

**ECONOMICS AND INDUSTRY
STANDING COMMITTEE**

Inquiry into Water Licensing and Services

**TRANSCRIPT OF EVIDENCE TAKEN
AT PERTH
THURSDAY, 20 DECEMBER 2007**

SESSION THREE

Members

Mr R.C. Kucera (Chairman)
Mr G.A. Woodhams (Deputy Chairman)
Dr J.M. Edwards
Mr M.P. Murray
Mr A.J. Simpson

Hearing commenced at 3.00 pm**CAMKIN, MR JEFFREY KEITH****Private Citizen, examined:**

The CHAIRMAN: This committee hearing is a proceeding of Parliament and warrants the same respect that proceedings in the house itself demand. Even though you are not required to give evidence on oath, any deliberate misleading of the committee may be regarded as a contempt of Parliament. Have you completed the "Details of Witness" form?

Mr Camkin: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: Do you understand the notes at the bottom of the form?

Mr Camkin: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: Did you receive and read an information for witnesses briefing sheet regarding giving evidence before a parliamentary committee?

Mr Camkin: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: Do you have any questions relating to your appearance before the committee today?

Mr Camkin: No.

The CHAIRMAN: Would you give us a brief overview of your knowledge of water management in Western Australia and anything you think would assist in setting the context of why you are here?

Mr Camkin: Thank you for the invitation to appear before the committee. I do so as a private citizen, not relating to any previous or current capacity. I have been involved in the development of public policy, administration and research in water, irrigation and fisheries for about the past 15 years. I will go through my roles, working backwards so that you can get a bit of any idea about my background. I am currently working with CSIRO as a sustainability specialist on a project called Northern Australia Irrigation Futures. I have been doing that since 2005. Prior to that, in 2005, I was seconded to the Department of the Premier and Cabinet to review and provide recommendations to government on the appropriate water industry arrangements for Western Australia. Prior to that, between 2003 and 2005, I spent several periods as policy and liaison officer for the Minister for the Environment, who also had responsibility for water resources. During that period as well I was strategy manager for water resources at the Department of Environment, which now of course is the Department of Water. I was also director of the water resource management charges project, which investigated water licence fees and water resource management charges in Western Australia. From 1997 to 2002, I was manager of water allocation in Western Australia. From 1996 to 1997 I was recreational fisheries policy and planning officer at the Department of Fisheries. From 1995 to 1996 I was special projects officer to the Minister for Primary Industry and Fisheries. From 1992 to 1995 I was commercial fisheries manager in New South Wales. I have tertiary qualifications in Applied Science in Fisheries from the Australia Maritime College and a Graduate Diploma in Natural Resources Law from Wollongong University. I also participated in the Australian water industry executive program at Monash University. From 1997 until now I have been a member of the Australian Water Association committee in Western Australia, including being president from 2005 to 2007. I was a member of the WA government water legislation and administrative arrangements working group in 2005. From 2003 to 2005 I was a member of the WA Irrigation Review Steering Committee. In 2004 I was a member of the WA government

interagency working group on the National Water Initiative. During this time I undertook international study tours through a Churchill Fellowship in 2004 examining strategic approaches to water resource management in South Africa, the USA and Brazil. In 2002 I was an Australian National Committee on Irrigation and Drainage travel fellow, looking at approaches to water allocation and management in Argentina, Peru, Chile, Mexico, USA and France.

The CHAIRMAN: I think you are eminently qualified to be sitting before us. Well done. Do you have a copy of the terms of reference?

Mr Camkin: I do.

The CHAIRMAN: If I may take you straight to them; as you can see, they are pretty specific and relate specifically to the licensing of water and costs associated with that. We want to try to keep to that because we have been given fairly narrow terms of reference. The first term of reference refers to “the benefits to, cost to and imposts on irrigators, industry, community and environment of a licensing system”. You have obviously worked through this process. Are there benefits? If there are, what are the benefits of licensing? Are there downsides to the process, particularly with the cost and impost on irrigators? What is your view about the first term of reference?

