

MACALISTER CUSTOMER CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

**MINUTES OF MEETING 190
Held 10.00am Tuesday 22 February 2022
SRW Maffra**

PRESENT

Mrs Raelene Hanratty, Chair
Mr Benn Thexton, Deputy Chair
Mr Norm Drew
Mrs Jeannette Howie
Ms Kate Lamb
Mr Alan Clyne
Mr Brad White

SRW Representatives

Mr Cameron FitzGerald, Managing Director
Mr Hugh Christie, General Manager Service Delivery
Mr Simon Wilkinson, Manager Water Supply
Ms Taryn Price, Executive Assistant

APOLOGES

Ms Joanne Butterworth-Gray, SRW Board Chair
Mr Stephen Dwyer
Mr Malcom Sellen
Mr Graham Anderson, OAM
Mr Robert Webber

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES; AGENDA LISTING

The Chair opened the meeting by acknowledging the traditional owners of the land and waters of the MID.

2. DECLARATION OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

No conflicts of interest were declared.

3. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The date on the minutes was agreed to be changed to reflect that they were recorded from the December 2021 meeting.

RECOMMENDATION

That the committee **approves** the minutes of the meeting held on **Tuesday 14 December 2021**.

Moved: Mr Norm Drew

Seconded: Mr Alan Clyne

4. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES; AGENDA LISTING

Apologies from Stephen Dwyer and Malcolm Sellen were noted.

5. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Meeting	Agenda Item #	Action	Action Officer	Status
Sept	7.5	SRW to work with Mr Clyne in the development of a workshop.	Wilkinson/Crawford/Clyne	Complete
Oct	6.3	The MCCC chair to develop a letter to be sent to the Minister, with Committee input, regarding Board appointments.	Hanratty	In progress – to be completed by the April 2022 meeting.

The chair provided an undertaking that the letter to the Minister regarding Board appointments will be sent prior to the next meeting.

6. PRINCIPAL MATTERS

6.1 CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

- The Chair provided a report which included:
 - One call from a customer regarding issues with valves not shutting on farm. This issue has been resolved.
 - A Project Control Group meeting is scheduled for this Thursday 24 February, with Alan Clyne. The chair asked the committee for any issues that need to be raised. There is concern raised about the length of time being taken to award a construction contractor and move the project forward. Cameron FitzGerald advised that the project is moving forward; and that SRW is engaged in the final stages of commercial negotiations.
 - Cameron FitzGerald confirmed that there will be a public update issued to the irrigator community within the coming days.

6.2 SIGNIFICANT ISSUES OR ACTIONS

- There are no significant current issues or actions.

6.3 MATTERS REFERRED BY THE BOARD

Cameron FitzGerald advised that there are no Board matters to be referred to the committee. Cameron asked the committee if there were any specific items of focus to feed back to the Board, to which the committee had none at this meeting.

6.4 ALLOCATION MODEL REVIEW & WATER TRADING AND UTILISATION PROJECT

- Marissa Gwydir, Project Officer – Regulated Water Utilisation joined the meeting to discuss the projects.

The Committee discussed the following:

- The map is currently incomplete as it is only showing part of irrigation area.
 - It was noted that SRW will ensure the correct map is used.
- Ensure SRW assesses the problems diligently for a consolidated view
- SRW need to work on building trust and credibility within the community for trading in the MIA due to historic issues with engagement by third parties when seeking water.

- The legal issues on developing the trading platform
 - SRW confirmed that it will not be brokering the water sales on any platform created. The platform will be managed/hosted by a third-party for transparency and would be intended to provide a transaction platform only.
- Timeline of project.
 - SRW will have the platform formulated for next season, with consultation being undertaken with the MCCC and finalised by July/August 2022.
- Cost of project
 - The project is funded by DELWP for two years (investigation/trial phases). SRW will be considering who bears the ongoing costs once established. It was noted that under any circumstances SRW will not make profit from this.
- There is a Project Control Group for this project, with membership from SRW and DELWP, that ensures accountability to DELWP for their funding.
- DELWP will be looking broader as to where else this platform could be applied.
- There is concern that the government may want to trade water in the entire district without geographical limitations.
 - There will be rules about what can be traded and where, as there will be separation as to where water traders can operate.
- Will it be exclusive for the brokers of the area to use the platform?
 - There will always be the ability for people to make private agreements.

