

Submission to: The Tasmanian Legislative Council – Select Committee on Tasmania Irrigation

From: Midlands Water Scheme Irrigator Representative Committee (MWS-IRC)

Date: December 2017

*Terms of Reference: Inquire into and report upon the future management of water rights and associated assets that are currently administered by Tasmanian Irrigation Pty Ltd.*

The **Midlands Water Scheme – Irrigator Representative Committee (MWS-IRC)** is dissatisfied with;

- The high level of administration costs, (\$700,000 in 2016/2017 year) charged annually by Tasmanian Irrigation Pty Ltd to the Midlands Water Scheme.
- To date, the MWS -IRC feel they have been unable to adequately control, influence or transparently analyse Tasmanian Irrigation Pty Ltd costs relevant to the Midlands Water Scheme. This is due to any one or more of the following factors:
  - inadequate consultation including poor timing or lack of detail;
  - difficulties in the MWS IRC being able to obtain detailed information from TI;
  - being consulted on matters that are essentially for information and noting only by the MWS IRC, as all decisions on the specific matter/s have been previously determined by TI.
  - The MWS IRC not being provided with information in a timely manner prior to meetings

The **Midlands Water Scheme Irrigator Representative Committee** believe they are a group that is capable and competent, and would like to have more consultation and input into the Midlands Water Scheme in respect of;

- All matters that relate to the determination of the fixed costs of the MWS. This includes:
  - reviewing the full list of functions, services, fees and specific charges imposed on the MWS scheme, whether by TI, by regulatory requirements, or other obligations
  - being in a position to request clarification from TI as to relevance of some of the functions and services, including how they are derived in terms of costs

The MWS IRC, upon having a full understanding of services, costs and functions relating to the MWS, would like to be able to select various service providers to deliver those services/ functions in relation to the MWS. For example, selecting a provider to do the MWS

accounting, or the Farm Water Access plan audits. The MWS IRC would like to be able to either:

- choose to engage Tasmanian Irrigation Pty Ltd in a competitive market or;
- negotiate and outsource to suitably qualified private sector contractors

This would then ensure the scheme benefits from the most cost effective delivery of the services in a competitive market.

The **Midlands Water Scheme Irrigator Representative Committee** request that the Legislative Council Commission interview and question Chair, Andrew McShane as part of their enquiry process.

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