

MEDIA RELEASE

Adrian Pederick MP

Shadow Minister for the River Murray,
Agriculture, Food & Fisheries and Forests

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Irrigators continue to face uncertainty

River Murray irrigators would be getting a much better deal than a five percent increase in their allocation if River Murray Minister Karlene Maywald had not buckled to the interests of other Basin states by agreeing not to buy water for irrigators.

Shadow River Murray Minister Adrian Pederick said he welcomed the increase in entitlements to 10 percent but said it would give irrigators little relief.

“South Australian River Murray irrigators continue to get the raw end of the deal because Minister Maywald is not strong enough to walk into negotiations with other states without buckling to their demands,” Mr Pederick said.

“By the Rann Government effectively negotiating away its rights to enter the water market – like it has done previously – and secure water for irrigators, growers face continued uncertainty.

“The Rann Government has in previous years underwritten critical water allocations but won’t be helping irrigators in this way this year.

“The current grant system is putting a floor in the market price for water and making it more expensive for growers.

“Minister Maywald fails time and time again to use her influence to improve the situation for irrigators.

“It is not enough to say repeatedly ‘there’s not enough water’ – we all know the Basin is in a drought.

“But Minister Maywald has abandoned the interests of those people she is supposed to champion and more worrisome is the fact a lot of these people are her own constituents.

“Minister Maywald has not been able to protect the interests of irrigators – whether it’s negotiating the COAG deal or agreeing with NSW and Victoria not to enter the water market to secure water for growers.”