

# MCCC AGENDA

## Meeting no. 207

10.00am  
Tuesday 27 May 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.*



**Southern  
Rural Water**

Managing Water. Serving Communities.

# 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            |
|-------------|------|---------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| 27 May 2025 |      | 10am                                                    | SRW Office – Maffra |
| Topic       |      |                                                         |                     |
| 1           |      | Acknowledgement of County                               | Chair               |
| 2           |      | Welcome and Apologies                                   | Chair               |
| 3           |      | Declaration of conflicts of interest                    | All                 |
| 4           |      | Confirmation of Minutes: Meetings 206                   | Chair               |
|             | 4.1  | Attachment – Minutes MCCC Meeting 206, 25 February 2025 |                     |
| 5           |      | Business arising from previous meetings                 | Chair               |
|             | 5.1  | Attachment – MCCC business arising report               |                     |
| 6           |      | <b><u>PROJECT CONSULTATION</u></b>                      |                     |
|             | 6.1  | Macalister Fresh Consultation                           |                     |
| 7           |      | <b><u>TRAINING</u></b>                                  |                     |
|             | 7.1  | Cultural Awareness Training                             | Christopher Sanders |
| 8           |      | <b><u>PRINCIPAL MATTERS – FOR DISCUSSION</u></b>        |                     |
|             | 8.1  | Water Supply East Update                                | Matt Cook           |
| 9           |      | <b><u>PRINCIPAL MATTERS – FOR NOTING</u></b>            |                     |
|             | 9.1  | Communications Report                                   |                     |
| 10          |      | <b><u>COMMITTEE MATTERS</u></b>                         |                     |
|             | 10.1 | Roundtable Discussion                                   | All                 |
|             | 10.2 | Important issues from other customer committees         | Cameron FitzGerald  |
|             | 10.3 | Matters referred by/to the Board/board committee        | Cameron FitzGerald  |

|    |      |                                                                                                                                                                   |       |
|----|------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
|    | 10.4 | 2025 Committee Workplan                                                                                                                                           | Chair |
|    |      |                                                                                                                                                                   |       |
| 11 |      | <b><u>GENERAL BUSINESS</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Private works – Drain crossings</li> <li>• Allocation of Low Reliability Water</li> </ul> | All   |
| 12 |      | Meeting evaluation                                                                                                                                                | Chair |
| 13 |      | Next meeting                                                                                                                                                      |       |
| 13 |      | 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.'*

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Item No: 2

Subject: **Welcome and Apologies**

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

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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.

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Item No: 4  
Subject: Confirmation of minutes – Meeting 206  
Action: For approval  
Author: Hayley Taylor – Executive Assistant  
Date: 18/02/2025

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## PURPOSE

1. To ensure that the minutes taken of committee meeting 206 are an accurate and sufficient record of discussions held and decisions made at the meeting.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That the committee approves the minutes of meeting 206 held on Tuesday 25 February 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 206, held at SRW Maffra Depot on Tuesday 25 February 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. Directors 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. |

# Macalister Customer Consultative Committee

## Minutes of Meeting 206

| Date             | Time    | Location         |
|------------------|---------|------------------|
| 25 February 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 Mark Coleman                   | Committee Member |
| Mr Tim Missen                     | Committee Member |
| Mr Thomas Dwyer                   | Committee Member |
| Mr Warrick Purdon                 | Committee Member |
| Mr James Clyne                    | Committee Member |
| Mr Bernard Coleman                | Committee Member |
| Mr Brad White                     | Committee Member |

### In Attendance

|                       |                                       |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Mr Cameron FitzGerald | Managing Director, SRW                |
| Mr Simon Wilkinson    | General Manager Service Delivery, SRW |
| Mr Matt Cook          | Manager Water Supply East, SRW        |
| Ms Hayley Taylor      | Executive Assistant, SRW (minutes)    |

### Guests

|                     |                                                 |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| Ms Kate Berg        | Manager Environment and Climate Adaptation, SRW |
| Ms Kellie Massouras | Manager Emergency Planning and Risk, SRW        |
| Ms Melissa Jeal     | Corporation Secretary, SRW                      |

## 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.

## 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 205

The minutes of meeting 205 were **approved**, with the following amendment

Agenda item 9.1 Roundtable discussion – Mr Clyne was referenced twice as providing comments during this discussion. The second comments are to be attributed to Mr Van Den Dikkenberg.

