

Greater Sydney Customer Advisory Group

TO BE RATIFIED AT MARCH 2019 MEETING

Minutes of Meeting
Thursday 6 September 2018
WaterNSW, Level 9
420 George St, Sydney

Present: Peter Gray (Chair), Chris Schumacher, Justen Simpson, Paul Rasmussen, Daniel Buckens, Robert Horner, Gary Wallace (observer), David Stockler, Jonathan Dickson, Peter Littlejohns, Ben Shallis, Enrico Proietti and Toni Hayes (minutes).

Ronan Magaharan attended for agenda item 7.1.

Andrew Fraser, Mark Clayton and Graham Begg attended via Skype for specific agenda items.

Meeting Opened: 10.00am.

Welcome and introductions.

1. **Apologies:** David Tomlinson, Marina Hollands.

Confirmation of Chairperson

The Greater Sydney CAG agreed to continue Chairmanship of Peter Gray to the end of the current term of office, 30 June 2019.

2. **Declaration of Interest(s):**

- Declarations of interest were sought from attendees in relation to the meeting's agenda items. No interests were declared. Items included in the agenda are not considered confidential unless declared as such.

3. **Minutes of Previous Meeting, 8 March 2018:**

- Resolved the minutes of meeting held on 8 March 2018 be confirmed as a correct record. Taken as read.

*C Schumacher
carried*

4. **Confirmation of Agenda Items:**

- Refer to agenda item 10.

5. **Actions arising from minutes:**

- See action sheet attached.

6. **Water Delivery**

- 6.1 **Water System Operations Report (P Littlejohns)**

- WaterNSW provided a presentation on the operations plans for Greater Sydney, including storage levels, rainfall, storage forecasts, outage planning, water quality and prognosis. The plan is publicly available on WaterNSW's website at <http://www.watnsw.com.au/customer-service/news/operations>.
- Customers thanked WaterNSW for regular updates provided on Oberon Dam levels. Much appreciated and valued by customers.

- Water restrictions discussed. Oberon Council advised it is using water storage data from WaterNSW's website which doesn't take into consideration WaterNSW's "bank". WaterNSW explained that each customer is allowed to bank unused allocation up to a maximum of 20%. Our licence requirement is that all restrictions should be triggered on the adjusted storage in Oberon Dam.
- BOM rainfall deciles discussed. Refer also to the drought report on BOM website (www.bom.gov.au).
- Tallowa Dam drought scenario and protocols discussed. Shoalhaven Water advised they have gone into level 1 water restrictions and weren't aware of pumping from Tallowa Dam until hearing in the media and questioned WaterNSW's communication protocol. It was thought that some communication between operational staff had likely occurred. WaterNSW advised that the trigger had been met but no transfer of water has taken place due to Tallowa Dam storage level. WaterNSW has only transferred approximately 170ML as part of an initial short test of pumps to ensure they are functioning and ready when we get rainfall. Full Wet Commissioning will occur when sufficient water is available to WaterNSW in Tallowa Dam. Operation of Shoalhaven transfers will follow wet commissioning.

7. System Operation and Asset Services

7.1 Asset Maintenance and Services Update (R Magaharan)

- Asset performance and maintenance in Greater Sydney and Fish River valleys presented and discussed, including breakdowns and defects, maintenance and upcoming works.
- Fluoridation at Duckmaloi scheduled to be completed by December 2018. Customers questioned if there has been any feedback to WaterNSW from consumers in relation to the fluoridation. WaterNSW is not aware of any feedback to us. Lithgow Council advised it had notified its customers. Oberon Council would like to be notified if any feedback is received.

Action GS1809.01: *WaterNSW to advise Oberon Council if it has received any feedback from consumers in relation to fluoridation at Duckmaloi.*

Responsibility: R Cocks

8. Presentations/Consultation

8.1 Drought Response (J Dickson)

- As part of the NSW Government's Emergency Drought Relief, a rebate of up to \$4,000 per licence for the fixed component of bills on general security and some supplementary licences will apply to **future** invoices.
- For regulated river customers, the rebate will be applied equally over the next four bills. For unregulated and groundwater customers, the rebate will be applied to the next bill for 2017/18. High security and government licences are excluded.
- Visit <https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/climate-and-emergencies/droughthub/emergency-drought-relief-package> for more information.
- Oberon Council advised it is supplying reticulated water to rural consumers at a substantially reduced rate and questioned whether Council is afforded the same options regarding a rebate. WaterNSW advised that it does not have the ability/discretion under our Operating Licence and would require instruction from Treasury.
- Lithgow Council advised that it has sought assistance from WaterNSW to access to certain points along the network to allow water carters to fill at other points in the system to reduce cartage. WaterNSW advised that no formal correspondence has been received to date. Lithgow City Council to follow up and forward.