Mr Camkin: I forgot to mention earlier that I have a brief submission and have attached a copy of a summary of my Churchill Fellowship report, for some more context. I am happy to take any questions directly around the terms of reference. Maybe if I could just comment.

The CHAIRMAN: I should have asked you that first. Did the committee receive a copy of that submission? Thank you.

Mr Camkin: It is really for some context and just a few comments, I guess, about water licensing and services. Although the terms of reference are directly targeting water licensing, water licensing sits within the broader context of water resource management. Licensing might be the thing that licensees see most of the water resource management package of activities and, therefore, often value most because that is the activity they see. Often what they do not see is a lot of the activity that happens - policy development, for example, which happens in head office. They do not see those sorts of costs. The cost of licensing is only a small proportion of the cost of total water resource management. There are other things such as investigating resources and determining sustainable use, planning management, water resource management - all those things that actually underpin the ability to grant licences. You can separate the costs of licensing from the other costs and benefits of licensing from the other arrangements, but they intrinsically linked. As the pressure on water resources in the state goes up - it has been - there is a need for much closer management and much better assessment of water resources, better planning, better policies and more accurate allocations of water. Basically, as water use is approaching perceived limits for that use, and we are managing more towards a knife edge, we clearly need to increase the level of management, which is what we have been seeing. Part of that is increasing the licensing activity as well.

In terms of the first term of reference, I will bring some of the experiences from those international study tours in particular. It seems to me that water use really needs to be viewed as a privilege and the use of a community asset and not a personal use of something that is owned by landholders or anybody else. Water use and management is both a responsibility of government and a responsibility of landholders and water users in the rest of the community. One of the things that licensing does is to provide a formal recognition of the rights and responsibilities that licensees have and what comes with that privilege.

[3.10 pm]

Mr Camkin: The licencing system and water resource management that underpins it is designed to provide security to the environment, to water licence users and to society that water will remain available for ecological, social and economic benefit into the future. We need to think about not only existing licensees, but also future licensees.

I will make a few generalisations that people will be able to put holes into! From what I have seen, here and elsewhere, licensees value their licences - and increasingly so in recent years as a result of climate change - but undervalue the underpinning services of water resource management that support their licences. They might in some cases accept contributing to the costs of the licencing system, but find it harder to accept contributing to the costs of some of the broader, less direct management activities. However, where they do contribute to the broader licencing costs, it seems to me that the range of benefits that result are far in excess of the value of the income from licencing fees; things such as increasing their sense of ownership of the management need and responsibility for being part of the solution to water management challenges.

The CHAIRMAN: Before you move off that point, I clarify that you are saying that licensees are happy to pay for a licence, but are not necessarily as happy to pay for the underpinning services that actually measure and monitor etc.

Mr Camkin: I am not sure that I would use the term “happy”! However, they are certainly more accepting of contributing to licencing costs than of contributing to the broader resource management costs that are less direct and which they see less of; things such as planning - people sitting in head offices, developing policy - resource assessment work, and modelling. When users see people walking on their properties and talking to them about water management, that sort of face-to-face communication is very powerful. They value that.

The CHAIRMAN: Before we move off that subject, you said that your view is that water is a national resource and that ownership of water on a particular person’s land should not be an issue. Am I interpreting that correctly?

Mr Camkin: The view is that it is a community resource and that management responsibility is vested with the state.

The CHAIRMAN: Therefore should the control, measurement, regulation and monitoring of that resource also be an issue for everybody in the state?

Mr Camkin: My view is that it is the responsibility of government to ensure that there is good management in place; it does not mean that government has to do it all. Good water resource management should be a partnership between landholders, government and the community. There are some pretty effective models in places I have visited overseas that really build the community in as part of the process of water resource management. We are doing some of that here as well.

The CHAIRMAN: To return to the first term of reference regarding the cost to and impost on irrigators, what is your interpretation of the cost? Is the cost the fee of licencing or is it the cost of recovering all the other services that go towards supporting a licencing regime?

