



District Council 2 and 3 Regional Update



Meeting with David Downie, DSE Water Manager:

Richard Anderson, Geoff Akers and other members of the VFF Water Council met with David Downie and Campbell Fitzpatrick at the VFF's Water Council meeting last week.

Discussion focused on the Northern Sustainable Water Strategy Discussion Paper and ensuring farmers have adequate consultation about proposals outlined in the paper. The date to send in submissions has now been extended to March 17. The Council also discussed the variation of carryover models between states given water is now being traded interstate.

Meeting with Prof Mike Young, University of Adelaide

Professor Mike Young from the University of Adelaide gave a presentation to the VFF Water Council last week. Professor Young discussed the impacts of climate change and his proposal to manage water in the Southern parts of Australia.

DPI Future Farming Statement:

Richard Anderson as well as a number of other VFF Executives attended DPI's workshop last week to discuss future farming strategies in Victoria. The statement will consider new farming practices as we move forward as well as ensuring Victorian agriculture remains competitive in a global market.

Environmental Headwork's Charges & Environmental Levy

DC 3 has developed two issues papers that have been forwarded to the Victorian Water Minister. The paper on environmental headwork's charges highlights the inequities of farmers having to pay to store environmental water. DC 3 believes the environmental levy should be used to fund these storage costs and more importantly \$27 million collected from the levy remains unspent. The second paper highlights that the environmental levy is due to be reviewed by July 2008. Given \$27 million remains unspent and impacts of drought, rural customers should not be faced with any increase to the levy. For a full copy of the papers visit www.udvnorth.org.au.

Australian Dairy Farmers (ADF) Meeting:

ADF held its first meeting for 2008 in New Zealand. Yvonne Crawford (DC 2 Central Councillor) and Daryl Hoey (DC 3 Central Councillor) attended this week long meeting. The ADF Board spent 3 days visiting farms learning about different farming systems, this included high input systems and farms managing high rainfall. They visited Landcore farms (in particular the Weeka farm) which is a state owned entity in the Cape Fowl Wind Region. As part of the tour they also visited Synlait, which is an integrated milk plant with 12 farms that produce niche products at its factory as well as undertaking its own marketing and research and development. The Board also discussed climate change, carbon emissions trading, National Vendor Declarations and antibiotic residuals in bobby calves.

Water Service Committees meet with State Owned Entity

Water Services Committee Chairs and Deputies last week met with the State Owned Entity Board that will manage the \$1billion infrastructure upgrade across the GMID.

They discussed the importance of consultation and the early works program for this year.