

**BARLOW GUILTY PLEA  
(26/11/2018)**

The NSWIC respects Mr Barlow's decision to plead guilty. The NSWIC strongly condemns any actions of water theft.

The Council has always supported a strong compliance regime and irrigators have been paying for compliance for many years through our fees to the NSW Government. What this development has shown is that clear rules, clear information and a compliance system with integrity is necessary for effective management of the water resource in NSW. The NSWIC will continue to work with both government agencies and irrigators to ensure compliance is effective, and that our water resources are used in the best possible way within legal and regulatory frameworks.

Irrigators across the State depend on a strong compliance regime because the people of NSW should and must have confidence that the limited resource of water is managed at all times in the best interests of the people, with environmental outcomes and then the economic circumstances of rural communities and the State. Water theft is to the detriment of both the irrigation industry and the environment.

There are over 12,000 irrigators in New South Wales, today's guilty plea by Mr Barlow applies to his actions, it is not about those 12,000 irrigators that continue to do the right thing. The NSWIC now has an important role in making sure singular instances of water theft remain unrepresentative of the Sector and ensuring the 12,000 irrigators in NSW who do the right and legal things, are not subject to unfair, unwarranted and unjustified generalisations.

The New South Wales Irrigators' Council encourages irrigators and members of the public with concerns about non-compliance, to raise their allegations with the Natural Resource Access Regulator on 1800 633 362. END

For further information:  
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Approved JC / TN