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Histrionics Merchants need to get a grip

The CEO of the National Irrigators' Council, Tom Chesson said he was amazed by the histrionics which has accompanied the announcement that at the Federal level water will be returning to the Agricultural portfolio.

"The near hysterical response from some quarters warning of dire consequences shows a frightening lack of knowledge about how the Basin Plan works," Mr Chesson said.

"Adelaide's water supplies are not at risk, in fact over \$350 million was taken out of Basin Plan \$5.8 billion infrastructure fund to build a desalination plant in Adelaide to ensure even in the midst of the worst drought Adelaide will not run out of water."

"To put it simply there cannot be any changes to the Basin Plan unless Parliament authorises it."

"We are sick and tired of being used as political pawns as politicians try to whip up fear to wedge each other for electoral gain in marginal Adelaide seats."

"On a positive note we welcome the fact that Prime Minister Turnbull has placed the economy front and centre and hope this sees economic and social issues in the Basin come to the fore."

"We stand ready to do the heavy lifting to transition the national economy from a mining boom to a dining boom and we note that irrigation already underpins the country's largest manufacturing sector," Mr Chesson said.

"We hope that the Coalition's desire to kick start our regional economies will see a strong focus on a delivering a triple bottom line for communities in the Basin, many of whom are suffering from high unemployment, especially amongst our young people."

"There are some outstanding issues that will need to be resolved in the near future, including the Government's response to the Water Act Review and any potential Legislative changes arising from that review."

"We would hope given the broad support for the majority of the Water Act Review Recommendations that there is bipartisan support in Parliament."

Mr Chesson said there also needs to be a renewed focus on removing unnecessary red tape and a major focus on delivering cheaper energy costs, especially electricity prices which are out of control.

"Too often people who live outside the Basin with no skin in the game and for whom there are no consequence for their actions dictate the terms to Basin Communities. Having a person who lives in the Basin as the Federal Minister responsible for the Basin Plan will be a first," Mr Chesson concluded.

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