



Victorian Farmers Federation

United Dairyfarmers of Victoria

District Council 2 and 3 Regional Update



Over the past two weeks, your dairy and water leaders from Dc 2 and 3 have been involved in the following activities.

Federal Water Plan:

The VFF received a reply from Malcolm Turnbull regarding outstanding concerns with the water plan. Unfortunately, it did not allay our concerns and is available on the VFF website. Simon Ramsay met with Prime Minister, John Howard, prior to receiving our response from Minister Turnbull and discussions focused on Victoria supporting the plan. Richard Anderson and Geoff Akers met with State Government senior staff last week to discuss outstanding issues. Discussion focused on the broad referral of powers the Federal Government is seeking, which we simply do not support.

Richard Anderson had an extensive meeting with John Thwaites regarding our concerns and late last week the VFF met with Premier Bracks asserting there was insufficient detail to sign up to the plan and the power referral was too wide reaching. Both Minister Thwaites and Premier Bracks agreed with our concerns.

The draft legislation provides no comfort at this stage - there are over 10 sections that remain blank and the referral of powers being sought from State Governments is extensive. We have always maintained the devil will be in the detail, and clearly there is much work required in this legislative detail. Until we have all the detail and our concerns addressed we will not be suggesting the State Government sign up to the plan.

The National Farmers Federation adopted a similar position to the VFF last week and does not support the Federal Government seeking a full referral of powers. Richard Anderson was instrumental in the NFF adopting this position.

Moira Shire Water Forum:

Over 5 VFF/UDV executive members attended this meeting. Discussion focused on identifying water issues in the Moira community and how the shire can be active in securing the shire's water needs into the future.

Meeting with G-MW:

Richard Anderson and members from the Benalla branch met with Russell Cooper and David Jeffrey's to discuss modeling the alternative option to decommissioning Lake Mokoan. Benalla members submitted a number of questions and will meet with G-MW to discuss the response.

Fodder Shortages:

There have been a number of industry meetings regarding drought conditions discussing the financial pressures farmers are under and severe fodder shortages.

Barmah-Choke Bypass Meeting:

The DC's have organized another Barmah Choke bypass meeting, this time in Kerang. DSE officials will be present to discuss the positives and negatives of the proposal. The meeting will be held 10am, 11th May at the Mid Murray Flying Club, Kerang.

EC Support for Non-Australian Residents:

Don't forget, DC 2 and 3 have arranged for Commonwealth Department staff to discuss EC support issues for Non-Australian residents. Meeting will be held May 9th, 11am - 2pm at the Numurkah Football Club.

We will continue to keep you informed of our lobbying activities with regular inserts in Country News. If you want further information please contact your branch or district council representatives.