

NIC welcomes legal action to resolve accusations against two irrigators

Steve Whan, CEO of the National Irrigators Council says he “welcomes action taken by NSW to take accusations of water theft against two Northern Basin irrigators to court.

“Irrigators have zero tolerance for water theft, water theft rips off other irrigators as well as the environment, and it destroys community confidence. If these accusations are proven then we would expect a punishment that acts as a deterrent for illegal activity.

“Of course, we do need to remember the presumption of innocence. Both accused have denied wrongdoing and we welcome the fact that they will have the opportunity to test their position in court.

“We have been disappointed with the time it has taken to have these allegations tested in the court.

“And we have been very disappointed that a flawed enforcement system has meant opponents of the basin plan have been able to tarnish the 99.9% of irrigators who have no accusations against them.

“Resolving these allegations is very important and today’s announcement is a welcome step toward that.

“It is also very important to note the huge amount of work that has been done overall to improve compliance over the past seven months.

“NSW Minister Blair deserves credit for the prompt and extensive action he has taken to rectify long term problems with the Governments compliance regime.”

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9 March 2018