



MEDIA RELEASE

Australian Water Association supports Government's focus on Australia's future water needs

28 March 2014

The Australian Water Association (AWA) welcomes today's announcement by the Minister for Agriculture, Barnaby Joyce, of a new ministerial working group to identify new infrastructure projects that can deliver on Australia's water supply needs in the future.

AWA Chief Executive, Jonathan McKeown, said that it is a positive initiative of the Coalition Government to bring together the key areas of the government that can build a productive future for water infrastructure in Australia.

"The issues of deteriorating infrastructure in an environment of cost pressure, along with the need for increased operational efficiency, have long been key concerns for the water sector and we are pleased the Government has put together practical steps in prioritising infrastructure investment in Australia.

"According to *AWA/Deloitte State of the Water Sector Report* research, the Australian water industry not only sees maintenance and augmentation of infrastructure as the top issue facing the industry, but also this issue was identified as being the least effectively addressed across the nation in regards to water in the 2013 Report.

"As the Association that represents water professionals across urban and rural sectors, we are particularly pleased that no one sector is being looked at in isolation. Further, we welcome the inclusion of the diversification of water supply options, including water reuse, efficiency and groundwater storage, as possible opportunities that the government will consider.

"In conjunction to this announcement, we hope that today's meeting of the Federal Treasurer with the State Treasurers will develop positive new funding alternatives for investment in Australia's water infrastructure to ensure sustainability across a dynamic sector.

"The development of a cross-sector ministerial working group gives us confidence that water has not 'fallen off the political agenda' and we look forward to assisting the Group consult with the industry as they develop their options paper for July," said Mr McKeown.

Notes to Editors

- The Australian Water Association is Australia's leading membership association for water professionals and organisations.
- AWA is independent and plays an essential role in supporting the Australian water sector in the delivery of effective and sustainable water management practices.
- The mission is to foster knowledge, understanding and advancement in sustainable water management – its science, practice and policy – through advocacy, collaboration and professional development.
- AWA's activities are centred around a comprehensive program of conferences, workshops, publications, industry programs, training courses, networking and b2b opportunities. AWA's Annual Conference and Exhibition is Australia's largest water industry event.

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