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**General Purpose Standing Committee No. 5 - Inquiry into the augmentation of water supply for rural and regional New South Wales**

**28 February 2017 hearing**

**Ricegrower's Association of Australia**

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**Questions taken on notice:**

**1.**

**The Hon. RICK COLLESS:** Yesterday we saw some photos of quite large canal developments that are occurring on Hindmarsh Island in Lake Alexandrina that actually require a lot of extra water to fill up, but there are no extra charges being applied to that water. It is just expected to be delivered without charge from New South Wales and Victoria. Are you aware of those sorts of things happening there and is it likely to exacerbate the problems that we are already facing with these environmental flows?

Water management within states is a matter for each State. The Murray Darling Basin Agreement sets out the water sharing arrangements within the Basin and each State is then responsible for meeting its obligations to each other and within its own jurisdiction. We don't believe it is appropriate to question water management within other jurisdictions and likewise expect the same in return. Nevertheless, the RGA agrees that any changes to water use cannot be at the expense of reliability and/or accessibility of existing water entitlements.

**2.**

**Mr SCOT MacDONALD:** I interrupt you there—I guess it is not your role to answer for SunRice, but has SunRice made any comments about its viability as a company, an exporter and a processor with this sort of trajectory of productive water loss?

The RGA does not wish to respond on behalf of SunRice and directs the Committee to contact SunRice directly.

**Supplementary questions:**

- 1. Can the Ricegrowers' Association of Australia give a brief outline of 'Water for Rivers' and 'Living Murray' initiatives? Particularly the loss of productive water in the Murray and Murrumbidgee systems. Including by class of water e.g. high security, general security.**

The below table outlines water recovery that occurred within the Basin, and within both the Murrumbidgee and Murray valleys between 2004 and 2009<sup>1</sup>. We note that water recovery figures

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.water.nsw.gov.au/water-management/water-recovery/water-purchase;>  
[https://www.mdba.gov.au/sites/default/files/docs/pre-2009-water-recovery-updated2015.pdf;](https://www.mdba.gov.au/sites/default/files/docs/pre-2009-water-recovery-updated2015.pdf)

are expressed in long term average annual yield (LTAAY) terms to account for variations in reliability between categories of entitlement. Hence the number of water entitlements recovered is much greater than the reported figure, in particular for general security entitlements.

Unfortunately the RGA does not have access to data identifying the source of a water recovery on a licence category basis i.e. high security, general security, etc.

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Total Recovery</b>	<b>Sourced from Murrumbidgee</b>	<b>Sourced from Murray</b>
<i>Cap to NSW Water Sharing Plans</i>	241 GL	90 GL	58 GL
<i>Riverbank</i>	80 GL	? GL	NIL
<i>Water for rivers (Snowy Water Initiative)</i>	390 GL	96 GL	24 GL
<i>The Living Murray</i>	249 GL	52 GL	99 GL