



**Senator Malcolm Roberts**  
One Nation Senator for Queensland

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## MEDIA RELEASE

### **Murray Darling Basin investigation a whitewash**

One Nation Senator Roberts expressed sheer disbelief and disappointment with the Keelty report into the Murray Darling Basin's water allocations to farmers who need water to grow food.

Senator Roberts said, "As the nation reels from COVID-19 and faces food shortages this report is woefully inadequate and a tragic waste of taxpayers' money. "

"An investigation should demonstrate rigour and analysis and instead Mr Keelty's report is full of inadequacies."

The report fails to include in its datasets this year's substantial rainfall event and does not acknowledge rainfall within the MDB has increased over the past 100 years. Instead the Keelty analysis deceitfully uses 'declining inflows' as a way of arguing why farmers should be denied a fair allocation of water.

When 4000 disenchanted farmers descended on Canberra to protest the unfair allocation of water between the environment and farmers, they were promised that their zero allocations would be the subject of this review.

"It is deeply disappointing, particularly now when our agricultural productive capacity is under-utilised, that this issue was not rigorously examined by Mr Keelty. Astonishingly the report fails to even mention those zero allocations," added Senator Roberts.

As predicted by many farmers, the former Water Minister David Littleproud used the promise of an investigation into the MDB to quieten the crowd of protestors and conveniently shift blame to the States and irrigators.

Irrigators are suspicious of MDBA figures that show declining inflows when the Murray River has been running so high that environmental damage has resulted along the upper Murray and Barmah/Millewa forest from excessive water.

Disturbingly the report claims that environmental water is not being wasted, ignoring the unnecessary flooding of forests, excess water flushed out to sea in South Australia and keeping the lower lakes filled above their natural levels with Murray River water.

"The report may as well have been written by the MDBA itself, as it addresses none of the concerns from farmers, some of which have gone without a water allocation for 3 years."

COVID-19 has highlighted the critical importance of Australia restoring our productive capacity across many strategic industries, including our agricultural sector.



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“The Keelty report’s lack of due diligence in this investigation is akin to the last nail in the coffin of one of Australia’s most substantial food bowls. No water, no food,” Senator Roberts added.

Unsurprisingly, the report found that a lack of trust and leadership worsened the problems. One Nation calls for a Royal Commission into misconduct in the implementation of the Murray Darling Basin Plan.

“Trust cannot be restored until roting has been exposed and fixed. Australia needs management of the MDB Plan that reflects a genuine triple benefit - for irrigators, communities and the environment,” Senator Roberts stated.