



TUESDAY 2 AUGUST 2017

STATEMENT FROM KEN MATTHEWS

Today I start the review that I have been commissioned to do by the NSW Government. I have been asked to investigate allegations of corruption, misconduct and maladministration in water management and compliance actions in the NSW Department of Primary Industries – Water raised in the Four Corners program broadcast on 24 July 2017.

My terms of reference (copy attached) cover all the allegations raised in the broadcast and ask me to make recommendations for improvement in the administration and compliance of water matters in NSW.

I have also been asked to ensure that if my investigation identifies any potentially illegal or corrupt activities that these will be referred to relevant authorities. And, that if we uncover any conduct that is not been in keeping with the department's policies or processes, this information will be provided for decision-making in any subsequent disciplinary processes.

The Government has advised that it is open to an expansion of the scope of my investigation if my preliminary work suggests this is warranted. I will also be speaking with the Australian National Audit Office and the Commonwealth Government about their inquiries to ensure that we can collaborate where appropriate.

I have experience in water management in Australia and a long standing commitment to ethical public administration and will be conducting this investigation without fear or favour.

I have taken on this work because I am committed to a water management system in which all stakeholders can have confidence, certain in the knowledge that the historic Murray-Darling Basin Plan is being implemented in NSW in accordance with all the rules and regulations that govern the plan.

A contact email address and telephone number has been set up for any person who has information that they believe should be the subject of my investigation. Such information will be treated in confidence, and may be made anonymously if desired.

I would invite any DPI staff members, former staff members or members of the public who have relevant information to contact us on (02) 9338 6963 or by email at contact@matthewsinvestigation.nsw.gov.au.

All information provided will be reviewed by me and the team I am establishing. Information on the review will be published on the NSW Department of Industry web site.

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