



Stakeholder Engagement Plan

Wentworth to Broken Hill Pipeline IPART Consultation

April 2025

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1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose of document

The purpose of this document is to lay out a comprehensive Consultation and Engagement Plan for the 2025 Wentworth to Broken Hill Pipeline Pricing Determination. This follows IPART's 3Cs framework to support our Pricing Proposal to IPART for the 2026 – 2031 Determination, due September 30, 2025 and to ensure our engagement is high-quality, as well as compliant

1.2 Project background and overview

The consultation has been developed around IPART's 3Cs framework and builds on our recent WaterNSW experience. The consultation will cover:

- ensuring we are delivering the outcomes that customers need and want
- that our costs are kept prudent and efficient
- that we have a pricing proposal and delivery plan that are credible.

This engagement is designed to be fit for purpose to the small number of customers and stakeholders, comprised of one large customer, Essential Water, and four minor offtake customers. The consultation is designed to be targeted and efficient, to leverage Essential Water's own engagement with their customers for their pricing submission to IPART, and to use our learnings from our recent Rural Valleys and Greater Sydney IPART Pricing engagements.

We already have a strong relationship and connections with Essential Water, but limited prior information on or ongoing contact with offtake customers.

We aim to produce a Price Proposal that reflects customer and stakeholder priorities, delivers good value to our customers. In terms of grading our initial aspiration was for an Advanced level of achievement from IPART. However, upon consultation with Essential Water, we revised that to a Standard grading in view of their input.

The project scope will be limited to the customers and stakeholders affected by the Wentworth to Broken Hill Pipeline. Community insights will be derived from observations from Essential Water's consultation with its 10,000 customers and by direct consultation with Wentworth Shire Council and Broken Hill Council.

Due to the low offtake customer numbers and a separate approach to pricing as set by IPART based on the assets in place, there could be upward pressure on prices that could be higher than for Essential Water. Pricing impacts for Essential Water and the offtake customers are currently being assessed.

The Barkandji Native Title group's meeting in late March has been positive, resulting in a request to enter into a ILUA Agreement with WaterNSW. Outcomes of this process will feed into the Wentworth to Broken Hill Pipeline consultation and price proposal. The pipeline is built over Barkandji land and there was minimal consultation with them prior to its construction. The two processes will run in parallel, but we note it may have some input into the Wentworth to Broken

Hill Pipeline engagement as there may be cost implications for the upcoming or subsequent determinations.

IPART’s 3Cs Framework



1.3 Timing

There are three distinct phases of this activity. Proposed timings are below.

Time	Phase and Activity	Stakeholders
February - April 30	<p>Phase One: Exploring Phase</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial contact with Essential Water and scoping, discussion of the IPART 3C’s framework, establish top priorities. • Permission sought and obtained to observe Essential Water’s engagement. • Briefing from Essential Water to understand early learnings. • Engagement with other organisations with similar consultations (Sydney Desalination) for lessons learned. • Formal engagement session for exploration phase to set priorities, inform topics for Phase Two 	Essential Energy, Sydney Desalination Plant, Wentworth Shire Council, four smaller customers.
May	<p>Phase Two: Diving into the Detail</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal engagement with Essential Water on projects/ initiatives which speak to their priorities. • Consult with smaller customers. • Consult on the cost and prices associated with water delivery. Gather feedback. 	Essential Energy and four smaller customers, Wentworth Shire Council

June - July	<p>Phase Three: Closing the Loop</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate iteration and where we have incorporated customer feedback into our plans. Discuss prices. • Write up Engagement report. 	Essential Energy , Wentworth Shire Council and four smaller customers
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1.4 Engagement risks

Risk	Remediation	Risk likelihood /impact
Lack of alignment between our customer outcomes and Essential Water’s customer outcomes	Available staff have attended and will attend upcoming sessions with Essential Water. Our engagement tests what we’ve heard and seeks to identify how we might deliver more value to support their customer outcomes.	Low
Externally variables driving increased cost impacts and limiting our ability to keep costs down. For instance, interest and energy costs higher than IPART’s allowance. Electricity represents around 40% of Opex for the pipeline and as such providing accurate forecasts is important.	Transparency with customer on the drivers of the costs. Frontier Economics has been engaged to calculate the forecast costs of electricity over FY27-FY31. This engagement will also assess the electricity cost ‘true-up’ in the current regulatory period for inclusion in the pricing proposal. The adoption of an electricity cost true-up for the upcoming period will help to mitigate the risk of unfavourable electricity price movements.	Medium
Price increases seen as unacceptable due to affordability concerns	Transparency with customer on the drivers of the costs through planned engagement. WaterNSW to ensure proposed costs are at the lowest sustainable level. This will be achieved by robust internal review and input from external advisors (e.g. for electricity costs). Government funding to Essential Water to (amongst other things) recognise the efficient costs of the pipeline is expected to manage affordability risk.	Medium / low
Customer representations to Minister on length of time and cost entailed for offtake	Minister’s office briefed on project and complexity. Repeated program of engagement with customers.	Medium/ low

Communication and Stakeholder Engagement Plan – Wentworth to Broken Hill Pipeline

Risk	Remediation	Risk likelihood /impact
Native Title consultations may derail or delay pipeline consultation	<p>WaterNSW met with Barkandji Native Title group in late March who requested an ILUA with WaterNSW. Much was positive in the discussion. There may be cost implications for our Pricing submission.</p> <p>It is optimal for outcomes to keep both processes running in parallel but separate.</p>	<p>Medium/Low</p> <p>Potentially some impact to pricing</p>

2. Communication and engagement activity

2.1 Communication objectives

To instil greater confidence in the customers and communities we serve.