ACTION GS1809.02: Follow up formal correspondence from Lithgow City Council to WaterNSW requesting access to additional points along the network to allow water carters to fill at other points.

Responsibility: D Buckens

- WaterNSW advised that the trigger in the Metropolitan Water Plan for the Sydney Water desalination plant is 60% of total storage. Note that this trigger is for the notification to the desalination plant operator to commence works to bring the plant back online. The trigger for the first level of water restrictions is 50% of total storage. WaterNSW's trigger was for the Shoalhaven transfers, which were passed in April, and it has been remarkably dry since then. WaterNSW and Sydney Water will continue holding regular drought planning meetings.

8.2 Regulatory Update (J Dickson)

Reform Update

- WaterNSW provided a recap on the water reform process to date. Draft WRAP regulations have been released and ongoing consultation with the Taskforce continues.

Ownership of Meters

- WaterNSW currently owns and maintains meters in the southern valleys and Nepean and Bega systems. Metering legislation passed in June 2018 created a framework under which a transfer of ownership may occur.
- WaterNSW acknowledges there are transitional issues to be worked through and is actively involved in preparing a framework.

Metering Policy

- The Taskforce is currently preparing a list of NMI-approved pattern approved meters. WaterNSW is seeking direction from the Taskforce to publish this on our website as per requests from our customers.
- WaterNSW's submission to the metering framework has been published at https://www.industry.nsw.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0019/162505/Water-reformconsultation-submission-178.pdf
- Draft metering regulations have now been released by the Taskforce.

8.3 Pricing Determinations (J Dickson)

- The **WAMC pricing determination** runs 2016-20 with functions split between DOIW, NRAR and WaterNSW. New pricing submissions are due by 30 June 2019 from each agency.
- The **rural valleys pricing determination** runs from 2017-21, with submissions due to IPART 30 June 2020. WaterNSW will seek involvement from the CAGs on price modelling in early 2019. We will again seek to continue the journey towards customer choice.
- **IPART Cost Share Review:** IPART is reviewing how the costs of providing rural bulk water services is shared between water users and the NSW Government, following a beneficiary pays or impactor pays framework.
- A draft report is due in October 2018 with final report due February 2019. Any changes will impact the next WAMC and Rural Pricing Determinations and customers are urged to be involved in the process.
- With four determinations on the landscape (WAMC, W2BH, Greater Sydney and Rural), WaterNSW will be seeking customer input via CAGs from February 2019 to June 2020.

8.4 Voice of Customer Update

- WaterNSW thanked customers for participating in the Voice of Customer survey. Over 700 customers were surveyed across the state and feedback is currently being collated.
- Some customers indicated a preference for CAGs to meet face to face more frequently than twice per year and as such WaterNSW will hold three face-to-face meetings in 2019. This was welcomed by the CAG.

8.5 Levels of Service (LOS) Project Update (A Fraser/H Hadungoda)

- Workshops have been held with Fish River customers in July and August, with a final meeting planned for 10 September.
- WaterNSW will engage a consultant to assist with the Future Trends study, high-level costing and economic analysis and will commence a LOS gap analysis and options development.
- Water availability and long-term water supply plans for Sydney discussed. Revision of metropolitan water plans across the whole of the Greater Sydney regions has begun.

8.6 Burrendong Temperature Curtain Update (M Clayton)

- Following extensive investigations into cause of failure and some subsequent design modifications the curtain was partially reinstated (due to low storage levels) and made operational in August 2018. Full reinstatement and testing will commence once water levels in the storage increases.
- More information is available at <https://www.waternsw.com.au/projects/burrendong>.

8.7 Nimmie-Caira SDL Project (M Clayton)

- The NSW Government acquired 19 parcels of land in Nimmie-Caira (on behalf of the Commonwealth) as an SDL project associated with the implementation of the Murray Darling Basin Plan. WaterNSW operates and maintains 60 assets within the system.
- Out of the 60 impacted assets, only four are located on or near the Murrumbidgee River and are required to deliver water to both the Nimmie-Caira and regulated customers. The other remaining impacted assets are used to manage flows within the Nimmie-Caira system on behalf of the environmental water holders.
- WaterNSW is working with DOI Water to legally discharge its obligations with respect to operating and delivering water within the Nimmie-Caira footprint. No impact is expected to Lowbidgee customers as needs can be met by assets retained by WaterNSW.
- WaterNSW will divest the assets back to DOI Water. We may have future involvement in operating/maintaining the assets however this is unknown at this stage. We won't have ownership.

