**RE: ILLEGAL FLOODPLAIN HARVESTING**

I am an irrigator in Victoria.

My annual water allocation is affected by the amount of water available in the system.

When water is flowing out of the Menindee Lakes and into the Darling River, Victoria does not need to supply as much water from its head storages to supply South Australia’s annual entitlement.

Historically, 721.5GL (or 39%) of the SA annual entitlement comes from the Darling River and for the last few years the rivers contribution has been zero, severely impacting myself, my fellow irrigators and the communities in which we live and operate.

I am aware the practice of floodplain harvesting is occurring via outdated works approvals under the Water Act 1912 (NSW). With the disallowance of the Water Management (General) Amendment (Exemptions for Floodplain Harvesting) Regulation 2020, these works can no longer legally facilitate the take and use of water without a licence.

I am also aware the Southern Riverina Irrigators (**SRI**) have written to NRAR asking for legal clarity around the next large rainfall event.

Will NRAR enforce compliance of the Water Management Act 2000 (NSW) or explain why it is not necessary for action?

Like everyone else in the basin, I want to know if the rules that apply to those in the southern basin will be applied equally to those in the northern basin.

We know the NRAR board has met and discussed the disallowance and determined they won’t be making a public statement on this issue and yet this is very much in the public interest.

As a farmer I have been strictly following the laws and regulations around water and I am being impacted by the lack of water reaching Menindee Lakes.

There are currently no floodplain harvesting licences and whilst I have heard statements by NSW DPIE they will be finalised by July 2021, I have no confidence this will be the case.

Can you confirm if there will be enforcement of the Water Management Act 2000 requirement for the take and use of water via a licence and meter, until floodplain harvesting licences are implemented?

Thank you