**Moved:** Chris Van Den Dikkenberg **Second:** James Clyne

## 5. Business Arising

The report was taken as read and status comments noted.

## 6. PROJECT UPDATE

### 6.1 SRW's Carbon Offset Program

Ms Kate Berg, Manager Environment and Climate Adaptation provided the committee with an overview of SRW's Carbon Offset Program highlighting:

- SRW's target to reach net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 1 July 2025. This target was developed in 2017 and SRW are on track to be the first Victorian Water Corporation to reach net zero.
- SRW has developed a Climate Change Mitigation Plan which sets SRW's net zero targets.
- SRW's baseline emissions assessment was conducted in 2016/17, and SRW have reduced emissions from 1800 to 561 CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent. All current emissions are attributed to SRW's fleet.
- Strategies for SRW to reach net zero emissions:
  - Generating and purchasing renewable energy
  - Reducing our Fleet to zero emissions, and
  - Using carbon offsets where there is a gap.This is achieved through generating solar power, and partnering with Zero Emissions Water, to purchase renewable energy directly from a solar farm.

- SRW has a target of a zero emissions fleet by 2030. SRW is transitioning fleet to hybrid and electric vehicles and looking to reduce the overall fleet. SRW have also installed EV charging at the Maffra Depot with future plans to install chargers at other SRW sites.
- SRW will need to acquire carbon offsets until such time as SRW's fleet is fully electric. SRW can only purchase or generate carbon offsets in Victoria.
- SRW is involved in a partnership with Wannon Water, where Wannon Water will gift SRW credit units to allow SRW to meet commitments, and SRW will in turn, gift offsets back to Wannon Water when SRW generates offsets.

The committee inquired whether SRW had considered generating offsets in other ways. Management advised SRW had considered engaging with a broker to trade or purchase offsets, and soil carbon, but reforestation was deemed the most suitable option as the soil carbon offsets generated were less than the reforestation option.

#### Carbon Offsets Reforestation Project (CROP)

- The CROP is an environmental plantings project focused on revegetation around the marginal lands surrounding Lake Glenmaggie, Merrimu Reservoir and Blue Rock Lake.
- The carbon reforestation offsets project has the potential to remove up to 35,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere over 25 years
- The project has the potential to generate 35,000 Australian Carbon Credit Units (ACCU) by 2050.
- SRW has registered the project with the Clean Energy Regulator.
- SRW will plant 13 hectares at Glenmaggie on Glenmaggie Creek which has been approved and is currently reviewing the feasibility of planning at Blue Rock.
- Reforestation will replicate the ecological vegetation class of the area as set out by the National Regulator.
- A bushfire assessment has been completed, and a bushfire management plan will be developed to ensure the site is resilient.
- A cultural heritage management plan will be developed to protect the artefacts found on the site during the cultural heritage assessment.
- The land will be managed in line with obligations set by the State Government and will be managed for the next 25 years.

The committee inquired what would happen if SRW do not hit net zero? Management confirmed the Wannon Water agreement ensures that SRW will be at net zero until 2030, where SRW will have reduced the fleet, generated offsets that will cover SRW's emissions and be able to payback Wannon Water.

The committee thanked Kate for the presentation.

## 6.2 Emergency Management at SRW

Ms Kellie Massouras, Manager Emergency Planning and Risk provided the committee with an overview of emergency management at SRW, including an update on the Flood Warden System and highlighted:

- Victoria's emergency management arrangements which include specifications of roles and responsibilities of organisations across the state. Regional and municipal committees are responsible for reducing the likelihood, the effect, and the consequence of emergencies in their area.
- Legislation now requires the community to be directly consulted in emergency management.
- Each risk identified is required to have plans on how to manage the risk and SRW is required to have our own plans which mirror these plans.
- The risks impacting SRW and how SRW manages and mitigates each risk.
- During events, SRW reports to municipal or regional committees or organisations as described in the plans. SRW will send a representative to the control centre to be able to communicate information to or from the control centre.
- As part of SRW's flood response plan in the Thomson Macalister area, a community lead Flood Warden's network was formed in the 1980's. The purpose of the network is to enable consultation amongst flood wardens and with Southern Rural Water. This consultation supports each flood warden to make their best endeavours to provide flood warnings to landowners with infrastructure and livestock known to be impacted downstream of Southern Rural Water's operations at Glenmaggie and Cowwarr weirs. Recently SRW has been assisting the members in refreshing the committee. SRW is assisting with running the meetings and has been formalising a Terms of Reference for the group.

