

MCCC AGENDA

Meeting no. 208

10.00am
Tuesday 26 August 2025
SRW Maffra Office

We acknowledge the Gunaikurnai people, Traditional Owners of this land on which we meet and we pay our respects to their Elders past and present.



Our Vision

Great value for customers and community through excellence in rural water management



Our Trademark Values

We are **Always Safe** and **Accountable** working as **One Team** to deliver a lasting **Legacy**.

Macalister Customer Consultative Committee

Date		Time	Location
26 August 2025		10am	SRW Office – Maffra
Topic			
1		Acknowledgement of Country	Chair
2		Welcome and Apologies	Chair
3		Declaration of conflicts of interest	All
4		Confirmation of Minutes: Meetings 207	Chair
	4.1	Attachment – Minutes MCCC Meeting 207, 27 May 2025	
5		Business arising from previous meetings	Chair
	5.1	Attachment – MCCC business arising report	
6		Committee Appointments	Management
7		<u>GUEST SPEAKER</u>	
	7.1	Winter Capital Works update	Matt Weatherall
8		<u>TRAINING</u>	
	8.1	Governance Training – Customer Committee Recruitment Process	Hayley Taylor
9		<u>PRINCIPAL MATTERS – FOR DISCUSSION</u>	
	9.1	Water Supply East Update	Matt Cook
10		<u>PRINCIPAL MATTERS – FOR NOTING</u>	
	10.1	Communications Report	
	10.2	Corporate Plan	
11		<u>COMMITTEE MATTERS</u>	
	11.1	Roundtable Discussion	All
	11.2	Important issues from other customer committees	Cameron FitzGerald

	11.3	Matters referred by/to the Board/board committee	Cameron FitzGerald
	11.4	2025 Committee Workplan	Chair
12		<u>GENERAL BUSINESS</u>	All
13		Meeting evaluation	Chair
14		Next meeting	
15		Close	12pm

Light refreshments will be provided at the meeting.

Item No: 1

Subject: **Acknowledgement of Country**

'We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land on which we are meeting. We pay our respects to their Elders, past and present, and the Elders from other communities who may be here today.'

Item No: 2

Subject: **Welcome and Apologies**

The Chair will welcome attendees and note any apologies for this meeting.

Item No: 3

Subject: **Declaration of Conflicts of Interest**

The Chair will ask committee members to declare any conflicts of interest relating to the business of this meeting.

Item No: 4
Subject: Confirmation of minutes – Meeting 207
Action: For approval
Author: Hayley Taylor – Executive Assistant
Date: 19/08/2025

PURPOSE

1. To ensure that the minutes taken of committee meeting 207 are an accurate and sufficient record of discussions held and decisions made at the meeting.

RECOMMENDATION: That the committee approves the minutes of meeting 207 held on Tuesday 27 May 2025.

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE CONSIDERATIONS

2. Minutes are confirmed at each committee meeting.

BACKGROUND

3. Draft minutes are circulated after each committee meeting. Any suggested changes are captured as track changes, for consideration and confirmation at the following meeting.

REPORT

4. Draft minutes of meeting 207, held at SRW Maffra Depot on Tuesday 27 May 2025 are provided in attachment 4.1.
5. **Budget impact:** Nil
6. **Link to strategy:** Nil.
7. **Risk:** Committee meeting minutes are a public record and may be subject to release under Freedom of Information. Members should ensure that minutes accurately and appropriately reflect the discussion and decisions of the meeting.

NEXT STEPS

Who	Action
Meeting Secretary	Once confirmed, the minutes will be saved in Southern Rural Water's document management system and Southern Rural Water's Website.

Appendix 4 - Macalister Customer Consultative Committee

Minutes of Meeting 207

Date	Time	Location
27 May 2025	10:00am	SRW Maffra Depot

Present

Mr Benn Thexton	Committee Chair
Ms Kate Lamb	Committee Member
Mr Christopher Van Den Dikkenberg	Committee Member
Mr Tim Missen	Committee Member
Mr Warrick Purdon	Committee Member
Mr Bernard Coleman	Committee Member
Mr Brad White	Committee Member

In Attendance

Mr Cameron FitzGerald	Managing Director, SRW (for part)
Mr Matt Cook	Manager Water Supply East, SRW
Ms Hayley Taylor	Executive Assistant, SRW (minutes)

Guests

Christopher Sanders	Cultural Liaison Officer
Peter Hahnemann	Project Manager Macalister Fresh

Apologies

Mr Simon Wilkinson	General Manager Service Delivery, SRW
Mr Mark Coleman	Committee Member
Mr James Clyne	Committee Member

1. Acknowledgement of County

The Chair acknowledged the Traditional Owners of the land on which the meeting was held.

2. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed all present to the meeting and noted the apologies.

The Chair **noted** the apology letter provided by Mr Thomas Dwyer, in relation to the comments he made at the Nuclear Power Generation forum in December 2024. The committee was advised Mr Dwyer will also complete governance training provided by SRW, prior to the next meeting. Management advised the governance training will be rolled out to the whole committee at a future date.

Mr Simon Wilkinson, Mr James Clyne and Mr Mark Coleman submitted their apologies. Mr Cameron FitzGerald, Managing Director attended the meeting online due to attending a drought forum in Warrnambool, and advised he will need to leave the meeting at 11:25am.

3. Declaration of conflicts of interest

The Chair asked attendees to declare any conflicts of interest relating to the business of this meeting.

There were no new conflicts raised.

4. Confirmation of minutes – Meeting 206

The minutes of meeting 206 were **approved**.

Moved: Chris Van Den Dikkenberg **Second:** Kate Lamb

5. Business Arising

The report was taken as read and status comments noted.

6. PROJECT CONSULTATION

6.1 Macalister Fresh Consultation

Mr Peter Hahnemann, Project Manager Macalister Fresh, provided the committee with an overview of SRW's Macalister Fresh project highlighting:

- Information from the project Customer Reference Group meetings held in 2024, have been collated to inform the vision and project success factors for the region.
- For the past 6-months, SRW has been using the outcomes from the Customer Reference Group to identify and develop response options and pathways.
- SRW has recently met with DEECA and the National Water Grid to discuss the project.

- The greater vision and the benefits identified in discussions with the Stakeholder Reference Group include Regional growth, benefits to all irrigators, water savings, network rationalisation, automated network, climate adaptation and all year water supply. Macalister Fresh is creating a long-term vision that will help inform how smaller interventions will be rolled out into the future.
The committee discussed the big picture of Macalister Fresh in delivering water to other area's in the region, utilising Blue Rock, linking pipelines to the Mitchell River, building another dam above Glenmaggie.
- The aim of the consultation with the committee is to seek feedback on the options, and the criticality of what matters to customers and the community.

The committee discussed reports from irrigators that they were waiting for 10 days to have a water delivery to fill a dam. Management discussed the potential for a dashboard that would help irrigators identify gaps in demand whereby they would place an order, rather than waiting.

The Chair provided feedback on the availability of Low Reliability Water (LRW) and commented that SRW had not shown that current irrigators how they would have a more reliable water supply and better quality service, if the district was to be expanded.

The committee discussed the allocation of LRW during the season, and availability of water during the season. Management provided a summary of how the Allocation Model calculates available water to be allocated as LRW.

The Managing Director inquired as to the appetite of customers to trade water during the season to benefit from the water that would otherwise not be utilised. The committee discussed the barriers to trading which include monetary, and customers waiting for LRW allocation.

Upon inquiry management advised the research indicates 7GL of High Reliability Water would be required for 20 new customers if the district was to be expanded. The committee discussed how water would be made available to new customers. A key factor to current irrigators accepting an expansion to the district will be explaining the concept to expanding water availability. The Managing Director reiterated that the project would not proceed if current demand within the district cannot be met, and current customers receive an improved system. The opportunity the proposal considers, is having a wider customer base to support system improvements and ensure a reliable water supply into the future.

The Chair reiterated SRW must show irrigators that there is more water available than what current customers can use.

Mr Hahneemann reiterated that the mantra of the project has been, since inception, that the current district is no worse off.

Mr Hahneemann discussed options considered to improve service and increase capacity which could include balancing storages, and look at "near-term", lower cost

interventions that could be implemented to improve service that could address the immediate needs of customers.

The Committee reiterated that providing information on the vision and long-term plan of Macalister Fresh will be a key communication piece to inform customers as to why certain options are being considered. The committee recommended highlighting power savings and other benefits that could be realised by the installation of a piped, pressurised system as part of consultation could be constructive.

