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Submission to NSW Water Reforms As small irrigators on the Mole River I feel I would like to put some points forward on metering small users. • Most farmers have only small amounts of irrigable land and it is opportunistic irrigation at best in these variable seasons that we are all experiencing. The Mole River has not run for eight months, so the reliability of water impacts on our chances to grow and capitalise on markets and forward contracts. Therefor limited income can be generated from irrigation at all so it would not be cost effective to install water meters. • Most irrigators try to drought proof their properties utilising opportunistic pumping to produce hay so there is no generation of income to help run properties. Therefore there is no economic value to farmers to install meters. If meters are required in the future a cheaper style of meter would do perfectly as a slight degree of inaccuracy would mean an insignificant amount of water. • Highly accurate water meters are very expensive and as our meters would be inundated in flood times they would have to withstand physical damage to avoid being continuously replaced at added expense. • We are presently experiencing a drought through most of NSW and we are heavily impacted in the Northern region of the Western slopes. All farmers are experiencing financial duress and will not be in a position to purchase meters and this situation will continue for a further 3-5 years once the drought concludes. • It appears those irrigators under a 100mm works license may not require a meter and this may work well enough for this purpose. • For the collection of data on water uptake a 5 year exemption from meter installation would mean more accurate data and stream information. It appears irrigators take a very minor amount of the annual flow of the Mole River and Tenterfield Creek. In conclusion the cost of the installation of water meters would be prohibitive by the time specialists excavated and redesigned the pipe work to suit the meters. No high value crops are grown in the district such as tobacco that may justify the expense. Meters would prove of little benefit to authorities in terms of information as all irrigators are currently required to keep a log of hours pumped. An on-line Portal system may work but extra time will be needed to see if there are any real benefits. Regards, [REDACTED]

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