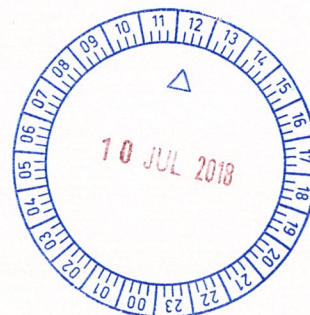




The Hon Niall Blair MLC
Minister for Primary Industries
Minister for Regional Water
Minister for Trade and Industry

IM18/13401

Dr John Keniry AM
Commissioner
Natural Resources Commission
GPO Box 5341
SYDNEY NSW 2001



Dear Dr Keniry

John

Thank you for your letter of 18 May 2018 and copy of the Natural Resource Commission's (NRC) review of the Water Sharing Plan for the Border Rivers Regulated River Water Source 2009. I would like to thank the Commission for its work and valuable input into the Plan.

The Department of Industry (DoI) – Water planning team reviewed the Commission's report and has provided feedback. I am aware that the NRC also presented the draft report to the Border Rivers Stakeholder Advisory Panel (SAP) meeting, which included representatives from the Queensland Department of Natural Resources Mines and Energy on 1 March 2018.

I am pleased to advise that the NSW Government is developing a replacement plan, which is aligned with the Water Resource Planning process. It is expected to be completed in early 2019. The water resource planning process includes:

- Improvements to the clarity and measurability of objectives;
- development of a monitoring and evaluation plan;
- Review of environmental flow provisions and modelling of options to identify where operational issues can be addressed. Where possible, this work will improve environmental outcomes without creating third party impacts;
- the ability to revise environmental flow requirements, which will need to be made within the parameters of the the Murray-Darling Basin Plan and;
- discussions for opportunities to improve clarity and better facilitate trade within the scope of the Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA).

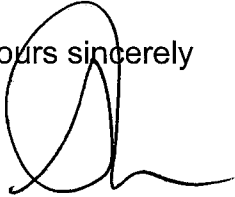
In regards to your recommendation to re-establish the Border Rivers IGA standing committee and improve the governance of water resources in the Border region, NSW and Queensland have appointed a working group to review the broader governance of the region. This includes reviewing the 1946 NSW and Queensland Border Rivers agreement and the 2008 Border Rivers IGA. DoI Water is also working with Queensland to re-convene the Border Rivers Standing Committee. This committee oversees the 2008 IGA and will work with the working group during the review of the governance arrangements.

These actions will result in improved governance and transparency in the region and resolve a number of the outstanding governance issues that were raised in the review.

To discuss any further enquiries the Commission may have, I have asked that Mr Peter Hyde, Director Planning, be available. He can be contacted on 0419 162 826.

Thank you again for your interest in this matter.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Niall Blair', written over the words 'Yours sincerely'.

6 JUL 2018

**The Hon Niall Blair MLC
Minister for Primary Industries
Minister for Regional Water
Minister for Trade and Industry**