7. TRAINING

7.1 Cultural Awareness Training

Mr Christopher Sanders joined the meeting and provided the committee Cultural Awareness Training. The training covered:

- Reconciliation at SRW
- Impacts felt by Traditional Owners
- Traditional Owner Groups in SRW's service area
- Stolen Generation and Intergenerational Trauma
- Difference between and Acknowledgement to Country and Welcome to Country and recognising Traditional Owners.
- Traditional Owner Access to Water Roadmap
- The commitment from the Water Sector
- Cultural Safety, and what it means to be culturally safe.
- Barriers faced by Traditional Owners today

8. PRINCIPLE MATTERS – FOR DISCUSSION

8.1 Water Supply East Update

Mr Matthew Cook, Manager Water Supply East provided an update on the season to date, highlighting:

- Demand during the season was better than last season, but SRW are still looking at ways to improve delivery timing.
- Water Sales results
- Capital work program to fix Tunnel Five and automated outlet program. Outlets being upgraded are prioritised on volume used.
- New role of Manager Strategic Projects and Service Optimisation.

The committee discussed weeds in channels and the winter maintenance works being completed to clean channels including the third year of a trial of the PayLoad product.

9. PRINCIPAL MATTERS – FOR NOTING

9.1 Communication Report

The report was taken as read.

10. COMMITTEE MATTERS

10.1 Roundtable discussion

Due to time constraints the Chair opened the discussion to contributions from members rather than a roundtable format discussion.

Mr Missen reiterated the comments during the Macalister Fresh discussion regarding water in the weir at the end of a relatively dry season. The committee discussed how the model could be altered with other trigger points included, that could make more water available earlier in the season.

10.2 Important issues from other customer committees

The agenda item was not discussed

10.3 Matter referred by/to the Board/Board Committee.

The agenda item was not discussed

10.4 2025 meeting schedule

The committee **accepted** the 2025 meeting schedule with no amendments.

11. GENERAL BUSINESS

The following items were raised by members:

Private works – drain crossings – Mr Cook provided an overview of SRW's requirements in regard to private works on or around SRW infrastructure. Customer's wanting to complete works are required to abide by SRW requirements. SRW encourages customers to talk to SRW prior to starting works and obtain an agreement to ensure all parties understand and agree to their responsibilities. The committee inquired as to the dispute resolution process, and were advised customers can contract the Energy and Water Ombudsman Victoria.

Allocation of Low Reliability Water – discussed during agenda item 6.1.

The Chair raised an issue in regard to SRW communicating requirements to transfer water allocation between bores. Mr Cook **agreed** to take the question on notice and discuss with the Manager Statutory Functions.

Action	Action Officer	Due Date
Discuss feedback received from the Chair with Manager Statutory Functions, in regard to SRW communicating requirements to transfer water allocation between bores	M. COOK	28/06/2025

12. Meeting evaluation

With the meeting running over time, this agenda item was not discussed.

13. Next meeting

The next meeting of the Macalister Customer Consultative Committee is scheduled for Tuesday 26 August 2025 at SRW's Maffra Office.

14. Close

With no further business the meeting was declared closed at 12:29pm.

Item No: **5**
Subject: **Business arising from previous meetings**
Action: **For noting**
Author: **Hayley Taylor – Executive Assistant**
Date: **19/08/2025**

PURPOSE

1. To allow the forum to assess management progress on items identified for action from Macalister Customer Consultative Committee meetings.

RECOMMENDATION: That the committee notes the status of business arising action items, including:

- One action item has been completed.

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE CONSIDERATIONS

2. Business arising is considered each meeting.

BACKGROUND

3. Actions are captured in the minutes each month and transposed into risk wizard where base and aspirational dates are added along with the responsibility for completion.
- 4.

REPORT

5. Attachment 5.1 describes each action item, its status, and a comment on its progress.

BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS - MCCC

Action progress: Complete

Action	Source	Due date	Completed date	Accountable officer	Status comment
35746	Discuss feedback received from the Chair with Manager Statutory Functions, in regard to SRW communicating requirements to transfer water allocation between bores	Macalister Customer Consultative Committee, 27 May 2025 - Agenda Item 9.2 Macalister Fresh Update	28/06/25	19/08/25	Matt Cook
					I raised with Manager Stat functions. this has now been progressed with the applications team including discussions with the license holder. This process is still ongoing and is actively being worked on to come to a resolution.
					This action of me discussing the topic with the Manager Stat functions is completed.

Item No: 6

Subject: **Committee Appointments – Chair and Deputy Chair vote**

SRW Management will call for nominations for Chair and Deputy Chair of the forum, including acknowledging any nominations received prior to the meeting.

Members will undertake a vote and the successful nominees will commence their positions at the November 2025 committee meeting.

