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Media Release

Transparency from NSW Government still hard to find

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Repeated calls for the NSW Government to publically release the final business cases for a series of dam proposals continue to be ignored, despite the government ranking improved transparency as their number one priority in the [State Water Strategy](#).

The Legislative Council Portfolio Committee No.7 Planning and Environment [Rationale for, and impacts of, new dams and other water infrastructure in NSW: Part 2 report](#) was tabled in parliament on September 20 2021. Last Friday the NSW Government released its [response to the report](#).

The Part 2 report covers Dungowan dam, Mole River dam, Macquarie River re-regulating storage project (aka the Gin Gin dam), Western weirs and Menindee Lakes water savings project.

Referring to the Dungowan proposal the government response bluntly states "... the Final Business Case will not be publically available".

"How can the public trust that the impacts the Gin Gin dam would have on wetlands, fish, birds and freshwater mussels downstream is being fully considered, if we don't get to see the business case?" Said Mel Gray, convenor of Healthy Rivers Dubbo.

The purpose of the Gin Gin dam on the Macquarie/Wambuul River is to provide more water to fill the existing irrigation entitlements in the valley¹. While the government response promises the significant ecological impacts of less water to the struggling Ramsar listed Macquarie Marshes² will be taken into consideration, it seems unlikely the government will show the public its findings.

"The Perrottet government are claiming in the State Water Strategy that their number one priority in water management is to 'Build community confidence and capacity through engagement, transparency and accountability'. While at the same time they are steadfastly refusing to act on community calls to release crucial details.

"By hiding from the public how big the impacts downstream will be, the government are making communities very nervous.

"Taking more water out of rivers upstream will mean less for First Nations communities, towns, recreational fishers, campers, graziers and water users downstream – it couldn't be more simple!" Ms Gray said.

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¹ [ref DPIE.DIP.507 Snowy Hydro Legacy Fund Project Proposal Appendix A](#)

² [Notification of likely change in ecological character of the Macquarie Marshes Ramsar site to the Ramsar Secretary General on 17 July 2009 under Article 3.2 of the Ramsar Convention.](#)