A member inquired as to why SRW cannot contact customers directly. The Managing Director advised that as part of the new process, SRW will send out a message alerting farmers that SRW is preparing for a potential event. SRW's website will also be updated in real time, which will track changes to releases for customers and the community to check. The Control Agency for flood events manages communication to the public through the VicEmergency App, but this app does not advise of water releases. The SRW website updates will provide this additional information. The flood warden network provides a benefit of local knowledge to the community.

The members discussed flood events highlighting;

- the Flood Warden network is only as good as the information they receive and would like to see more data stations to provide a better picture of changes in conditions and would like to see government investment in this infrastructure.
- some farmers are affected by flood water that does not meet minor flood level. Management clarified that SRW starts notifications when the organisation is making choices around releasing water from weirs.
- discussed the reliability of information on the BOM website.

Management advised once the mapping of the flood wardens is complete, customers and community will be notified of who their flood warden is

The committee thanked Kellie for the presentation.

## 7. PRINCIPLE MATTERS – FOR DISCUSSION

### 7.1 Committee Governance

The Chair advised this agenda item was included after a member made representatives made on behalf of the MCCC that were not correct. He stated individuals can have their own opinions, but there are structures and processes governing who can make committee representations.

Ms Melissa Jeal, Corporation Secretary, provided a presentation on governance arrangements at SRW, highlighting;

- What governance is and what it looks like in the Victorian Water Sector.
- SRW's Customer Committee Governance is governed through the board and SRW management. SRW has two instruments that provide instruction on how the committee is run, the purpose of the committee and the expected behaviours of committee members. These are the Customer Committee Handbook, and the VPS Code of Conduct.
- Public comment is authorised as described in the Customer Committee Handbook.

The committee discussed the representations made on Nuclear Power Generation by Mr Dwyer. It was noted, the Chair of the Committee wrote to the Hon. Darren Chester and the ABC, clarifying the MCCC's position (there is no position) on Nuclear Power Generation. The formal position of the MCCC has been noted as an amendment to the minutes of that Nuclear Power Generation Inquiry.

The Managing Director described the process outlined in the Handbook of a member who has not followed behaviours or requirements of the committee.

The committee requested an In-Camera session to discuss the matter.

SRW left the meeting at 11:28am, and returned at 11:56am. Mr Wilkinson remained in the meeting to assist with committee process on the matter.

The Chair advised:

- The committee recommends that Thomas Dwyer be suspended from the MCCC pending a review of his conduct by a Panel, as outlined in the Customer Consultative Committee Handbook.
- The recommendation is made on the basis that Mr Dwyer misrepresented the MCCC to the parliamentary enquiry into Nuclear Energy
- The suspension from the committee is on the grounds *'that the conduct of an individual has brought, or is likely if continued to bring, to either or both the committee or SRW into disrepute'* as detailed in the Customer Consultative Committee Handbook.

Mr Dwyer left the meeting at 12:00pm.

The Chair clarified that Mr Dwyer had tendered his resignation, but it was not accepted, and his membership would be reviewed in line with the process outlined in the handbook.

The Managing Director thanked the committee for their professionalism when dealing with this matter.

## 7.2 Season Outlook

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

- Approximately 56% of water shares have been used this year.
- The allocation model review considers the flow of water into the storage over a 28 day period. As part of upcoming allocation reviews coming into the end of season, channel capacity will also be considered, in regard to whether the amount of water left can be delivered.
- A permanent water auction is scheduled for 4 April 2025. The committee discussed previous allocation of water savings during earlier modernisation projects where a decision was made where customers were allocated a portion of the savings rather than the savings being auctioned. The Managing Director confirmed this is not SRW's view now, and water auctions are held. The Managing Director advised SRW still hold some water shares, which are scheduled to be auctioned, but in the meantime, to bring the water into production, SRW has conducted temporary water auctions of these water shares. The Chair inquired whether as part of the research into whether it is feasible to expand the district, reliability of water in the current district footprint is assessed.

