

SUMMARY STATEMENT OF PAUL REESE FOR WAIMAKARIRI IRRIGATION LIMITED

INTRODUCTION

- 1 My name is Paul Reese and I provide environmental management services to Waimakariri Irrigation Limited (*WIL*).
- 2 In this role I have managed *WIL*'s Farm Environment Plan (*FEP*) and audit program since its inception, as well as liaising with shareholders and providing training and general advice to farmers, senior management and the *WIL* board of directors.
- 3 I provided a statement of evidence for *WIL* dated 17 July 2020.

SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE

- 4 In my statement of evidence I provided an overview of *WIL*'s day-to-day environmental management, including:
 - 4.1 the Farm Environment Plan and audit programme;
 - 4.2 irrigation management; and
 - 4.3 nutrient budgeting.
- 5 I also provided case studies outlining what PC7 might mean 'on the ground' for a number of representative *WIL* farm types and systems.
- 6 As the *WIL* Scheme environmental manager I have witnessed considerable change within the scheme (and wider farming sector) over the last five years.
- 7 One of the biggest shifts is in farmer attitudes, thinking and engagement on environmental factors. The improved understanding of the issues of nitrogen loss and other contaminants leaving a farm demonstrates the shift in awareness of what is now a critical aspect of farming. Environmental factors are now at the forefront of decision-making. This permeates from everyday decisions on stock movements or design of a farm fence to large decisions such as infrastructure and machinery upgrades and farm purchases. Farmers are actively making decisions to improve their impact on the environment for generations to come.
- 8 The *WIL* Scheme is in an excellent position with the systems, structures and resources in place to determine where the priorities are to improve water quality information through a culture of continuous improvement. This is backed up by the ability to enforce consequences if environmental performance does not meet standards, as has occurred with several properties in recent years, which have been required by the Scheme to obtain their own farming land use consents.
- 9 *WIL* is able to leverage its systems and engagement with farmers to improve on-farm environmental performance. This is part of the *WIL* solutions package to make water quality improvements and ultimately achieve the freshwater objectives in the zone.

- 10 Through its monitoring requirements the discharge consent assists WIL to influence and feedback into what happens inside farm boundaries. I see the audit process as the 'mechanism for change'. It identifies on-farm risks to the environment that the particular land use poses and assesses how well the risks are being managed within the constraints of the particular property. The focus for WIL has been on ensuring that GMP's are actioned on the ground and developing a culture of continual improvement. The range of practices and improvements required to meet GMP can include infrastructure, management changes and management capability.
- 11 From the five representative case studies I undertook for WIL in preparation for PC7, it is clear that PC7 will have a significant impact on the farming community. It is also clear that OVERSEER modelling does not capture the numerous actions happening on the farm which have immediate impacts on environmental performance.
- 12 Through my role as the WIL environmental manager I have noted that most farmers are already going above and beyond GMP. The audited FEP and GMP approach has become more than just a compliance tool, for farmers it is now a matter of principle and pride to do the very best they can within their property and business constraints.
- 13 It is essential that the PC7 framework and rules enable, encourage, and incentivise environmental improvements across all elements of farm management, if water quality improvements and ultimately the freshwater objectives in the zone are to be achieved. Having the WIL Scheme working together is also critical to achieving the environmental outcomes sought through PC7.

11 November 2020

Paul Reese