Mr Camkin: My view is that we should be considering the whole cost, not just the cost of licensing - not necessarily attributing all those costs to licensees, but considering what all those costs are and working out what, out of all those costs, should be attributed to licensees.

The CHAIRMAN: With regard to your travels overseas, do the models you talked about differ in any way from the model that is proposed by the Department of Water and the models suggested by the National Water Initiative?

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: That is assuming you know what has been proposed by the Department of Water in its latest iteration!

The CHAIRMAN: Sorry; I assumed you did.

Mr Camkin: I know that a suite of licence fees were debated in Parliament.

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: Yes, and they were disallowed and a new regime was tentatively floated.

The CHAIRMAN: I am not so much concerned about the quantum or the dollar signs; I am more concerned about the criteria for reaching that quantum.

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: Can I ask a supplementary question? What is being proposed is a licence fee, but it varies depending upon the size of the licence. I do not know whether you are happy to say, but do you have a personal view about the ideal licencing charging system?

Mr Camkin: Not really. I have always held the view that a licence fee is an important first step and that it starts the process of licensed water users contributing to the meeting of costs. That is a really important first step. It does not matter so much what the quantum is; the important point is that they are contributing. It can, at the same time, be used as a way of increasing the level of transparency of services provided, and provide mechanisms by which licensed users can become part of the negotiations and processes involved in setting licence fees. I was involved in introducing a charge for rock lobster fishing in New South Wales when I was there, at the same time as we introduced a quota management system, similar to the rights systems that are proposed under the National Water Initiative. We regulated the industry, limited the number of people who could take lobsters and introduced a total allowable catch, which is similar to a maximum sustainable year. We charged them a fee and within six months or maybe a year, they actually asked us to increase the fees because they were getting value out of the security it provided to their entitlements. They actually started funding increased levels of enforcement and monitoring and those sorts of things. I guess for me that was a clear reflection of the value they got from an improved management system.

The CHAIRMAN: What were the elements of that fee?

Mr Camkin: I am testing my memory; it was 15 years ago! I think - I will have to check - it was the equivalent of a licence fee and there may have been a fee associated with the percentage of the total allowable catch they were allowed to take. However, I am not certain.

The CHAIRMAN: Sorry; I should not have put you under that pressure. Taking into account the current regime, what do you understand the elements of the licensing fee that currently applies to be? There is a big variation between various properties at the moment, is there not?

Mr Camkin: Yes, I think it is similar to some work I did previously with the department. There is a range of categories of licences based on the volume of water allocated on the licence. There are increasing steps of fees within that. Again, I think it is a useful first step to start the process of working out how to fund a sustainable water future, but further steps need to be considered beyond that.

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: Presumably - with regard to what you were saying about transparency in the New South Wales rock lobster example - there would need to be transparency about how any such fee would be arrived at and what factors would be considered.

[3.20 pm]

Mr Camkin: In my travels, I have picked up a couple of things relating to this that improve the acceptability of these things; namely, open, transparent demonstration of the costs - in this case the cost of licensing and also the broader costs of management; and a commitment to the building of understanding of water resource management services. What are the things the department and others are currently doing in water resource management? It is a matter of gradually building the understanding of the community, in particular water users, about what actually happens. It is not just licensing; it is a much broader range of services. Other things are a shared vision for future levels of service - developing the equivalent of the rock lobster fishery. A joint acceptance of this is what we are aiming for. These are the services we need. Other things are involving water users in determining the priorities for expenditure and in negotiating the fees themselves. That links obviously to the levels of service. Clearly, government will have some levels of service that it does not want to see it drop below, but there are other levels of service that are available for negotiation I would imagine. Others are: clear acceptance and use by water resource managers of the knowledge that water users and the community have. We often hear water users state that they are quite happy

to be involved in the measurement of their water use and in providing reports, rather than funding a troop of meter readers, for example. Finally, an ability for water users in the community to be actively involved in the water resource management - to be participants rather than observers of water resource management.