A member inquired why the carry-over ability of environmental water is not afforded to customers. Management clarified that the Victorian Environmental Water Holder have a separate Bulk Entitlement (BE) issued by the Minister and SRW is required to follow the rules set out in the BE.

## 7.3 Discussion | High Demand Review

The committee Chair led a roundtable discussion on how customers have found the system performance since December 2024. The committee advised;

- have not experienced the same issues (Tim Missen)
- some timing issues at Nambrok given demand was higher and more frequent as they did not dry off. (Brad White)
- have not had issues with SRW delivery. They have been pumping from the river and moving water around the farm to meet requirements. (Warrick Purdon).

The committee discussed on-farm storages and inquired as to whether SRW knows what capacity of on-farm storage across the district. Management advised SRW do not have this information. The committee commented that as part of the Macalister Fresh project, it considers the benefits of on-farm storage particularly in strategic locations to assist with capacity. (Chris Van Den Dikkenberg)

Management discussed water deliveries this year have been the same in the peak periods of last year, but this season has been different, whereby customers are ordering less per order due to the water they have available and have been drying off sections of their farms. While a lot of work has been done to reduce choke points, through weed spraying and desilting channels over the last winter, the biggest impact to improved delivery times has been the way water is being ordered.

## 8. PRINCIPAL MATTERS – FOR NOTING

### 8.1 Communication Report

The report was taken as read.

## 9. COMMITTEE MATTERS

### 9.1 Important issues from other customer committees

The Managing Director provided an update on items discussed during the recent Southern Groundwater and Rivers Forum (SGRF). The SGRF members discussed and provided feedback on improvement of application times, GM2030 project and communication to customers on rosters and restrictions

### 9.2 Matter referred by/to the Board/Board Committee.

The Managing Director provided an update on items discussed during the recent board meeting, including

- Mid-year Managing Director performance review,
- Digital future of SRW, including required upgrades to aging technology systems. SRW will implement upgrades through an ERP implementation in small batches, commencing with the finance system. The board will also have a new Digital Transformation subcommittee to ensure good governance over the technology uplift.
- A new Minister for Water has been appointed – Minister Gayle Tierney. SRW will provide a briefing on the organisations current and future strategic direction and work to continue to grow a positive relationship with the Ministers Office.

SRW will shortly go to tender for the Tunnel 5 project which will fix the leaks on the tunnel. The project will be run over the winter period to fix the tunnel.

### 9.3 2025 meeting schedule

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

## 10. GENERAL BUSINESS

The following items were raised by members:

- Reports around the district that there are blackberries growing on easements that need spraying. Management advised they have also heard this, and a

contractor has been engaged to complete a one-off spraying project to catch-up on weed spraying around the district.

- The Wellington Shire has recently completed a course educating staff on Love Grass and the next time one is run, Mr Mark Coleman will reach out to SRW to see if anyone would like to attend.
- Reports of a lot of rabbits at the Cowwarr Depot building and foxes along the channel banks.

## 11. Meeting evaluation

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

## 12. Next meeting

It was **agreed** the meeting secretary will request agenda items from the committee at least two weeks prior to each meeting.

It was **agreed** the meeting secretary will distribute an electronic version of the Macalister Irrigation Area history document, published in August 2022 to the committee.

The next meeting of the Macalister Customer Consultative Committee is scheduled for Tuesday 27 May 2025 at SRW's Maffra Office.

| Action                                                                                                                                                     | Action Officer | Due Date   |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|------------|
| The meeting secretary will request agenda items from the committee at least two weeks prior to each meeting.                                               | H. TAYLOR      | 06/05/2025 |
| The meeting secretary will distribute an electronic version of the Macalister Irrigation Area history document, published in August 2022 to the committee. | H. TAYLOR      | 10/03/2025 |

## 13. Close

With no further business the meeting was declared closed at 12:42pm.