Item No: 7.1

Subject: **Winter Capital Works update**

Matt Weatherall, Program Lead MID, will provide a presentation on capital projects completed over the winter maintenance period in the Macalister Irrigation Area.

Item No: 8.1

Subject: **Training – Customer Committee Recruitment Process**

Hayley Taylor, Executive Assistant and Committee Secretary will facilitate a session on the Customer Committee Recruitment Process.

This governance training has been developed specifically for SRW's Customer Consultative Committee's, and short sessions will be held each meeting where key governance matters relating to SRW's Customer Committee's will be discussed.

This training was developed using the information within [SRW's Customer Consultative Committee Handbook](#) which is located on SRW's website.

Item No: **6.1**

Subject: **Water Supply East Update**

Action: **For noting**

Author: **Matt Cook, Manager Strategic Projects and Service Optimisation.**

Date: **19/08/2025**

Issue	Commentary 2024-25
Allocation Update	Current Allocation is 95% HRWS, 0% LRWS
System Efficiency (target vs actuals)	N/A

2024-25 Season wrap up.

- Water delivered on farm – 154,956 ML
- Efficiency – 86%

During the 2024-25 irrigation season, 16,869 customer water orders were delivered across our Macalister Irrigation Area, (district and regulated rivers), which is 12 percent above the 5-year average.

While the Macalister Irrigation District season ended on 15 May, our planners continued to manage releases from our storages into regulated rivers for customers with year-round entitlements in the Macalister Irrigation Area.

On the Latrobe River alone, 928 orders were delivered reflecting the drier period impacting Gippsland.

Scale of Delivery	Alloc Bank Accounts Within High Reliability Share Entitlement Range							
	Up to 124 ML		124-174 ML		Above 174 ML		Total	
	Volume	No.	Volume	No.	Volume	No.	Volume	No.
Below 50% HRS	1196.8	394	328.2	15	1824.5	24	3349.5	433
50% to 75% HRS	2025.9	67	704.3	8	9246.9	31	11977.1	106
75% to 100% HRS	3442.1	71	2654.3	21	30120.6	49	36217.0	141
100% to 110% HRS	1950.0	28	1229.6	8	26883.3	48	30062.9	84
110% to 120% HRS	790.4	15	1412.4	8	24219.1	35	26421.9	58
120% to 130% HRS	1069.1	16	567.4	3	16226.1	21	17862.6	40
130% to 140% HRS	738.5	8	604.8	3	11038.5	11	12381.8	22
140% to 150% HRS	487.5	6	1197.1	5	9622.1	8	11306.7	19
150% to 160% HRS	143.4	1	210.3	1	2091.0	3	2444.7	5
160% to 170% HRS	153.1	3	0.0	0	299.3	1	452.4	4
170% to 180% HRS	219.4	1	0.0	0	0.0	0	219.4	1
180% to 190% HRS	0.0	0	0.0	0	424.8	1	424.8	1
190% to 200% HRS	35.1	1	0.0	0	0.0	0	35.1	1
Above 200% HRS	321.1	3	271.9	1	518.1	1	1111.1	5
Delivery where no HRS	42.7	106					42.7	106
Retired	645.9	10					645.9	10
Total	13261.0	730	9180.4	73	132514.4	233	154955.7	1036

As reported throughout the past three seasons, the district experienced periods of peak demand including one late in the season in mid to late April. During these periods of high demand, SRW enacted our High Demand protocol, with messaging and notifications sent to customers along with additional operational support. This insured we had more labour on the ground to service the needs of the system and to support our workgroup, which contributed to wait times that were considerably less than the 8-10 days experienced in previous season.

It is also worth noting that during the 2024-25 scenario customers utilised night time ordering more frequently, where as in prior periods of high demand, nighttime orders dropped off compared to what was ordered during the day.

Winter Maintenance

The Water Supply East technical and maintenance team completed 694 work orders during the winter maintenance period, including replacing 41 gearboxes on gates and dealing with a few mid-season failures, especially where older Rubicon gate panels delaminated.

Maintenance activities on automated systems and regulators, identified and responded to ant-damaged radios, faults in flume gate Solar Drive Boards and Remote Terminal Units, broken cables, meter validations and Bermad part replacements. Alongside this work the battery replacement program continued, with 200 Lithium-Ion batteries installed which are both more energy efficient and better for the environment.