To listen closely to customer priorities and ensure alignment between customer priorities and our future delivery.

To conduct a high quality, fit for purpose engagement targeted to different customers and stakeholders. As we have one major customer and 4 offtake customers with low volumes, much of our effort is pitched toward Essential Water.

The conversations with customers will work to identify ways in which to deliver greater value to them in the coming determination.

2.2 Communication approach

Targeted fit for purpose communications and engagement to individual customers and stakeholders. This means discussion with Essential Energy and other customers so our approach incorporates how they want to be engaged. We have also sought to learn from other similar engagements external to WaterNSW, including having discussions with the Sydney Desalination Plant which has similar relationships.

We enjoy a mature relationship at an operational level with Essential Water and seek to build on this strength in our engagement. We have sought to observe Essential Water's engagement, to understand their perspective on key learnings and to identify ways in which we might best support them to deliver their customer outcomes. The alignment between our engagement and our understanding of theirs, is key to producing a set of nuanced customer outcomes to support our key customer in the region.

2.3 Communication tools

A mixture of online and face to face engagement.

Direct engagement with customers and also learning how to serve our major customer Essential Water better by observing their key learnings from their IPART customer engagement.

2.4 Key messages for Essential Water

1. We are listening to our pipeline customers and stakeholders and working to deliver on the outcomes they value
2. We are working to keep costs fair and to make sure our business is efficient
3. Market factors are increasing outside our control, some fluctuations are unavoidable
4. We keep local communities front of mind as your community partner
5. We are making it easier to do business with us by giving you access to information where and when you need it
6. We are investing in our assets to maintain these for future generations

2.5 Key messages for the four offtake customers

1. We listening and interested to hear your views so we can deliver on the outcomes you value
2. We are working to keep costs fair and to make sure our business is efficient
3. Market factors are increasing outside our control, some fluctuations and price rises are unavoidable
4. We are making it easier to do business with us by giving you access to information where and when you need it
5. We are investing in our assets to maintain these for future generations

2.6 Stakeholder Engagement Action Plan

Engagement for Essential Water

Date	Engagement	Inputs
April 30	Online Engagement session (Phase One)	Big picture priorities, capex considerations, financial information, testing support for Advanced grading with them.
April 30	(Phase One) Engagement	Each SME to deliver their own slides
May 7	Notes due out with what we learned from Phase One	To inform what we consult on for Phase 2 where we get into more detail, discussion and offer any options/ choices that we can
May 15	Content (slides) due for Phase Two Online Engagement	Each SME to develop/deliver their own slides
May 21	Online Engagement session (Phase Two)	Diving into the detail. Confirming customer outcomes, shaping performance measures. Capex and Reg update on figures
May 28	Notes due out with what we learned from Phase Two	Customer feedback to inform where we land, and therefore how we close the loop, to demonstrate for Phase 3 how we listened to their preferences and where this is evidenced in our Proposal and delivery plans
June 7	Content (slides) due for Phase Three Online Engagement	Each SME to develop/deliver their own slides for Closing the loop. Confirming our Capex plans and content of our Pricing Proposal.
June 15	Online Engagement session (Phase Three)	Closing the loop. Slides to demonstrate for Phase 3 how we listened to their preferences and where this is evidenced in our Proposal and delivery plans
July 15	Writing up Engagement report	All three phases, all customers. To be distributed August.

Engagement for Offtake Customers, Wentworth Shire Council

Date	Engagement	Inputs
May 5	Invitation to engage – email (Phase One)	Send out email to offtake customers inviting them to engage. Preferences and level of interest from offtake customers to inform whether phonecall, online or in person meeting/s will be appropriate.
April	Online Engagement Wentworth Shire Council (Phase One)	Engagement with Wentworth Shire Council. Meeting organised.
May15	Online Engagement (Phase Two)	Test community priorities, demonstrate where these are evidenced in our outcomes/ actions.
June 15	Online Engagement (Phase Three)	Close the loop. Demonstrate for Phase 3 how we listened to their preferences and where this is evidenced in our Proposal and delivery plans Each SME to deliver their own slides
July 15	Writing up Engagement report	All three phases, all customers. Distributed August.

3. Stakeholder analysis

3.1 Stakeholder mapping

Stakeholder group	Stakeholder name	Influence	Interest	Type of engagement
[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]
	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]
	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]
	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]
[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]
	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]
	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]
	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]

Stakeholder contacts

External Stakeholder Groups	Contacts	Contact Details
[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]
[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]
[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]
[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]
[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]
[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]
[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]
[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]

3.2 Project location

The pipeline stretches from Wentworth to Broken Hill.

