

# Greater Sydney Customer Advisory Group

## Minutes of Meeting

**Location:** WaterNSW Office, Warragamba Dam

**Date:** 23 April 2026

**Time:** 9.30am

**Present:** Matthew Trapp (Chair), Arli Miller, Marina Hollands (online), Gary Wallace, Jenny Zadro (observer), Gary Brassington (observer).

**WaterNSW:** Rob O'Neill, Brendan Maher, David Tomlinson, Brian Mayhew, Jack Finch, Lachlan Browne, Phil Glastonbury, Renee Briggs, Teegan Hayward and Toni Hayes. Online for specific agenda items: Amanda Fuller.

**NSW DCCEEW:** David Andersen and Max Best.

**Meeting Opened:** 9.30am

### 1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS:

#### 1.1 Acknowledgement of Country

**1.2 Apologies:** Brenden Logue, Peter Griffiths, Anthony Muscat, Clinton McAllister, Bruce Blunden, Ruwen Pillay, Joshua Muscat.

#### 1.3 Confirmation of Agenda Items

#### 1.4 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.

#### 1.5 Minutes of Greater Sydney CAG Meeting, 18 September 2025

– Resolved the minutes of the meeting held on [18 September 2025](#) be confirmed as an accurate record of the meeting. Taken as read.

A Miller/M Trapp (carried)

#### 1.6 Actions arising from minutes

– Refer to action sheet (attached).

### 2. WaterNSW update:

#### 2.1 WaterNSW update and Land & Water Operations overview (R O'Neill)

– WaterNSW provided an update on its new operating model and status of the business transformation program. The labour reduction process has concluded with approximately 280 FTE roles removed, primarily affecting metropolitan areas, senior and middle management, and corporate functions.

– The Land and Water Operations portfolio structure was outlined, with priorities including improving end-to-end collaboration and process improvements, strengthening consistency in customer engagement, maintaining service levels despite resourcing changes, embedding teams and supporting team morale.

– Top of mind items for the Greater Sydney CAG for our team were discussed, including government-owned meters, metering compliance and Fish River.

– Oberon Council highlighted recent issues with blue/green algae at Oberon Dam, indicating Council was only made aware through the Regional Environmental Management and Operations (REMO) process, and expressed disappointment that WaterNSW did not reach out to customers through direct

engagement. WaterNSW advised water quality and supply wasn't affected however acknowledged that contact with Council should have been made and will be considered in future.

### **3. Customer Services:**

#### **3.1 Water Accounting & Metering (J Finch)**

- WaterNSW has consulted widely with Hawkesbury-Nepean customers, user groups, and industry across the catchment in relation to government-owned meters. Feedback has been collated to identify shared priorities and is being used to develop practical pathways, aligned with regulatory requirements and government direction. These pathways will be presented to government for consideration, and customers will be kept informed as decisions and delivery progress. Customers with government-owned meters will be contacted before rollout, and support is available via phone (1300 662 077) or email ([portal.maintenance@waternsw.com.au](mailto:portal.maintenance@waternsw.com.au)).
- Members queried whether the approval process will impact the NUMR compliance deadline for coastal users. WaterNSW advised this is unlikely, noting that approximately 130 sites are required to be compliant by 1 December 2026, which will be prioritised.

#### **3.2 Customer Assessments & Approvals (A Fuller)**

- WaterNSW provided an overview of agency roles within the water sector, customer service standards (actual vs target) for applications and approvals, and a proposal to change the end-of-year final submission date for temporary trades.
- WaterNSW continues to meet or exceed customer service standards for applications and approvals in most areas, with performance standards monitored monthly.
- WaterNSW in collaboration with NSW DCCEEW has reviewed our end of water year operations and concluded that an earlier submission cut-off date for temporary trade applications is necessary. Moving forward, the last day to submit temporary trade applications for the current water year will be 10 business days before the end of the water year. Members were also reminded that the customer service standard for temporary trades is 90% processed within 5 business days.

### **4. OPERATIONS:**

#### **4.1 Water Planning & Delivery (D Tomlinson)**

- WaterNSW presented a review of operations in the Greater Sydney and Fish River valleys, including total system storage, rainfall and inflow, demand, environmental releases, overview of major outage program, Prospect system demand management and water quality.
- There have been low inflows this year, however with storages so full WaterNSW is in a good position to handle a short term drought. Oberon Dam has been at or near spill for some time.
- The trigger to commence Shoalhaven transfers is 75% of total system storage. Earliest expected date for storage decline to 75% is early 2027.
- Members questioned whether WaterNSW has factored data centre usage into forecast demand figures. WaterNSW advised this would be looked at through the lens of the Greater Sydney Water Strategy and with any supply augmentation plan, Sydney Water is the lead agency.
- Lake Oberon destratified in mid-April due to cool, windy conditions, causing mixing in the lake. This resulted in dissolved iron and manganese distributed throughout the water column, and geosmin present in raw water throughout the water column.
- Potentially toxic algae have been persistent since February, although recent cold weather has decreased concentrations. There has been a lot of metals in the bottom waters, which is not unusual for Oberon. WaterNSW has been liaising with Oberon Council regarding any potential supply impacts.
- Oberon Council raised issues with managing metals at its treatment plant and questioned if there is a solution. WaterNSW advised that a destratification system was on the list of candidate projects however there is no work scheduled in this determination. This will be reconsidered when funding becomes available, noting a recent bubble plume aeration trial has been successful at Pindari Dam.

