



The Hon Dr Sharman Stone MP
Federal Member for Murray

Monday 7 September 2015

Mr Grant Heir *11/9*
Auditor General
Australian National Audit Office
GPO Box 707
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Mr Hehir

Amongst the list of Potential Audits to be undertaken as part of the Audit Work Program for 2015-16 is an audit of the Murray-Darling Basin Authority's (MDBA) implementation of the Basin Plan.

My Electorate of Murray is one of the regions most detrimentally impacted by the forced removal of irrigation water and shutdown of infrastructure in the implementation of the Basin Plan.

Recently the MDBA requested the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority (GBCMA) complete an analysis and assessment of the over the bank flooding impacts of the Constraints Management Strategy for the Goulburn, Broken and a section of the Murray River, in less than three months. This work cannot be adequately undertaken given upper tributaries are not all gauged.

The GBCMA covers over 2,431,655 Hectares which constitutes 10.5% of the State of Victoria. It is unreasonable to expect that the required comprehensive investigation and analysis can be completed in less than 3 months to a satisfactory standard, without proper data, and when the consequences are serious man-made flooding of properties every 2-3 years.

Over the last few years, I have had countless representations from community members who have experienced unsatisfactory communication with staff from the MDBA and have expressed concern about the MDBA's processes and procedures in implementing the Basin Plan. They give evidence of the strategy destroying their farm or business viability. While the plan is supposed to be delivering a triple bottom line outcome it is clear that this is not being achieved, and in fact, there is evidence of waste of funds, and gross incompetence.

I urge you to make the MDBA a priority and undertake an audit as soon as possible before the actions of the MDBA result in irreparable damage to individuals and the communities of the Murray Darling Basin.

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely

The Hon Dr Sharman Stone

