



Niall Blair

Minister for Primary Industries
Minister for Regional Water
Minister for Trade and Industry

MEDIA STATEMENT

Tuesday, 25 July 2017

RESPONSE TO ABC 4 CORNERS

The NSW Government remains committed to the Murray Darling Basin Plan, while seeking the best deal for NSW communities within that framework.

It's wrong to suggest that a change to the water rules in NSW in 2012, somehow undermines our determination to see the Plan through.

I have directed the Secretary of the NSW Department of Industry to provide an urgent overview of all the compliance matters raised in the program.

I have also asked for clarification around the circumstances of the Deputy Director General's briefing.

The Department established a new quality improvement process for regulation on July 1, 2016, with an independent advisory committee led by the NSW Land and Water Commissioner and the former head of the NSW Environment Protection Authority.

The Secretary will engage these advisers in preparing a suitably robust and independent process to complete the analysis of these issues.

Additionally, the Secretary will also seek advice from the Ombudsman to maximise the effectiveness of the investigation.

We acknowledge the importance of every drop of water in the basin, but the fate of the Murray-Darling Basin Plan won't hinge on irrigators in the Barwon-Darling.

This Government is determined to address the economic, environmental and socio-economic concerns around the river system, with local communities front and centre in this balancing act.

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