The CHAIRMAN: Were there licensing regimes overseas?

Mr Camkin: Everywhere I have been licensing regimes were in place.

The CHAIRMAN: Was there a common theme running through the criteria for the costs of those licences?

Mr Camkin: I was involved in the process previously when I was with the department, and at the same time Colorado was going through the exact same process. I was comparing notes with Colorado's process. The issues that were being raised, the negotiations we were having and the concerns being raised by the water users were exactly the same. Similarly, when I spoke to people about this in South Africa, the issues were the same. It goes to levels of service; it goes to this idea of a vision for levels of service: what should users, as opposed to the general community, contribute, for example? Is it possible to transparently break down what all the total costs are to what are those that are actually created by the water users themselves and what is created by the broader community's demands? It depends on whether you use an impacter-pays model to attribute costs, or a beneficiaries-pay model, and all those sorts of things. There are similar discussions everywhere. They are not easy discussions, and authorities everywhere seem to be going through the same sort of process.

The CHAIRMAN: Have the places you visited reached a conclusion?

Mr Camkin: Water resource management charges have been in South Africa for a few years. I was back there only a few weeks ago and I get the feeling that it is still a process of negotiation and trying to work out the levels of service in different catchments. However, in 2004 they were clearly pointing to some of the broader benefits that come from having a fee that goes beyond the few million dollars they bring in from such a fee. It really is about people becoming part of the solution.

Mr M.P. MURRAY: In all the modelling of associated costs, you are saying take a total cost. I am probably going outside the terms of reference a fair bit, but who monitors the draw-downs? Is that part of the licensing fee or part of the Department of Environment and Conservation? It is all right to have a fee and to check what is going out, but if we do not check what is in there, we are not gaining from what we are legislating for. We could end up with no water. We could charge all the fees but there might be an earthquake somewhere and as a result the inflow could be interfered with. I am concerned about charging a fee but not having a check and balance for how it equates to what we take out.

Mr Camkin: That is my point: consideration of the licence fees is just part of the story. There is a bigger picture, which is about the full cost of management and the need to understand the inflows into the system, not only what someone is taking out. Some of those things are not directly related to the process of licensing. They clearly support the licensing system.

Mr M.P. MURRAY: Can we, in all honesty, say we are charging a fee because we need to monitor and still be confident the job is being done? I do not think so, because we do not know what the draw-downs are and what the recharge is.

Mr Camkin: Typically, those functions would be being carried out by the Department of Water.

Mr M.P. MURRAY: The department would be saying, "You're getting more for the licence fee. We're not doing it; you do it", as is the way of departments.

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: Are you not saying that we should be really transparent about these being the costs and activities that are undertaken in one column and a proportion of those in a way that is really transparent to everyone will go into the licence fee however it is worked out? However, there

is then a feedback loop in that local groups of people in a catchment who pay the licence fee get reports from the department about the licence money it has collected, and, at the same time, how much it has spent on monitoring or improving the knowledge of the catchment.

Mr Camkin: There are a lot of benefits in feeding back, so that it builds the understanding of the services being provided. Essentially, that is what I am saying. There is a broader picture, and the licensing and the licence fees are part of that. Nevertheless, it is that broader context in which we need to continue to develop people's understanding. That has been happening, particularly in the past five years.

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: In your travels have you had any feeling about the proportion of broad costs that are put back to the licence?

Mr Camkin: I did not really look at the total percentage recovery, if you like. I looked at the sort of things that were guiding the decisions. Some of those are fairly pragmatic. I think in South Africa they had decided not to try to recover some of those central office costs because there is too much debate about them.

The CHAIRMAN: With regard to the cost structure and transparency, it should be fairly simple to work out the administration fee for issuing someone a licence. My crayfishing licence costs me \$38, or whatever it is, and half that if I am a senior. It gripes me because all my mates have a Seniors Card. The \$38 for the administration fee should be a standard fee that should be applied to everyone, regardless of the amount of water that is allocated or what is used, should it not? It will cost no more for writing out that piece of paper than it would for someone with a much bigger allocation. However, the cost of monitoring the water they use would grow exponentially depending on the size of the allocation and on how much they used, would it not?