Matt Cook advised that the allocation model raised last year within this committee is currently being assessed within this project and that this links to bulk entitlements. There was discussion on the calculation and allocation of low reliability water shares in the current model. The method for allocation of low reliability water shares are proposed to be considered as part of the allocation model review project.

ACTION: A copy of the allocation presentation will be circulated to the committee along with the meeting documents.

6.5 SALINITY UPDATE

- A paper was included with the agenda for noting and discussion.

The Committee discussed the following:

- There is a need to monitor groundwater levels
- The CMA is currently assessing the bore monitoring system
 - The outcomes of the monitoring assessment will be tabled at the next MCCC meeting.
- A member queried what effect the spray irrigation systems and on-farm storages have on groundwater levels and salinity measurements.
 - SRW will consult with the CMA for information.

6.6 MANAGER WATER SUPPLY

- Simon Wilkinson, Manager Water Supply led discussions, including:
 - Allocation update
 - Flows well above 10-year average
 - System efficiency
 - December at 85% and January at 89%

6.7 PRICING SUBMISSION

- Cameron FitzGerald provided an update on the Pricing Submission. He advised that there will be a detailed proposal of what pricing will look like available in April and discussions will be held with this committee.

7 FOR NOTING

7.1 CORRESPONDENCE

- There was no correspondence.

7.2 FEEDBACK REGISTER (RELEVANT TO MID)

- The Committee noted the feedback.

7.3 COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE

- The Committee noted the Communications report.

8 GENERAL BUSINESS

- Upgraded outlets through modernisation and pricing impact.
 - SRW advised that it is not charging landholders any differently at the moment. A member queried that people receiving pressurised water should be charged premium price.
 - It was acknowledged that there will be differences between farms with modernised and non-modernised systems and pricing will be discussed in April 2022 as part of the draft Pricing Submission.
- Corporate customer engagement.
 - Cameron FitzGerald advised that corporate customers are met with individually on an ad hoc basis to discuss their aspirations. It was agreed that there is an opportunity to review the MCCC membership, with a view to increasing membership of corporate farming interests, after the Pricing Submission is complete in September.
- MCCC new member induction.
 - A member queried if the expectations of being a committee member are well communicated when newer members join.
 - A member advised that the committee conduct needs to be reviewed if corporates are going to be involved.
 - Members are to endeavour to make the community more aware of their position and promote what the MCCC is about.

It was noted that an induction is needed for new members to the committee and a handbook to be made available to the wider community.

- SRW operations and structure discussion.
 - Cameron FitzGerald discussed the requests recently raised by a committee member. He provided a presentation outlining staffing allocations, staff survey results, improvements that have been implemented within the organisation, safety performance within the organisation, and his approach to leadership accountability.

- A member commented that the loss of key staff has seen a loss of knowledge; however noted that there are also benefits of changes through the introduction of new ideas.
- A member queried the relevance of the office in Ringwood and whether the office there is needed.

The committee agreed that there is an opportunity to enhance member conduct with clearer expectations set, and to reflect on how to best work together.

9 NEXT MEETING

The next meeting No. 191 of the Macalister Customer Consultative Committee is scheduled for 10.00 am on Tuesday 26 April 2022.

Meeting	Date
MCCC 191	Tuesday, 26 th April 2022
MCCC 192	Tuesday, 24 th May 2022
MCCC 193	Tuesday, 26 th July 2022
MCCC 194	Tuesday, 27 th September 2022
MCCC 195	Tuesday, 25 th October 2022
MCCC 196	Tuesday, 13 th December 2022

10 MEETING CLOSE

The meeting closed at 12.26pm

	July 2021	Sept 2021	Oct 2021	Dec 2021	Feb 2022	April 2022	May 2022	July 2022	Sept 2022	Oct 2022	Dec 2022
Raelene Hanratty	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓						
Graeme Anderson	✓	✓	✓	✓	Apol						
Stephen Dwyer	✓	✓	✓	✓	Apol						
Jeanette Howie	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓						
Norm Drew	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓						
Malcolm Sellen	Apol	✓	✓	✓	Apol						
Alan Clyne	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓						
Robert Webber	✓	✓	✓	Apol	Apol						
Kate Lamb	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓						
Brad White	Apol	✓	✓	✓	✓						
Benn Thexton	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓						

- ✓ - Attended Meeting
- Apol - Notification of apology
- Blank - Did not attend