



**Niall Blair**

Minister for Primary Industries  
Minister for Regional Water  
Minister for Trade and Industry

## MEDIA RELEASE

Friday, 15 December 2017

### NSW WATER REFORM PACKAGE

The NSW Government today announced details of a comprehensive water reform package that will:

- introduce best practice water management in NSW;
- establish a compliance and enforcement regime that delivers strong and certain regulation;
- ensure transparency and equity in how water is shared, allocated and managed in NSW; and
- build capability across the NSW Department of Industry to support effective implementation of water reforms.

Minister for Regional Water, Niall Blair said establishing the Natural Resources Access Regulator (NRAR) is one part of the reform, along with a firm commitment to increase resources by \$9.5 million for compliance and enforcement activities.

“Interim Chief Regulatory Officer, Ross Carter, is already working to revamp water compliance and enforcement, and is joined today by former NSW Minister, the Hon. Craig Knowles as chair of the independent board, alongside environmental lawyer and policy expert Ilona Millar and agribusiness professional Bruce Brown,” Mr Blair said

“The NSW Government will introduce new water measurement rules with a ‘no meter, no pump’ policy for larger water users, with consultation to begin early next year.

“All water users and the broader public require ready access to information about water use in NSW and this is why increasing transparency in water management is a key part of this reform package.

“It’s also very important that environmental water is managed effectively and NSW will work closely with stakeholders and Basin states to ensure this occurs.”

The NSW Government understands the importance of water to our food and fibre producers, the environment and other groups, and these reforms demonstrate our commitment to a fair and sustainable use of this precious asset.

The NSW water reform package is available at [www.industry.nsw.gov.au/water-reform](http://www.industry.nsw.gov.au/water-reform). Members of the NRAR Board are detailed below.

**MEDIA: Evie Madden | Minister Blair | 0409 682 163**



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The NSW Parliament passed legislation to establish the Natural Resources Access Regulator (NRAR) in November 2017. The NRAR was established to oversee compliance and enforcement of water laws in NSW. The board of the NRAR will provide the strategic and independent oversight needed for water regulation in NSW.

#### Inaugural Board of the NRAR

- **Craig Knowles** – has held a range of senior executive roles in the health, planning and natural resource management sectors. He was the Chair of the Murray Darling Basin Authority from 2011-15. He was also a senior Minister in the NSW Government from 1999 to 2005 covering a number of portfolios including Natural Resources. In 2015 he received the River Murray Medal for ‘outstanding service towards restoring the health of the River Murray’ as well as an Order of Australia.
- **Iona Millar** – has more than 18 years’ experience in environmental law and policy and a strong background in natural resource management law. She has been working as Special Counsel with Baker McKenzie’s Environmental Markets Practice since 2008 and has previously been involved in legislative and policy reviews of water legislation. Ms Millar has worked for the NSW Environmental Defender’s Office in a previous role.
- **Bruce Brown** – is currently a Director of Coleambally Irrigation Co- operative Ltd. He has served as both a Director and Member of a number of State and Federal Government committees. He has a background in agribusiness and has been General Manager of the Namoi Catchment Authority and North Coast Local Land Services.

#### Interim Chief Regulatory Officer

- **Ross Carter** - is a regulatory specialist with over 30 years’ experience in the design and implementation of policy and regulation. His roles have ranged from field-based regulatory operations in rural and regional areas to senior executive positions at both state and national levels. Some of his previous roles include time as the Executive Director Sydney Region for the NSW EPA and an Executive General Manager with the Australian Clean Energy Regulator.