Mr Camkin: Yes it would. It would depend on how narrowly you determine the process of signing that licence. The costs are all the same for taking that piece of paper off a printer and signing it. However, the process of actually making a decision that this licence can be approved or needs to be refused can be much greater for a large licence. Sometimes it is a small licence, but in a system that is close to fully allocated. That would be a harder decision to make than it would be for someone who wants a small amount of water in a new area where we know a lot of water is available. It is about the cost of making the decision, and not just the cost of taking the paper and signing it.

The CHAIRMAN: Is that overall decision not made in the public interest? The person seeking the licence wants to use the water. The considerations about giving him or her that use are about the greater public interest and about the availability of the consumptive pool etc, are they not?

[3.30 pm]

Mr Camkin: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: That being the case, why, then, would the user be asked to bear that cost just because the decision as to whether or not they can use that water is harder for that person than it is for the next person down the road?

Mr Camkin: There are a number of ways you can look at it. The cost is created because that person wants to take water as well, so some of those costs do not exist if he does not walk into the office saying, "I want this water allocation." There are a number of ways you can look at the attribution or creation of the costs. Clearly, there are broader community benefits. There are reasonable processes you can go through, and I am sure the departments have been through them leading up to these fees; that is, have looked at all the management costs, broken them down and worked out which of those costs are attributable to water users and which are not. I grabbed a presentation from the Department of the Premier and Cabinet website just last night. It is from a presentation I gave in September 2003. It has a breakdown of these sorts of costs.

The CHAIRMAN: We would be very interested in that, if it is a spare copy.

Mr Camkin: You can have this copy. I downloaded it off the internet; it is a public document. I would imagine that updated figures may well be available, as that was a very preliminary assessment.

The CHAIRMAN: Can we grab that copy off you, and if we need to update the figures, we can go, through that, to the Internet?

Mr Camkin: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: What I am trying to get clear in my own mind is why, simply because a person uses more water than another person, that person's licensing fee should be higher. I can understand you would charge them more for allocation; that is, you would link an allocation back to that.

Mr Camkin: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: But I am not sure why the licensing fee should be higher or lower. There must be criteria for setting those costs. If that is the case, should the Department of Water have to clearly enunciate those elements in every licensing fee?

Mr Camkin: As I said before, some decisions are harder and more complex than others. The process of licensing is a process of taking into account a range of factors and then trying to make a call on them. In some cases, there are a few factors and it is quite clear, and in other cases there are lots of things to consider which are quite complex; there might not be a lot of water available and you might be really pushing the limits to sustainable use, for example. I think most places have a tiered structure for licence fees, and in some ways that, perhaps a little crudely, reflects this difference in licensing costs.

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: So largely it reflects the effort?

Mr Camkin: Yes.

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: The hours put in?

Mr Camkin: Yes. Again, I think it is a good first step that enables more formal and inclusive negotiations on where it all goes in the future.

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: Do you have a view on local management?

Mr Camkin: Yes, I do.

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: Care to share it?

Mr Camkin: Probably one of the highlights of my study tours was looking at some of the models that have been established, particularly in South Africa and Brazil, to increase the level of local management. South Africa, at the moment, has a fantastic platform and fantastic legislation policy framework but it is struggling to find the human resources to implement it. There is a lesson there about keeping the development capacity in line with the policy framework. Both Brazil and South Africa have been lauded as having some of the most modern water legislation in the world. It is very much about establishing a structure whereby it is very clear what decisions are made at the national level and what decisions are made at the state level and the catchment level. They are actually making the bulk allocations in a process called the "national water resource strategy" that determines what the bulk allocations between catchments are. The idea is that the catchments then manage what they get within that catchment. Things such as inter-basin transfers of water are decided in that national water resource management strategy.