Item No: 5  
Subject: Business arising from previous meetings  
Action: For noting  
Author: Hayley Taylor – Executive Assistant  
Date: 20/05/2025

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## 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:

- Three action items have been completed, and
- One action item will be addressed during the meeting.

## 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                                                                                                                                                        |
|--------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|----------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 35596  | Terry Flynn present to Council on the 3/4 Bench using the information that was presented to the SGRF.                                                      | Macalister Customer Consultative Committee, 26 November 2024 - Agenda item 9.1 Roundtable discussion – Regional highlights, issues and opportunities | 30/03/25 | 20/05/25       | Terry Flynn         | SRW is able to provide a presentation regarding the 3/4 Bench, which includes the detailed information previously presented to the SGRF, to the council upon request. |
| 35636  | The meeting secretary will request agenda items from the committee at least two weeks prior to each meeting.                                               | Macalister Customer Consultative Committee, 25 February 2025 - Agenda Item 12 Next Meeting                                                           | 06/05/25 | 09/05/25       | Hayley Taylor       | Request for agenda items email sent to the committee prior to the meeting. Process to continue for each meeting into the future                                       |
| 35637  | The meeting secretary will distribute an electronic version of the Macalister Irrigation Area history document, published in August 2022 to the committee. | Macalister Customer Consultative Committee, 25 February 2025 - Agenda Item 12 Next Meeting                                                           | 06/05/25 | 20/05/25       | Hayley Taylor       | copy distributed with the agenda for the May 2025 MCCC meeting                                                                                                        |

## Action progress: This agenda

| Action |                                                                                                                    | Source                                                                                               | Due date | Completed date | Accountable officer | Status comment                                                                                                                                                                             |
|--------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|----------------|---------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 35534  | An update from the MAcFresh project group to be provided in August 2025 to inform the MCCC what has been achieved. | Macalister Customer Consultative Committee, 27 August 2024 - Agenda Item 9.2 Macalister Fresh Update | 01/08/25 | 20/05/25       | Hayley Taylor       | Refer to agenda item 6.1. Update to the committee bought forward to May 2025 to align with consultation timeline of the project. Additional updates will be provided at future milestones. |

Item No: **6.1**

Subject: **Macalister Fresh Consultation**

Peter Hahnemann, Project Manager Macalister Fresh and Terry Flynn, Manager Water Resources Strategy will attend the meeting and discuss the status of the Macalister Fresh project, and give an outline of the upcoming engagement.

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Item No: **7.1**

Subject: **Cultural Awareness Training**

Christopher Sander, Cultural Liaison Officer will facilitate Cultural Awareness Training for the Committee.

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Item No: **8.1**

Subject: **Water Supply East Update**

Action: **For noting**

Author: **Matt Cook, Manager Water Supply East**

Date: **20/05/2025**

| Issue                                 | Commentary 2024-25                         |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| Allocation Update                     | Current Allocation is 100% HRWS, 100% LRWS |
| System Efficiency (target vs actuals) | 86%                                        |

### Season wrap up.

These numbers are only preliminary and will be finalised for the August 2025 meeting, where a detailed season analysis and further Key Performance Indicators will be provided

Water delivered on farm – 148,000ML

Efficiency – 86%

| 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     | 1247.8                                                              | 392 | 340.7      | 14  | 2063.8       | 22  | 3652.3  | 428 |
| 50% to 75% HRS    | 1603.5                                                              | 62  | 628.3      | 7   | 9445.7       | 32  | 11677.6 | 101 |
| 75% to 100% HRS   | 3446.8                                                              | 72  | 2697.0     | 21  | 28946.0      | 49  | 35089.8 | 142 |
| 100% to 110% HRS  | 1929.0                                                              | 27  | 1100.3     | 7   | 25404.7      | 46  | 28434.0 | 80  |
| 110% to 120% HRS  | 1297.0                                                              | 19  | 1157.2     | 7   | 26037.9      | 37  | 28492.1 | 63  |
| 120% to 130% HRS  | 1057.8                                                              | 18  | 1325.9     | 7   | 21363.0      | 23  | 23746.7 | 48  |
| 130% to 140% HRS  | 843.0                                                               | 10  | 407.0      | 2   | 3322.0       | 7   | 4572.0  | 19  |
| 140% to 150% HRS  | 470.7                                                               | 6   | 1387.2     | 6   | 13235.2      | 10  | 15093.2 | 22  |
| 150% to 160% HRS  | 143.4                                                               | 1   | 0.0        | 0   | 2142.5       | 4   | 2285.9  | 5   |
| 160% to 170% HRS  | 491.3                                                               | 4   | 0.0        | 0   | 1342.9       | 1   | 1834.2  | 5   |
| 170% to 180% HRS  | 0.0                                                                 | 0   | 0.0        | 0   | 0.0          | 0   | 0.0     | 0   |
| 180% to 190% HRS  | 0.0                                                                 | 0   | 0.0        | 0   | 0.0          | 0   | 0.0     | 0   |
| 190% to 200% HRS  | 22.1                                                                | 1   | 0.0        | 0   | 459.3        | 1   | 481.4   | 2   |

