

MACALISTER CUSTOMER CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

**MINUTES OF MEETING 196
Held 10.00am Tuesday 13 December 2022
SRW, Maffra**

PRESENT Mr Benn Thexton, Deputy Chair
Mr Steve Dwyer
Mr Norm Drew
Ms Kate Lamb
Mr Alan Clyne
Mr Graeme Anderson, OAM

SRW Representatives

Mr Cameron FitzGerald, Managing Director
Mr Simon Wilkinson, General Manager Service Delivery
Mr Matthew Cook, Manager Water Supply East
Mrs Hayley Taylor, Executive Assistant

APOLOGIES Mrs Jeannette Howie
Mr Brad White
Ms Joanne Butterworth-Gray, SRW Board Chair

ABSENT Nil

IN ATTENDANCE Omi Koulas, Struber – Agenda item 6.1
Bill Hansen, Struber – Agenda item 6.1
Anthony Goode – West Gippsland Catchment Management
Authority – Agenda item 6.2

1. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT TO COUNTRY

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

2. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

The Committee noted Mrs Howie and Ms Butterworth-Gray had submitted their apologies.

3. DECLARATION OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

No further conflicts were declared.

The committee discussed when conflicts should be declared, noting that all members had some kind of conflict as they are all irrigators in the MID. The committee noted that conflicts of interest should be declared prior to a discussion on any item in the agenda or general business where a member has a pecuniary interest above and beyond that of an irrigator in the district.

4. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The committee **approved** the minutes of the meeting held on **Tuesday 25 October 2022**.

Moved: Mr G Anderson

Seconded: Mr S Dwyer

5. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The report was taken as read.

Mr Cook noted that the format of the Weekly Snapshot is currently being reworked to include a better graphical representation of data and information. The new format will also include information on environmental releases as a standard item.

6. GUEST SPEAKERS

6.1 CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT REVIEW

Mr Wilkinson advised the committee that SRW has engaged a specialist communications and engagement consultant Struber to undertake an independent review of its communications approach to customers and stakeholders. The review includes feedback from each of the Customer Consultative Committees.

Omi Koulas and Bill Hansen from Struber introduced themselves and outlined the format of the workshop to be conducted with the Committee.

The Committee members provided feedback through the workshop which was captured by Struber.

6.2 IRRIGATION DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

Mr Anthony Goode, West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority (WGCMA), joined the meeting at 11:33am and provided an overview of the Irrigation Development Guidelines (IDG's) for Gippsland.

Mr Goode provided a presentation to the Committee which provided context on the purpose of the IDG's and noted the following:

- They are required to be updated every 10 years.
- They provide guidance to agencies and irrigators to process application for new or expanding irrigation developments, ensuring efficiency, consistency, transparency and meet best practice standards.
- The IDG review does not change requirements placed on developers under the Water Act or any other Act.
- The review includes providing improved information (factsheets) for developers including clarification of the appeals and complaints process.
- A workgroup has been created to improve cooperation between key implementation partners.
- Next steps:
 - Finalise consultation process (comments close end of 2022)

- Draft to working group for final review – End of January 2023
- Commence endorsement process with the aim to have a final document by EOFY 2022/23

7. PRINCIPLE MATTERS

7.1 CHAIRPERSONS REPORT

Mr Thexton noted:

- The Avon Development meeting was recently held, and he will wait for the minutes before updating the committee.
- The spring weather has been fantastic for farmers.

7.2 SIGNIFICANT ISSUES OR ACTIONS

Nil to report.

7.3 MATTERS REFERRED BY THE BOARD

Mr FitzGerald advised the Customer Engagement Review was referred by the board.

A member enquired how the other customer committees are functioning. Mr FitzGerald provided an overview of the other committees, noting:

- The Southern Groundwater and Rivers Forum meet four times per year, with one of those meeting held face to face. The committee is functioning well.
- The Werribee Bacchus Marsh committee has issues with attendance. This could be due to the fact there isn't any big issues happening in the area at the moment.

8. FOR NOTING

8.1 Water Supply Update

Report taken as read.

Mr Cook noted SRW is two days away from announcing the low-reliability water allocation. It is expected that the allocation will be similar to 2021, due to the amount of water spilling.

Mr Anderson requested the reasoning behind why the Low Reliability Water Shares allocation was low. Mr Cook reconfirmed the allocation process and the decision-making framework. Mr Cook **agreed** to include a link to the website page where this explanatory information is located in the notifications sent out.

Action	Action officer	Due date
Include a link to the website page where Low-reliability allocation reasoning is located in the allocation text message to customers.	COOK	9/12/2022

8.2 COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE

The Committee noted the Communications report.

Mr Drew stated there is a lag with the information that is being shared on social media. Management advised the website is the first point of truth and acknowledged that it takes a

little bit longer for social media to be updated. Management referred to the engagement review and reiterated that SRW wants to ensure engagement meets customer and stakeholder expectations.

8.3 CORRESPONDENCE

The Committee noted there has been no correspondence since the last meeting.

8.4 FEEDBACK REGISTER

The Committee noted there has been no feedback since the last meeting.

9. GENERAL BUSINESS

Newry Pipeline

The committee discussed the Newry pipeline, noting:

- One customer is unhappy with where the pipeline is being laid and another has decided to communicate through lawyers. Management advised SRW respects the right of customers to engage lawyers and will communicate with customers through their lawyers if that is what the customer wants. SRW can use powers under the Water Act to progress the project but would prefer to come to a resolution with the customer.
- During preconstruction site visits Jaydo has noted to customers that soil conditions may pose challenges when installing pipes. Management advised that these issues will be managed via the construction contract.
- Mr FitzGerald noted that he has met with Jaydo's CEO and discussed the need for consistent communications from both organisations to prevent contradictions in messaging to customers. Both organisations are confident they are working towards a successful outcome.

Magnicide H

Mr FitzGerald advised SRW is responding to a media enquiry about SRW's use of Magnicide H that had reportedly caused the death of carp in the channel system. Mr FitzGerald noted that SRW has tight procedures and controls on its use and that the EPA is advised when the chemical is being administered including the management process.

10. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting No. 197 of the Macalister Customer Consultative Committee will be scheduled upon the completion of the Customer Engagement Review.

Meeting	Date
MCCC 196	TBA upon completion of the Customer Engagement Review

11. MEETING CLOSE

With there being no further business, the meeting closed at 12.27pm.

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

P Attended Meeting
 Apol Notification of apology
 Blank Did not attend