



Customer Reference Group meeting summary

Time: 9:00 am – 1:00 pm, Wednesday 20 September 2023

Location: Community College Gippsland, Warragul

Optional tour: Drouin wastewater treatment plant, Settlement Road Drouin

Attendees

Customer Reference Group (CRG) members:

Suzanne Lewis
Diane Wilkinson
Adam Tyson
Robert Gaulton
Erlinda James
Olivia Brewer
Tania Brown
Simon Ortega

Gippsland Water:

Mel Thek, General Manager Business Transformation
Michael Crane, General Manager People & Culture
Luke Keet, Manager Corporate Planning & Strategy
Trudy Hodgson, Regulatory & Corporate Planning Lead
Ryan Butler, Senior Scientist - Sustainability
Shannon Dwyer, Environment & Sustainability Lead
Katrina Coulson, Manager Communications and Engagement
Emma Lewis, Senior Communications and Engagement Lead
Mark Vitlin, Communications and Engagement Advisor

Apologies

CRG members:

Desley Gray

Gippsland Water:

Sarah Cumming, Manager Director



Safety and wellbeing



Customer focussed



Innovation



Accountability



Collaboration



Integrity and respect

Items for discussion

1. Welcome - Katrina Coulson
2. Introductions - All
3. Climate Change Strategy - Ryan Butler
4. Customer Outcomes Performance Reporting – Katrina Coulson and Trudy Hodgson
5. Customer Sounding Board update - Emma Lewis
6. Next meeting/nominations for Chair - Katrina Coulson
7. Close – Katrina Coulson
8. Optional Drouin wastewater treatment plant tour – Brendan Holt

Following an Acknowledgement of Country, welcome and introductions, the meeting moved to key discussion items.

Item 3. Ryan Butler presented key points related in our upcoming Climate Change strategy and invited CRG input on three related topics:

1. Carbon offsets for air travel

In principle, the CRG supports the additional cost to offset flights, however they ask that Gippsland Water consider:

- if air travel is necessary in first place
- use of a third party (rather than airline) for offsets
- local offsets where possible

2. Assessing Scope 3 emissions (indirect emissions, such as waste, employee travel to and from work and materials purchased) to further understand how they can be measured before we're required to report on them.

The CRG supports the early assessment of Scope 3 emissions reporting, noting that early action could help mitigate risks.

The group acknowledged that the intent is not to increase customer bills through using additional resources to do this work, but to reprioritise work to enable this.

The CRG encouraged Gippsland Water to reach out to Melbourne-based water corporations who are already reporting on Scope 3 to learn from their experience.

3. Bushfire preparedness – discussion of the considerations needed when deciding how to reduce the risk of bushfires damaging our assets. Particular focus on the pros and cons of removal of surrounding vegetation vs modification or updates to existing infrastructure.



The CRG shared a variety of views on this topic and expressed broad support for taking a balanced approach that considers each asset individually and includes a multi criteria analysis.

Item 4. Katrina Coulson and Trudy Hodgson discussed options for assessing our performance for the Essential Services Commission (ESC) and community reporting, seeking CRG input on two key issues:

1. The approach to take on setting new targets for perception metrics, given the change in survey methodology (from phone calls to online). The CRG were empowered to decide to either:
 - accept recommendations from a research consultant, which were based on a limited pilot of the survey online and extrapolation of historical phone survey results, or
 - reset the targets based on the previously agreed methodology, after receiving the results of the first year of the survey conducted online (due to occur in October).

The CRG decided to endorse the second option, which allows for the year one targets to be based on the 2023 dataset, using the previously approved incremental improvements.

2. A framework on how to weight traffic light performance indicators to give a performance rating for each Customer Outcome and for overall performance. The CRG endorsed the proposed framework.

Item 5. Due to time constraints Emma Lewis advised that an update on the Customer Sounding Board would be sent by email.

Item 6. Katrina Coulson requested members to consider nominations for the CRG Chair position, and to advise of any unsuitable dates for the December meeting.

Item 7. Meeting closed. Those wishing to take the optional tour proceeded to Drouin wastewater treatment plant.

Next meeting

December 2023, Dutson Downs. Date TBA