### Water Order demand.

As we have been reporting throughout the past 3 seasons, we again had a period of peak demand in mid to late April. We have previously detailed the causes, but I am happy to say the wait times this time did not stretch out to 8-10 days.

During the season our High Demand protocol was enacted, with messaging and notifications sent to customers. This insured we had more labour on the ground to service the needs of the system and to support our workgroup.

It is also worth noting that in this latest scenario customers appeared utilise night time ordering where as in prior periods of high demand, nighttime orders dropped off compared to what was ordered during the day.

## **Water auction results**

An auction of permanent water shares in the Macalister Irrigation District (MID) was conducted online Wednesday 2 April 2025, via the Southern Rural Water Exchange hosted by Water Partners.

A total of 1,000 megalitres (ML) High Reliability Water Shares (HRWS) and 441 ML Low Reliability Water Shares (LRWS) were offered across 21 lots, without allocation for the 2024-25 season.

Seventy people registered for this auction and there were 15 unique bidders who participated in the online auction with the following results:

- Sixteen of the 21 lots sold, totalling 600ML HRWS and 191 LRWS.
- Winning bids ranged between \$2,950.00 and \$ 3,010 per megalitre for the high and low reliability bundled lots, with an average of \$ 2,971.00 per megalitre.
- The lots comprising only high reliability shares sold between \$ \$2,800.00 and \$3,000 per megalitre, with an average of \$2,860 per megalitre.
- The lots comprising only low reliability shares sold between \$170 and \$213.64 per megalitre, with an average of \$191.82 per megalitre.

The remaining shares (400 HRWS and 250 LRWS) are listed on our water sales platform (Waterpartners), and customers notified. The water is available at a set price of \$3000 per ML for HRWS and \$214 per ML for LRWS, this is equal to the highest price paid in the latest water auction. This is in alignment with our water sales Corporate Instruction. The water will be available to our irrigators up to 30 June 2025.

## **Winter Maintenance.**

This winter will see 40Km sprayed with Payload, this is the third year that we have trialled this product for the elimination of submerged weeds in winter. This treatment is done in the first part of the winter period and is done by the maintenance crew. Other works planned will include access tracks, concrete repairs on pipes and headwalls, flow gates and erosion work, walkway upgrades.

The technical team will be completing gearbox replacements, reference sensors, RTU software upgrades, replace cables, leaky frames, walkway access improvements and battery changes.

In the Capital space, 15 more automated outlets to be installed, 3 regulator site rebuilds will be completed on the Main Northern system and a large asset replacement on the Main southern of 130 meters of pipeline through rock on the side of the Macalister river called tunnel 5.

## **New Role - Manager Strategic Projects & Service Optimisation.**

In conjunction with the Macalister Fresh project there has been a strong commitment from SRW that for any expansion to work in the area we need to ensure that the service to the existing irrigator group is improved.

The Manager Strategic Projects and Service Optimisation will lead the delivery of key projects which include the application of technology to complex problems to drive operational efficiency and achieve improved outcomes for customers, community and stakeholders. The role will work across our regulated irrigation districts to understand our existing operational processes and identifying priority projects where process improvement, technology and innovation could produce transformational change.

This role will engage regularly with the MCCC to consult on projects and discuss opportunities for efficiency.