Through the winter period 38km of channels were sprayed with Payload. 2024-25 is the third year of the Payload trial, which is used to eliminate submerged weeds in winter. This treatment was completed in the first part of the winter maintenance period and was completed by the maintenance crew. Other works completed included access track upgrades, concrete repairs on pipes and headwalls, flow gates, erosion work, and walkway upgrades.

Macalister Fresh Project Update

The Macalister Fresh project team have been busy collating and forming documentation in preparation for the next step of consultation. This consultation will include attending a future MCCC meeting to continue the discussion with the members as well as a series of drop in sessions and presentations throughout the Macalister Irrigation District area. Stay tuned for these dates as we will be looking for your support to encourage attendance to these sessions.

Next Season outlook

Rainfall is likely to be above average for much of Gippsland over the next 3 months with warmer than average days very likely across most of Victoria. An increased chance of unusually high daytime temperatures particularly across far southern and eastern Victoria. Therefore, we are likely to see some rain events to come through our catchments and with the size of our catchment and reliable filling of the storage, inflow will as has done in other years slowly increase.

With good consistent inflows into Glenmaggie, we are increasing the available water in storage by retaining all inflow (excluding environmental and irrigator order requirements). This has seen us able to be at 83% capacity at w/c 11/08. With these consistent inflows we are targeting a full storage in mid-September. If full capacity is achieved, we will move into a Spill period with the carry over of environmental water being the first to spill.

Item No: **9.1**
Subject: **Communications and Engagement report – August 2025**
Action: **For noting**
Author: **Hayley Taylor, Executive Assistant**
Date: **19/08/2025**

PURPOSE

To update the Macalister Customer Consultative Committee on recent communications and engagement activities.

RECOMMENDATION: The Committee note the report.

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE CONSIDERATIONS

2. Communications and engagement activity is reported at each meeting.

BACKGROUND

3. The Communications and Engagement team develops communications plans, issues media releases, manages the website and social media, customer and community engagement activities and looks after media enquiries.

REPORT

4. Website

Southern Rural Water has produced a range of website content for the Macalister area including content promoting water for sale and providing information to explain Victoria's water entitlement system.

<https://www.srw.com.au/news-media/spanners-sprinklers-winter-works-wrapped-water-flows>

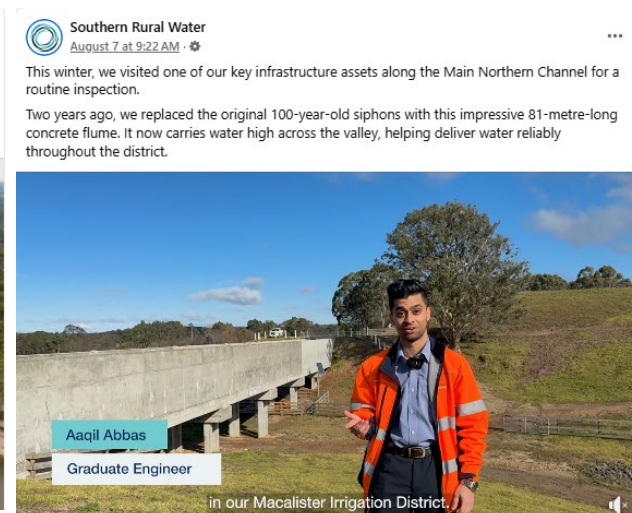
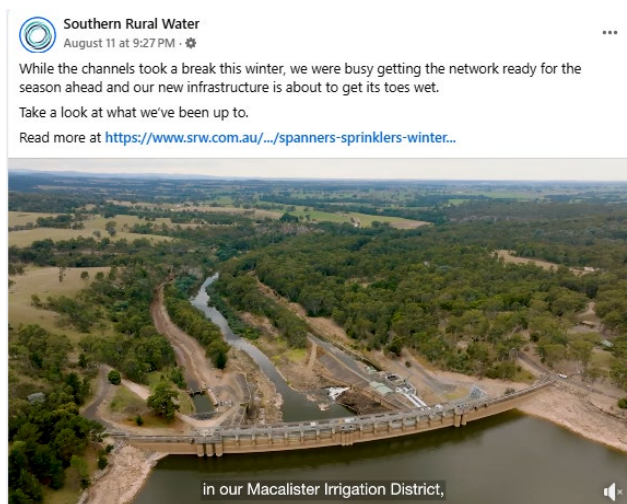
<https://www.srw.com.au/news-media/key-water-way-improvements-macalister-irrigation-district>

<https://www.srw.com.au/news-media/celebrating-30-years-serving-southern-victorias-rural-communities>

