

Monday 9th July, 2012

NIC Welcomes AWU Support for Irrigation Communities in the MDB

The National Irrigators' Council CEO, Tom Chesson, said communities in the Murray Darling Basin were heartened by the attendance of the AWU's NSW South West Organiser, Harry Goring, amidst the ranks of the 7000 people who attended the recent rally in Griffith to demand a balanced Basin Plan.

"Mr Goring understands that AWU jobs are on the line as much as farmers' futures are.

Recent economic work by [Independent Economics](#) (funded in part by Regional Development Australia) highlights that the proposed water recovery target of 2750 GL/y would result in the loss of over 2100 jobs in the South-west Murrumbidgee region alone and 1400 of those jobs would be lost from industries traditionally supported by the AWU. "

"The National Secretary of the AWU, Paul Howes has been extremely vocal over the weekend about the need for the ALP to stand up to the likes of the Greens Party and stated in an opinion piece titled; '*Paul Howes: Labor must turn on the Greens and destroy them*' in the [Sunday Telegraph](#) that;

"They openly want to crush the jobs of hardworking Australians in the very industries that support our national prosperity."

"Hopefully Mr Howes can see that the Greens demand for at least 4000 GL/y be recovered in exactly that same light," Mr Chesson said.

"Mr Howes is right when he says that

"The fact is that fringe parties are having a huge impact on politics around the country. They are able to use their political leverage to pursue extremist agendas, and to implement policies that are both socially and economically damaging."

"The National Irrigators Council would strongly urge Mr Howes to use his considerable influence to secure a future for workers and their families in the Murray Darling Basin by throwing his Union's support behind a balanced Basin Plan.

"It's not just farmers who stand to lose by a unbalanced Plan, it's workers across the board and the nation at large and we would be happy to work with the AWU to ensure that commonsense prevails" Mr Chesson said.

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