



15 March 2019

Guy Barnett, Minister for Primary Industries and Water

New Rural Water Use Strategy underway

Work has begun on a new Tasmanian Rural Water Use Strategy to guide Tasmania's future water management arrangements and to continue to grow the State's agricultural production.

This was the key message I shared at the Australian Water Association Tasmania Branch annual Ministerial Breakfast today.

The Tasmanian and Australian Governments along with farmers are making significant investments in irrigation to capitalise on Tasmania's natural water advantage.

The Hodgman Liberal Government has already allocated \$70 million to the proposed Pipeline to Prosperity, or third tranche of Tasmanian Irrigation Schemes, and Tasmanian Irrigation is preparing a business case for federal funding.

If fully implemented, it would see almost \$500 million invested across the State into another 10 potential irrigation schemes, creating over 3,900 jobs and return an estimated \$114 million each year to the agriculture sector, and our economy more broadly.

Expanding irrigation is a key part of our target to grow the farm gate value of the agricultural sector to \$10 billion per annum by 2050.

A number of entities, public and private, are involved in the administration our water resources. It is timely to update the state's rural water management framework, which has served us well to date, to ensure it reflects current best practice and the modern operating environment.

Delivering on a key election commitment, the new Strategy will be developed by DPIPW in collaboration with farmers, irrigators, rural communities and other significant water users and will:

- Review how the rural water management framework is currently working and any opportunities for improvement.
- Consider the future administration and compliance arrangements, and potential policies, protocols and/or legislation that may be required.
- Ensure that we continue to manage our rural water in an integrated, fair and efficient way that supports agricultural growth, while also protecting environmental values and providing for rural communities, recreational and other users.

The new Rural Water Use Strategy is expected to be finalised in 2020.

