

## JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

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### **Centroc & Lachlan Valley Water call on the State Government for urgent action on drought security infrastructure for the Lachlan**

With the current drought conditions a vivid reminder of the horrors of the millennium drought, a meeting of the Centroc Drought Committee with Lachlan Valley Water is calling on the State Government for urgent action on additional water storage infrastructure and downstream efficiency projects to improve drought security for the vulnerable Lachlan catchment.

“While WaterNSW have commissioned a detailed feasibility study over the last 2 years into the best options for increased water security/storage on the Lachlan or its tributaries we are yet to see any outcomes,” says Cr John Medcalf, Mayor of Lachlan and Chair of Centroc.

“We’ve been told for 12 months that the release of this study is imminent, and with the current climate of political uncertainty and elections next year, not to mention the drought, now is the time for urgent action to ensure the preferred project is committed to without delay.”

Lachlan Valley Water (LVW) Chair, Tom Green, says that the Government’s decision to look at a wide range of options to improve long term water security and reliability in the catchment as part of an overall approach to climate variability has been welcomed.

“While the current focus is on short-term drought relief, options need to look at the long-term drought preparedness of the Lachlan catchment,” says Mr Green.

Under the Snowy Hydro Legacy Fund Act 2018 the Premier and Deputy Premier may jointly nominate an infrastructure project if they consider that the project will improve economic development in regional New South Wales and will primarily benefit regional New South Wales.

“In its 2015 Audit Infrastructure Australia sees our region as having the 7<sup>th</sup> largest GRP in the nation in 2031,” says Cr Medcalf.

“Central NSW is recognised nationally for its agricultural heart and with the advent of inland rail is well placed to support the State Government in its agenda of regional growth, decentralisation and reducing metropolitan congestion.”

Chairs of both organisations agree that there could be no better project to benefit regional NSW than ensuring the long-term drought preparedness and water security of the Lachlan Valley.

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