



Dam the Mary River? Save the Mary River!

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TRAVESTON CROSSING DAM FIGHTERS REJECT MINISTERS EXPLANATION

"Although we are happy that the Beattie Government has agreed to reverse its decision to begin a process of compulsory acquisition of properties unless it has received all the necessary approvals, including an approval under the EPBC Act from the Commonwealth Government; it's difficult for us to accept Anna Bligh's explanation that almost immediate compulsory acquisition was all a bit of a misunderstanding" said Save The Mary River Coordinating Group spokesman Kevin Ingersole today.

"Consider the facts:

In her Ministerial Statement to Parliament on Tuesday October 31st, the Minister said "to give landholders certainty, land required for both dams and all stages of Traveston Crossing will be acquired now". She used the same words in her Media Statement also issued on Tuesday.

The Purchase Process Fact Sheet in the information pack together with a letter from Anna Bligh sent to property owners whose properties are required for the proposed dam (1, 2, or 3 days after the announcement) contains a step by step process diagram showing that if the property owner does not accept the Queensland Water Infrastructure Pty Ltd offer to purchase the property QWI will seek compulsory acquisition and the Coordinator General takes the land.

Under the Timing heading, the Fact Sheet explains "To provide certainty and minimise disruption for landowners, QWI aims to conclude purchases within approximately four months of commencement of negotiations". And further, "If an acceptable outcome cannot be negotiated, it may be necessary to ask the Coordinator General to initiate proceedings for compulsory acquisition of the relevant land..."

In Section 2 paragraph (d) of the government's Land Purchasing Policy – Traveston Crossing Dam we read "It is expected that if an agreement is to be concluded this will generally occur within approximately 4 months of the initial contact by QWI. (This period may differ depending on the simplicity or complexity of individual landowner circumstances.) If an agreement has not been concluded following this process, or if it becomes apparent that the landowner is not prepared to enter genuine negotiations, QWI may request the Coordinator-General to initiate procedures for the compulsory acquisition of the relevant land..."

"If the explanations of the process described in the Information pack together with statements from property owners at the meeting at Gympie on Friday that QWI officers had threatened compulsory acquisition if the QWI offer was not accepted within 4 months does not indicate the intention of short term compulsory acquisition, I don't know what does. Anna Bligh should understand that people in this region take a very dim view of tampering with the truth." he said.

“We have had a gut full of the Beattie Government’s appalling incompetence and its use of stand-over tactics in connection with the push to bring the flawed Traveston Crossing dam proposal on and we demand a fair, open and transparent process. We are not willing to accept having our requests for relevant and important facts and data for use by our independent consultants routinely denied by government and QWI officers. We want a new deal, and we want it now” he said.

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