Statement Regarding the Proposed Creation of Easements over Private Property in relation to the Murray Darling Basin Plan Constraints Management Strategy.

From the Upper Goulburn River Catchment Association (UGRCA)
15th September 2015

The UGRCA, representing many concerned landholders along the Goulburn River and its tributaries around Yea/Molesworth/Alexandra/Rubicon would like to make a clear statement in relation to the creation of easements across private property, as proposed by the MDBA's Constraints Management Strategy.

It is clear to the UGRCA that landholders, whose properties will be inundated by environmental flood flows, as proposed by the MDBA, in order to deliver man-made manipulated flood flows to the Lower Goulburn, Murray and South Australia, **are NOT prepared to negotiate** the creation of flood easements over our properties.

All our UGRCA land holders know that the MDBA floods, will cause an untenable loss in productivity of our farms, significant loss of amenity, increased major flooding risk and will lead to a serious devaluation of our properties. The Goulburn River flats in our area are some of the most productive and valuable farming land in the country. Land holders will not stand by and see their equity eroded by man-made floods.

An easement is not mitigation. It simply attempts to absolve the river operator, Goulburn Murray Water and the Goulburn Broken Catchment Authority from responsibility and liability from third party impacts.

Given the in-channel capacity of the Goulburn River at Molesworth is 9,500 ML per day, and the proposed MDBA environmental flood flows of 20,000ML/day are over double the bank full volume, landowners in the Upper Goulburn Catchment stand to suffer very severe and significant inundation of their properties on a continuing basis, and no amount of compensation can mitigate this.

We are resolute in our position that the creation of flood easements will not be negotiated.

Statement Prepared by Jan Beer on behalf of the UGRCA.