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: We would not have inter-basin transfer in Western Australia?

Mr Camkin: Perth-Kalgoorlie is an inter-regional transfer. In South Africa's case, it has established it based on catchments and sub-catchments, and there are 19 catchments, which are the

management units. The beauty of it is that it is very clear and understandable who makes what decisions.

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: Yes.

Mr Camkin: Brazil has the same structure, based on catchment management authorities that are the decision makers. In the case of Brazil, they also set the fees. The fees are set by almost the equivalent, in some ways, of Parliament.

The CHAIRMAN: Is it a standard fee, though, for all the users?

Mr Camkin: How do you mean?

The CHAIRMAN: Is it based on, as you said, the amount of investigation that has to be done, or is it a fee that is charged dependent on the amount of water that is allocated? How do they set their fee structure?

Mr Camkin: I am not sure.

The CHAIRMAN: You do not know. It would be possible to find that out, I suspect.

Mr Camkin: I have pretty good connections in Brazil. I could find that out for you.

The CHAIRMAN: If our secretary was to follow up on that with you out of session, would you be happy to give us some information to follow up on that?

Mr Camkin: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: I am interested in finding out what those criteria are and how the fees are set, because a lot of the angst that is coming to us appears to be because of, firstly, the fact that people do not want to pay for licensing fees, obviously, but they still want to have a right to the water and have it valued. A lot of the angst seems to be coming - if I am right - because some people are not paying any fees at all, and then other people are paying what they consider to be too high a fee compared with a person on a neighbouring property etc. In the models that you saw, was there some way of reaching a standardisation and appreciation of how the various fees were arrived at?

Mr Camkin: From what I saw, it comes down to transparency and working your way through these things. There will never be a perfect answer. There will always be these arguments and challenges, and some people will disagree and some will agree.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, of course.

Mr Camkin: I think there is a better understanding now than there was perhaps five years ago about the importance of funding good water resource management. It is the same thing with the recreational fishing licence proposals, which are progressively, gradually becoming more acceptable to people.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes. Jeff, were there any other issues that you wanted to raise with us? Are there any specific ones that jump out at you? I have one more question: how familiar are you with the current proposals for the National Water Initiative?

Mr Camkin: I have probably fallen off the pace a bit because I am not that closely involved in it now.

The CHAIRMAN: The licensing of water extraction is allowed for under the NWI, and I suppose you have really dealt with some of that issue, but can you explain the advantages and disadvantages of licensing water supply in Western Australia? You have talked a lot about the advantages of it; are there any disadvantages that you see?

Mr Camkin: If you do not have any management system at all - and the impact on common property resources is well documented -

The CHAIRMAN: Yes.

Mr Camkin: - the tragedy of the commons. You clearly need a management system. I am yet to see a better one. There is a reason that everyone seems to have a licensing system of some sort or another. As I said at the beginning, it provides a formal recognition of the rights and responsibilities of that individual. That is very important for defining the levels of security. As the management needs increase, that definition needs to get sharper and sharper.

[3.40 pm]

The CHAIRMAN: The other thing we have been told is that licensing creates a value for the individual or the piece of land and would then encourage or facilitate water trading and better usage of water within the area. When you went overseas, did you see any models to support that and that added value to the water allocations?

Mr Camkin: South Africa is only now really investigating water trading. Brazil does not have water trading. Australia is leading the way there a fair bit. My view is that water trading is a useful tool. It is one of the tools in the water resource management tool kit, and wherever it is appropriate, you use it. However, to trade, you would need to have something that is clear. What is it that is available to trade? In this case, it is an entitlement to take a certain quantity of water under certain conditions. Water trading was not a problem in the study tours that I did, other than perhaps some experiences in Chile in the 1980s that showed up some of the weaknesses if the right regulatory framework for trading is not set up, which is like anything.

The CHAIRMAN: Jeff, thank you. It has been helpful to us.

Mr Camkin: Can I touch on one other thing?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes.