### **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 some large Environmental flows still to come through May and June and irrigation demand still available on the rivers we are likely to see the weir continue to hold its storage level. If we were to see a storage level at Glenmaggie of 50% on 1 July this would give an estimated opening allocation of 60% HRWS. This is inline with the 2024/25 season and what could be seen as a “Normal year”

Item No: **9.1**  
Subject: **Communications and Engagement report – May 2025**  
Action: **For noting**  
Author: **Hayley Taylor, Executive Assistant**  
Date: **16/05/2025**

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## **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/end-irrigation-season-2024-25>

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

<https://www.srw.com.au/news-media/theres-still-some-water-sale-after-our-macalister-water-auction>

<https://www.srw.com.au/news-media/permanent-water-share-and-temporary-allocation-explained>

### **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.



**Southern Rural Water**  
May 6 at 9:46 AM · 🌐

A new chapter is beginning for Durt'Yowan (Latrobe River), with 16 gigalitres of unused water reallocated to benefit Gippsland's agriculture sector, Traditional Owners and the environment.

We are proud of the valuable contribution we have made to this process, having worked closely with the **Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action**, local irrigators, Traditional Owners and the **Victorian Environmental Water Holder** in bringing this opportunity to fruition.

From June, we will begin consulting with irrigators about the best and fairest way to make this water available for bolstering food production and supporting regional economic resilience.

We will release more information soon about how you can have your say.

Learn more here: <https://www.srw.com.au/initiat.../projects/latrobe-3-4-bench>



**Southern Rural Water**  
April 2 · 🌐

Confused about permanent water shares vs temporary allocation? We've got you covered. ... [See more](#)

## Permanent water share and allocation trade explained



**Southern Rural Water**  
March 18 · 🌐

Glenmaggie Dam has been standing strong for over 100 years, with some major upgrades along the way, including raising the dam wall by 3.6 meters and adding 14 radial gates back in the 1950s. Recently, we got our hands on some concrete samples to dig deeper into the dam's strength.

With coring and testing, we've gathered crucial data to help us plan for a safe and secure future.



## 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 reading water meters, providing information on water rights and reminding customers of their obligations to keep their meter sites safe. The social media posts link customers to the SRW website for further information

Keeping your meter site safe: <https://www.facebook.com/share/v/166mtkQjbR/>

How water rights work in Victoria: <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/14iYoNbT1g/>

Keeping track of water usage: <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/1Qi9YyWqky/>

## 7. Promoting events

SRW promotes events including webinars and workshops via our social media channels that may be of interest or provide assistance to customers. In April 2025, SRW join Agriculture Victoria in a webinar and workshop to discuss water planning and expanding water availability on farm. Please follow our social media pages to see more upcoming events.



**Southern Rural Water is with Agriculture Victoria and Dairy Australia.**  
April 7 at 11:00 AM · 🌐

Join us for two valuable opportunities to learn about water planning and expand water availability on your farm.

Webinar: Planning for Water Security

Hear from Penny Winbank, Manager Statutory Functions from Southern Rural Water.

Tuesday, April 8

12 pm - 1:30 pm

Via Zoom – register at: <https://forms.office.com/pages/responsepage.aspx...>

Workshop: Planning for Water Security

Hear from Andrew Rice, Team Leader Operations and Compliance from Southern Rural Water.

Friday, April 11

11 am - 2 pm

Leongatha - register at: <https://forms.office.com/pages/responsepage.aspx...>

Or find out more at

<https://agriculture.vic.gov.au/.../workshop-planning-for...>

Item No: **10.1**

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?
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Item No: **10.2**

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

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

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Item No: **10.3**

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

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

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Item No: **10.4**

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 10.4.1 for **noting.**

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## 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: **11**

Subject: **General Business**

The Chair will introduce any items of general business.

- Private works – Drain crossings (C. Van Den Dikkenberg)
- Allocation of Low Reliability Water (B. Thexton)

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Item No: **12**

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?

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Item No: **13**

Subject: **Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Macalister Customer Consultative Committee will held on Tuesday 26 August 2025 at the SRW Maffra Office.

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Item No: **14**

Subject: **Close**

The Chair will close the meeting.

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