8.8 Fish Passage Ministerial Taskforce Update (M Clayton)

- WaterNSW provided an update on the Fish Passage Ministerial Taskforce (as discussed at previous meetings). A strategic business case has been drafted with target completion October 2018 and approval process 2018/19.

8.9 Local Water Utility (LWU) Monitoring Review (G Begg)

- WaterNSW provided an update on the LWU Monitoring Review. Forty-two surveys have been completed to date.
- Emerging themes include strong interest in an active notification mechanism, potential for WaterNSW to act as a hub for data sharing and potential to supplement monitoring program by adding instruments to existing hydrometric stations.
- Review to be completed December 2018 with an update to be provided to CAGs early 2019.

8.10 Wentworth to Broken Hill Pipeline (W2BHP) Update (J Dickson)

- WaterNSW provided an update on the W2BH Pipeline Project. Completion of pump stations is well progressed and project currently on track for completion at the end of the year.

8.11 CAG Term of Office

- The current CAG term of office ends 30 June 2019. WaterNSW will call for nominations for the 2019-2022 CAG during February 2019.
- WaterNSW encourages current members to renominate and invites other interested customers to nominate through their respective nominating organisations/water user groups.

9. Reports

Noted and taken as read.

10. General Business

10.1 Drought Discussion

- Oberon Council advised there is a need for greater support for drought assistance in the western area of the catchment, particularly for those who sit at the top of the Fish River scheme that do not have access to reticulated water. It is understood that WaterNSW is limited in its flexibility around subsidies etc, however sought support from WaterNSW to jointly advocate on behalf of customers. WaterNSW advised that this is beyond our scope of influence, however understands customer sentiment. WaterNSW has weekly briefings with the Minister's office where this will be highlighted. Customers were also encouraged to write directly to the Minister.
- From a strategic, bigger picture point of view, is there any thinking within the water agencies on long term planning for droughts to better prepare into the future? WaterNSW advised that the work being done on levels of service and the 20 Year Infrastructure Options Study looks at the long-term initiatives that may be possible (<https://www.waternsw.com.au/projects/infrastructure-studies/20-year-infrastructure-options-study>). This is the first time in a generation that this kind of planning has been done in this state/organisation.

10.2 Flows from Nepean River to St Marys AWT

- Customers highlighted an issue which was noted is not WaterNSW's responsibility, however raised as customers rely on water from the Hawkesbury/Nepean and Warragamba Dam. When the release requirement from Warragamba Dam was reduced it was meant to be substituted by releases from Sydney Water's St Marys Advanced Water Treatment (AWT) plant. Customers suspected the flow from St Marys AWT had ceased. Customers have tried to make enquiries through Sydney Water with limited success.

Action GS1809.03: WaterNSW to pass on customer concerns to Sydney Water regarding flows to the Nepean River from St Marys AWT.

Responsibility: P Littlejohns

10.3 Basic landholder rights (BLR) in the Sydney basin

- Customers noted that as the Sydney basin grows there is more and more subdivision and more people with water frontage, meaning riparian rights would increase, and questioned if water rights would drop off and if this is controlled. WaterNSW advised that under basic landholder rights, approval would be required to put the works in (is not an entitlement).

Meeting Review and Close

Next Meetings: **eCAG:** Thursday 29 November 2018 (Skype)
 Face to Face: Monday 4 March 2019 (Sydney)

Meeting closed: 1.10pm

DRAFT

Carried Forward Actions			
Action No. yymm.action no	Action	Responsibility	Status
	Nil carried forward actions.		

New Actions			
Action No. yymm.action no	Action	Responsibility	Status
GS1809.01	WaterNSW to advise Oberon Council if it has received any feedback from consumers in relation to fluoridation at Duckmaloi.	R Cocks	COMPLETE. WaterNSW sent approximately 230 letters to Fish River customers on this matter in May 2018 and to date has received no feedback as a result, or in general, about fluoridation of water at the treatment plant.
GS1809.02	Follow up formal correspondence from Lithgow City Council to WaterNSW requesting access to additional points along the network to allow water carters to fill at other points.	D Buckens	
GS1809.03	WaterNSW to pass on customer concerns to Sydney Water regarding flows to the Nepean River from St Marys AWT.	P Littlejohns	