## 4.2 Regional Operations (B Mayhew)

- An overview of operational priorities and performance and an update on FY26-28 capital programs was presented and discussed.
- Work is well behind target for preventative maintenance in the Fish River system, with the past 6 months consistently in corrective maintenance and breakdown mode, which is significantly affecting ability to keep up with routine maintenance in the broader Fish River system.
- Dam safety maintenance and Duckmaloi treatment plant preventative maintenance have been prioritised.

**Action GS2604.01:** WaterNSW to provide data on volume of water lost through leaks in the Fish River system.

**Responsibility:** D Tomlinson

- There are 46 projects in execution or completion stage in Greater Sydney and 4 projects in the Fish River system. The Fish River budget and program are under review following the release of IPART's rural valleys draft determination, which may see an increase in capital across rural valleys.
- Members expressed concern that the Fish River system provides poor value for money, noting that customer charges do not align with the service received. WaterNSW acknowledged the issues, advising the system is an ageing asset that requires significant upgrades. Councils offered to work collaboratively with WaterNSW to advocate for funding, including pursuing joint funding opportunities to address the issues.

## 4.3 Finance proposal for next CAG meeting (B Maher)

- As part of its submission to IPART, WaterNSW committed to providing clearer visibility to customers on WaterNSW's financial performance and transparency of charges, including at a valley level.
- WaterNSW proposes to share an updated view of performance relative to revenue at the next meeting, as previously shared with CAGs during the pricing engagement, using the most current financial information, to support transparency and ongoing engagement (examples provided and feedback sought). A forward-looking asset plan will also be included.
- The discussion is intended to provide broader context on how economic conditions and management decisions are influencing financial outcomes, rather than focusing solely on short-term performance alone.
- WaterNSW is also keen to hear customer perspectives on the importance of long-term financial sustainability and how this should inform future planning. The Finance Team is aware of concerns raised by CAG members in relation to the current financial reports.
- The requirement for WaterNSW to pay a dividend to government was discussed. Members expressed interest in understanding how the dividend is calculated and allocated, with a view that the funds should be reinvested into the infrastructure and assets that service customers. WaterNSW advised that, as a State-Owned Corporation (SOC), it is required to pay a dividend, and that failure to do so may place its SOC classification at risk.

## 5. Presentations/Consultation:

### 5.1 WaterNSW WaterInsights app (P Glastonbury)

- WaterNSW has released its new WaterInsights app, available for Android users in the Google store (Apple to come). The app was tested by ~50 users, including some CAG members, and has the same functionality as the previous Water Live app. It is the fastest platform for real-time data.
- An overview of the key features was presented and discussed. The app is built from the website, and data for most sites is produced every 15 minutes.
- The WaterLive App will eventually be retired, scheduled for late 2026, once customers have had an opportunity to download and adopt the new WaterInsights App.
- The Real Time Data (RTD) website and the WaterInsights online portal will continue to operate as they do today, providing reliable access to water data and information.

- The daily river report in RTD is available on the WaterInsights website (almost identical) and WaterNSW is looking to incorporate into the app.
- WaterNSW encourages everyone to use the app and provide feedback via a direct feedback loop in the app. This is the first iteration, so we are keen to hear from customers on what is useful and what isn't.

## **6. BUSINESS PAPERS (taken as read):**

- Taken as read.

## **7. GENERAL BUSINESS:**

### **7.1 CAG Survey Results (B Maher)**

- The CAG survey at the end of the last round provided positive results, with ~50 members responding:
  - separating WaterNSW and NSW DCCEEW agenda items was valuable, with positive feedback received;
  - presenting online is suitable for short presentations (up to 20 minutes) however in person presentations are valued by customers where possible and provide better outcomes, understanding and discussion;
  - discussion of proposed policy and current policy are vital for both users and implementors;
  - it is important for NSW DCCEEW to host an afternoon session and that should continue; the separation will help clarify the roles of WaterNSW and NSW DCCEEW.
- WaterNSW reiterated that additional online CAG meetings are available to members at any time throughout the year as required, provided 50% of members agree.

### **7.2 Regulatory expectations for coal mines (G Brassington)**

- G Brassington highlighted recent NSW Government announcements, noting new regulatory expectations for coal mines to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions. These changes are relevant for WaterNSW, particularly in relation to methane abatement activities in Special Areas that will require industrial mitigation measures and coordination with WaterNSW. GM3 will engage further with WaterNSW on this matter.
- Members were also informed about regulatory reforms to support beneficial and post-mining land use, including more flexible and successive land-use pathways aimed at enabling future jobs, investment and regional economic transition. Potential future land uses discussed included pumped hydro projects, biodiversity outcomes, and residential, industrial and commercial development. These uses would need to be carefully considered where they intersect with WaterNSW Special Areas.

## **Meeting review and close:**

**Next meeting:** 27 August 2026, Warragamba Dam

**Meeting closed:** 11.20am

## Greater Sydney Customer Advisory Group – Actions – 23 April 2026

### New actions

Action number	Action	Person responsible	Status
<b>GS2604.01</b>	WaterNSW to provide data on volume of water lost through leaks in the Fish River system.	D Tomlinson	

### Carried forward actions

Action number	Action	Person responsible	Status
<b>GS2509.02</b>	WaterNSW to contact G Wallace and B Logue out of session to discuss Fish River modelling.	B Johnston	Emailed 18 September 2025 with offer to discuss further when suitable. Follow up email sent 28 April 2026.
<b>GS2307.04</b>	WaterNSW to look at how the financial reports are presented to the CAG and how the information could be provided in more granular detail for customers.	P Backo	Refer to agenda item 4.3