<https://www.srw.com.au/news-media/seasonal-outlook-warmer-weather-continues-winter>

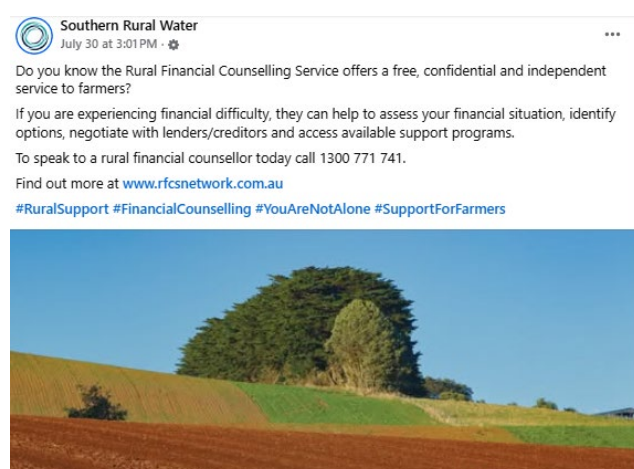
5. Social media

Our social media posts have received good responses. Below are examples of content since the last meeting. Please follow our social media pages to see more.



6. Advice, help and support for Customers

Since the last meeting, SRW has published social media posts and new articles on our Website, providing customers with information on support services including technical, financial and wellbeing. The social media posts link customers to the SRW website for further information



Item No: **10.2**

Subject: **2025-26 Corporate Plan**

Southern Rural Water's 2025-26 Corporate Plan has been accepted by government and has been published on SRW's website [here](#).

Item No: **11.1**

Subject: **Roundtable discussion**

The Committee Chair will lead a roundtable discussion of all committee members on regional highlights, issues and opportunities in each members area.

Discussion starters:

Regional Highlights, Issues, and Opportunities

- What is happening in your area that is important to customers and the wider community?
 - What are the most pressing issues currently facing your area?
 - Are there any emerging opportunities that SRW should be aware of?
 - How have recent developments (e.g., economic, social, environmental) impacted your region?
-

Item No: **11.2**

Subject: **Important issues from other customer committees**

Cameron FitzGerald, Managing Director, will provide a verbal update on important issues raised at other customer committees.

Item No: **11.3**

Subject: **Matters referred to/by the Board/board committees**

Cameron FitzGerald, Managing Director, will discuss matters that have been referred by/to the Board.

Item No: **11.4**

Subject: **2025 Committee workplan**

Southern Rural Water will provide updates to the committee as indicated in the 2025 Committee workplan. Additional items can be added to the agenda at the request of committee members and by SRW to address any current issues or events.

During meetings, the committee can request that items are added to the workplan to ensure that updates on specific topics are provided at key intervals.

The workplan will be included as an agenda item for each meeting.

A copy of the 2025 Committee workplan is included as attachment 11.4.1 for **noting**.

MACALISTER CUSTOMER CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE ROLLING WORK PLAN

		2025				2026				
	Requirement	FEB	MAY	AUG	NOV	FEB	MAY	AUG	NOV	Notes
Principal & Business Matters	Communications report	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Board update	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Water Supply East Update	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Brief paragraph to update to committee on current projects and issues
	End of season wrap-up			✓				✓		
Policy and strategic direction	Committee appointments			✓				✓		Yearly. (Chair and Deputy Chair vote)
	Environmental Water Management Flows				✓				✓	
	Climate Outlook and Drought Response Update			✓				✓		
	Corporate Plan				✓				✓	For noting. Full plan provided as discretionary reading
Project updates (DEECA and SRW)	HARC MID Operational Model Review	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Update or discussion at each meeting ongoing (action item 35442)
Admin / Other	Meeting evaluation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Important issues from other customer committees	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	As required
	Matters referred to the committee by the board/board committee	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	As required
	Committee Workplan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	

Item No: **12**

Subject: **General Business**

The Chair will introduce any items of general business.

Item No: **13**

Subject: **Meeting evaluation**

The Chair will seek feedback on the effectiveness of this meeting.

The Chair will ask the committee to assess the performance of the committee at this meeting, using the below questions as a guide.

1. Do we think the committee is adding value?
 2. What's working?
 3. What's not working?
-

Item No: **14**

Subject: **Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Macalister Customer Consultative Committee will held on Tuesday 25 November 2025 at the SRW Maffra Office.

Item No: **15**

Subject: **Close**

The Chair will close the meeting.
