



Senator Jacqui Lambie  
**Senator for Tasmania**

12 December 2014

The Hon. Tony Abbott  
Prime Minister  
PO Box 6022  
House of Representatives  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Prime Minister

In keeping with the Xmas spirit, I wish you, your family and staff a very Merry, Happy and Holy Christmas.

I also write to bring to your attention, recent advocacy and a request for funding I've received with regards to Tasmanian Irrigation Schemes.

As you are no doubt aware, Tasmanian Irrigation is waiting on a promised \$110M in federal funding to complete Tranche 2 of a suite of 10 market-driven irrigation schemes, seven of which are operational and three which are currently under construction.

I've been reliably informed that the Tasmanian State Government has already committed \$30M, however if federal funding is not forthcoming in the very near future, I've also been reliably informed that Tasmanian Irrigation will continue to lose key staff.

And should that unfortunate event occur, Tasmanian Irrigation would also lose the capability and capacity to develop further critically important schemes in Tasmania.

This would cause unnecessary harm to an important infrastructure project, which will add significant economic value and job creating opportunities to Tasmania's and Australia's agricultural production.

I note that once Tranche 1 and 2 of the Tasmanian Irrigation Schemes are completed - of the nearly \$1B (\$997M) of total investment, Tasmanian farmers will have paid \$628M.

The Federal Government will have contributed (\$259M) and Tasmanian State Government will have invested (\$110M) to this important infrastructure project.

While each Tasmanian Irrigation project is at a different stage of the development cycle, it has also been reliably reported to me that there are five schemes in Tranche 2 which have been held up by the delay in a commitment of federal funds.



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Those 5 irrigation schemes are:

- 1) The Southern Highlands;
- 2) Swan Valley;
- 3) North Esk;
- 4) Scottsdale, and
- 5) Circular Head

These schemes are in regions of Australia which are experiencing some of the highest rates of unemployment and social disadvantage – and therefore I would hope that you would understand the importance of ensuring that the promise of federal funding was kept. And that \$110M of federal infrastructure funding was authorized and approved as soon as possible.

Season Greetings and Merry Xmas again.

Yours Faithfully,

Senator Jacqui Lambie  
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Cc The Hon Julie Bishop, Deputy Prime Minister  
The Hon Warren Truss, Deputy Prime Minister  
The Hon Barnaby Joyce, Minister for Agriculture  
The Hon Will Hodgman, Premier of Tasmania  
The Hon Rene Hidding, Minister for Infrastructure  
The Hon Jeremy Rockliff, Minister for Primary Industries & Water