

NRAR Board external stakeholder meetings

July – September 2018

No	Organisation	Names	Discussion
18	Independents	Geoff Wise & Doug McKay	Geoff Wise & Doug McKay spoke to the Board on their experiences working across western NSW and as members of the Western Lands Advisory Committee, highlighting areas they saw as risks in water management in NSW.

April – June 2018

No	Organisation	Names	Discussion
16	Northern Basin Aboriginal Nations (NBAN)	Fred Hooper, Chair of NBAN	<p>NBAN provided an overview of its work in relation to cultural flows, including its research project. The Board noted that it would seek a briefing with NBAN on its cultural research project at a future meeting.</p> <p>NBAN noted its intention to work more closely with NSW in relation to the water resource plan consultation process.</p> <p>The Board noted that it viewed NBAN and the Murray Lower Darling rivers Indigenous Nations (MLDRIN) as its key contact points in relation to Aboriginal community input on cultural flows.</p>
17	NSW Farmers Federation	<p>Mitchell Clapham, Chair of Environment Committee</p> <p>Adair Garemyn, Policy Director - Environment</p>	<p>NSW Farmers asserted support for the functions of NRAR in providing its members with the social licence for their water use in NSW.</p> <p>NSW Farmers noted members have in the past faced penalties for actions where they were unaware of legislative requirements, and that improved education would support voluntary compliance.</p>

2017 – February 2018

No	Organisation	Names	Discussion
1	Wentworth Group of Scientists	<p>Peter Cosier, Board member</p> <p>Dr Celine Steinfield, Policy Analyst</p>	<p>The WWG noted the need to build trust and ensure decision making is transparent.</p> <p>The WWG noted the complexity of water sharing plans, the need to ensure environmental water is monitored and delivered and highlighted floodplain harvesting as a major issue.</p>
2	EDO	<p>Emma Carmody Senior Policy and Law Reform Solicitor</p> <p>Rachel Walmsley, Director Law Reform and Policy</p>	<p>The EDO noted the difficulty in gaining access to water information was due to its disparate online nature and that usage data required access to agency-held data and raised privacy legal issues as preventing access.</p> <p>The EDO noted the complexity of water sharing plans and the difficulties that water users had in interpreting and applying the plans.</p> <p>The EDO noted best practice regulation requires proper metering, transparency, genuine and broad community understanding of the rules, staff applying best practice compliance enforcement and the use of new technologies.</p>
3	IPART	<p>Hugo Harmstorf, CEO Matthew Edgerton, Executive Director Water Pricing</p> <p>Rob O'Neill, General Manager Water and Energy Licensing and Compliance</p> <p>Erin Cini, Director Licensing and Compliance</p> <p>Matthew Mansell, Director Pricing</p>	<p>IPART outlined the process for identifying agency water costs.</p> <p>IPART agreed to ongoing dialogue with the NRAR.</p>
4	Independent	Ken Matthews	Ken Matthews emphasised that there needs to be greater professional ethical practice by government and regulatees.

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			<p>Mr Matthews noted the two major issues as being the coverage, use and monitoring of meters across NSW and the transparency of water information, particularly water user data.</p> <p>Mr Matthews noted that if more effective and efficient delivery of his reforms was possible through alternative methods, he would be supportive.</p>
5	<p>NSW Irrigators Council</p> <p>National Irrigators Council</p>	<p>Mark Mackenzie, CEO, NSW Irrigators Council</p> <p>Richard Stott, Chairman, NSW Irrigators Council</p> <p>Steve Whan, CEO, National Irrigators Council</p> <p>Tim Napier, Director, NSW & National Irrigators Councils</p>	<p>Councils' noted that the majority of irrigators were measuring water usage.</p> <p>Councils' noted that greater investment was needed by Governments to address metering issues.</p> <p>Councils' noted that water data is available but difficult to locate.</p> <p>Councils' noted the need to work together with the NRAR to enhance legislative compliance.</p>
6	ICAC	<p>Giselle Tocher, Principal Officer Corruption Prevention</p> <p>Heidrun Blackwood, Senior Corruption Prevention Officer</p> <p>Andrew Howe, Senior Corruption Prevention Officer</p>	<p>ICAC enquired on progress on the water reform agenda.</p> <p>ICAC agreed to continue meeting with the NRAR to support ethical regulatory practice within NRAR and the Department.</p>
7	MDBA	<p>George Warne, Board member</p> <p>Russell James, Executive Director Policy and Planning</p> <p>Chris Guest, MDBA</p>	<p>The Board congratulated the MDBA on its compliance review report</p> <p>The Board noted its intention to work closely with the MDBA to improve regulatory enforcement of water legislation and plans.</p> <p>The MDBA agreed with the Board on the urgency of addressing metering.</p>
8	Ombudsman	<p>Michael Barnes, Ombudsman</p> <p>Chris Wheeler, Deputy</p>	<p>The Ombudsman agreed to ongoing dialogue with the NRAR to support ethical practice in NRAR and the Department.</p>

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		<p>Ombudsman</p> <p>Sanya Silver, Manager Projects & Major Investigations</p> <p>Nicole Lawless, Principal Legal Officer</p>	
9	Dept Planning	<p>Dr Oliver Holm, Executive Director- Resource Assessments and Compliance</p> <p>Kirsty Ruddock Director Compliance & Investigations</p>	The Department of Planning provided advice on building regulatory capability.
10	EPA	<p>Gary Whytcross, A/Chief Environmental Regulator</p> <p>David Fowler, Director Regulatory Reform and Advice</p>	<p>The EPA provided advice on risk and outcomes based regulation.</p> <p>The EPA noted the benefits of a flexible regulatory framework.</p>
11	TEC	Jeff Angel, Executive Director	The TEC noted the need to rebuild community trust and enhance transparency of decision-making.
12	Cotton Australia	<p>Adam Kay, CEO</p> <p>Michael Murray, General Manager - Operations</p>	<p>Cotton Australia discussed the cost and process for installing meters and the need for regulatory agencies to be clear in their interpretations of rules in water sharing plans and licence conditions.</p> <p>Cotton Australia noted commercial-in-confidence requirements for trading information</p> <p>It was agreed that ongoing discussions would be beneficial for both parties.</p>
13	Murray Darling Association	Emma Bradbury, CEO	The MDA, which represents 167 councils across the Murray Darling Basin, tabled feedback it had received from its members on the formation of the NRAR and issues to consider.

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			<p>The MDA noted the effectiveness of local government as a conduit for localised actions on compliance, particularly educative.</p> <p>The MDA noted the potential local government had to assist the NRAR in its work given that this was an issue of concern and priority for communities across the Basin, particularly in the northern region.</p>
14	Australian Floodplain Association	<p>Howard Jones, Board member</p> <p>Rory Treweeke, Board member</p>	<p>The AFA noted its support for the Murray Darling Basin Plan.</p> <p>The AFA noted its concerns with long term averages used in modelling and the need for good meters and compliance enforcement.</p> <p>It was agreed that ongoing discussions were be beneficial for both parties.</p>
15	Natural Resources Commission	<p>John Keniry, Commissioner</p> <p>Bryce Wilde, Executive Director</p> <p>Amy Dula, Program Director (water)</p>	<p>The NRC noted its legislative role to review revised and amended water sharing plans for independent assurance.</p> <p>The NRC highlighted the importance of its independence and the value that brought to its review of such plans.</p> <p>The NRC agreed that closer ties with the Department to enable their review of water planning documents would be beneficial to both parties.</p>