Mr Camkin: The sixth term of reference -

The CHAIRMAN: I just noticed that I had not ticked that one off.

Mr Camkin: This is something that I have been involved in debates on in the past. These sorts of costs of the bores, pipes and dams of self-suppliers are equivalent to the costs incurred by water service providers in building bores, pumps and dams. In the case of water service providers, they are the costs of providing them to towns or individuals. Those costs of water service provision are recovered through the water service charges that we all get sent. In self-supplying situations, they are paid for by individuals through their own investment. They are just the costs of capturing and moving water; they are not the costs of water resource management. The two are very different. In some ways, it is a bit of a furphy to tangle them up. It is better to keep those costs separate; that is, the costs of moving and putting water where you want it, as opposed to the costs of supporting the ability to do that through good water resource management. There are some costs that licensees incur. A large mining company, for example, might be required to investigate the water resource of an area in the Pilbara or wherever, whereas a small licence applicant in, say, Gingin may not be required to do the same sort of work. There might be a better understanding of water that the small licensee is applying for that has been gathered over the years through monitoring and reporting. There are some considerations there as to what you include in the cost structure and whether you recognise the contributions that some of those big companies make to understanding the water resources of the state.

The CHAIRMAN: The corollary to that is that if the state provided that service, it would cost the mining company or the irrigator a lot more because they would have to pay the service charge. The same would apply to me if I put down a bore at home. I would avoid the cost of using scheme water to water my garden. There is a balance there, is there not?

Mr Camkin: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: You are suggesting that in the cost of licensing fees consideration should not be given to people who put in their own infrastructure to utilise the consumptive pool that is there.

You are saying that the cost of licensing deals with the measurement, monitoring and control of that consumptive pool, rather than with the provision of infrastructure.

Mr Camkin: Yes, rather than the delivery of it.

The CHAIRMAN: Those two things should not be tangled up; they should not be enmeshed.

Dr J.M. EDWARDS: Does that 2003 document define “water resource management”? It is probably a definition we need. If not, would we find a definition fairly easily?

Mr Camkin: There is a flowchart that broke up the current expenditure at that time into things like water licensing, monitoring and measuring, policy and planning and those sorts of things. I need to stress that they were preliminary costings. It was some time ago.

The CHAIRMAN: The quantum is not a problem. It is having the headings and criteria and the elements of cost that should or should not make up a licensing fee.

Mr Camkin: That is right, yes. The first step is to understand them and put them on the table and then be in the process of negotiating through that.

The CHAIRMAN: Jeff, thanks. Are there any other issues that you wanted to raise?

Mr Camkin: No, I do not think so. I just reinforce that I am here as me, not as CSIRO or anything else.

The CHAIRMAN: That is not a problem. Finally, if there are other issues that you think could be of importance to us, you are more than welcome to contact our research officer, Loraine. We may come back to you in any case and ask you some further questions based on the models that you talked about that seemed to be successful.

Mr Camkin: Certainly, there is some detail in my Churchill Fellowship report. There is a hot-link to that in the submission. I am happy to help when I can connect you with people overseas.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you for your evidence before the committee today. The transcript of this hearing will be forwarded to you for correction of minor errors. If you could please make these corrections and return the transcript within 10 days of receipt. If the transcript is not returned within that period, it will be deemed to be correct. I am aware that we are only a week out from Christmas, so you can negotiate with Loraine about that if there is an issue. I thank you very much for your submission today. It has been most helpful. You have probably raised a few more questions for us to ask now. On behalf of the committee, I wish you and your family a joyous, peaceful and, hopefully, wet Christmas.

Mr Camkin: Thank you very much. Thank you for the opportunity.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Jeff. If people of your quality are prepared to come forward, I think we will get some good recommendations.

Mr Camkin: As you would know, taking on the Churchill Fellowship, you commit to disseminating what you find.

The CHAIRMAN: Absolutely.

Mr Camkin: This is an opportunity for that.

Hearing concluded at 3.48 pm
