



## 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:**

“Richard Anderson has seen a copy of the Intergovernmental Agreement that states will have to sign in order to receive funding under the Federal Water Plan.

Unfortunately, it seems the Federal Government is seeking a full referral of State Government powers which we have opposed from the beginning”.

### **Foodbowl Modernisation Project:**

Geoff Akers attended the Steering Committee meeting last week. The Steering Committee has broken up into three sub-committees which include a sub committee dealing with modernization issues, the environment and governance.

### **Water Use Licenses:**

Richard Anderson attended the final Department of Sustainability and Environment’s Water Market and Irrigation Reforms Steering Committee meeting. The VFF has sat on this committee since 2004 during the development and implementation of the water unbundling reforms.

Richard Anderson highlighted a number of concerns with the annual use limit outlined on Water Use Licenses. It was the VFF’s understanding this would reflect the maximum use limit outlined in the salinity guidelines. Unfortunately, many annual use limits are reflecting water right plus 60% or maximum use over the last eight years.

The steering committee agreed that a sub-committee of which Richard Anderson will be involved will be established to resolve the issue.

### **Water Purchases for the Environment:**

Last week the Murray Darling Basin Commission (MDBC) announced that its pilot project to purchase 20 gigalitres for the environment had closed 7 weeks early due popular demand. Water purchased for the environment unfortunately leaves less water in agricultural use and forces farmers to compete with the MDBC in the open water market.

Water needed for the environment must be recovered through infrastructure upgrades, not direct purchases. We must make sure that any of the 20GL purchased in Victoria comes off Victoria’s contribution to the Living Murray Agreement.

### **Groundwater temporary transfers:**

Richard Anderson has raised concerns with G-MW and the ESC that Groundwater temporary transfers have increased by \$490 since last year. This staggering increase has seen groundwater temporary transfer charges increase from \$65 to \$555. Richard will continue to pursue this issue.

### **Stock and Domestic Water in Murray Valley:**

Paul Mundy has responded to calls from members within Murray Valley concerned about availability of stock and domestic water. Farmers should contact the G-MW Cobram office for further information.

### **Watermove Trades:**

Farmers wanting to trade water with Watermove must submit their original forms with the office rather than faxing. Original forms are now required as part of the new water register. G-MW is currently working with DSE to streamline the process.

### **Seasonal Outlook & Impacts:**

Murray Dairy is currently drafting a Seasonal Impact study exploring a number of scenarios if the dry conditions continue. Once the report is completed it will firm a strong base for the region’s dairy industry to lobby Government on any response measures that may be needed.