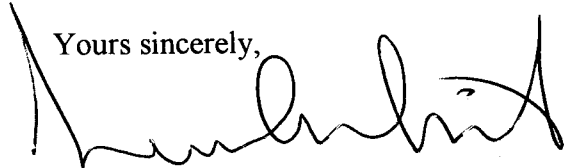
Feedback

1. The concept of the community providing input into the decision-making responsibilities of river health and management is strongly supported. (P.7)
2. The objective for the VRHS to achieve is supported (P.19)
3. Clarification within the 'Scope of the Victorian River Health Strategy' about the use of the River Murray would be of assistance to providing context to the document. (P.20)
4. There is insufficient data in the 'Classification of river regions in Victoria' within this Authority's region. We hope that this information can be determined and reported. (P.31)

5. The recognition of the increase in water trade as a mechanism for agricultural growth is supported but it also needs to be linked with the issue of better management of water flows in stream. This needs to be further investigated to ensure water flow in channel and quality is matching requirements. (P. 35)
6. Some irrigators within the region would like to further investigate being able to temporarily transfer their entitlements to the environment flows Bulk Entitlement. Is this something that can be considered in your 'Managing environmental water provisions for regulated rivers' section? (P.72)
7. The Authority notes and endorses the recommendations for stressed rivers and will work in conjunction with River Murray Water to manage this. (P.75)
8. This Authority currently doesn't have a Water Service Agreement and therefore would have nothing to review in December 2002. (P.82)
9. In 6.3.7 - Roles of Water Authorities - can you please clarify the sentence 'manage water abstractions within entitlements'. (P.82)
10. Rural Water Authorities seem to be undervalued in the 'Improved Land Management' - 7.3.4 - area of the document. As Water Authorities are the licencing and water supply agencies they need to be consulted and seen as being key players in any Codes of Practice being developed. (P.92)
11. The Authority doesn't support waiving charges for irrigators applying for domestic and stock licences in areas that are proposed to be fenced. The Authority suggests that CMA's contribute the fee to the Water Authority. (P.101)
12. Management Arrangements as stated for the Regional Resource Managers, such as Sunraysia Rural Water Authority (SRWA), are endorsed (P.118)

If you require any clarification on the above points please contact our Water Development Coordinator, Owen Russell.

Yours sincerely,



Neville Smith
Chief Executive Officer

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