



Regional Advisory Forum: Background Information and Terms of Reference

Dated

August 2023

Acknowledgment

Wannon Water and the Victorian Government proudly acknowledge Victoria's Aboriginal communities and their rich culture and pay our respects to Elders past and present.

We recognise the intrinsic connection of Traditional Owners to Country and acknowledge their contribution to the management of land, water and resources.

We acknowledge the Gunditjmara Peoples, the Eastern Maar Peoples, the Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali, Wergaia and Jupagalk Nations, and the Wadawurrung Peoples.

We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as Australia's first peoples and as the Traditional Owners and custodians of the land and water on which we rely.

We recognise and value the ongoing contribution of Aboriginal people and communities to Victorian life and how this enriches us. We embrace the spirit of reconciliation, working towards the equality of outcomes and ensuring an equal voice.

Background information

About us

Every day, we supply South West Victoria with sustainable water services, while leading our communities towards a healthier, more prosperous future. It's a commitment that we're proud to make to the region we call home.

From the South Australian border to the Otways. From the Grampians to the coast. Our services take care of more than 30 communities, including residents, farmers, businesses and industries. It's our responsibility to supply you with fresh water, from source to tap, and manage sewage to protect your health and wellbeing.



Putting people first comes naturally to us so we're here to help with more affordable, reliable and personalised service. You'll see us around, in towns and on streets, maintaining and upgrading the pipes, pump stations and treatment plants we all need.

As locals, we're driven to shape our region for the better. We're committed to working with our communities and strategic partners to support the health and wellbeing of our people and protect our natural environment. We simply believe it's the right thing to do and it all comes back to our greater vision to go beyond water for stronger communities.

It's about delivering sustainable water services together with positive change for our region – and we're proud to be leading the way.

Engagement context

We define engagement as *“a genuine process of working with people to build capacity, strengthen relationships and inform decisions”*. To that end, we're committed to best practice approaches to community and stakeholder engagement.

We ensure customer and community engagement is an annual and ongoing process to:

- Inform the development of our corporate plan each year.
- Provide iterative input to the development of future price submissions.
- Develop a clear, consistent and practical organisation-wide approach to best practice engagement.
- Ensure engagement is inclusive of the diversity of voices in our region (geographical, customer types, demographics, First Nations people, vulnerable groups and special interest groups).

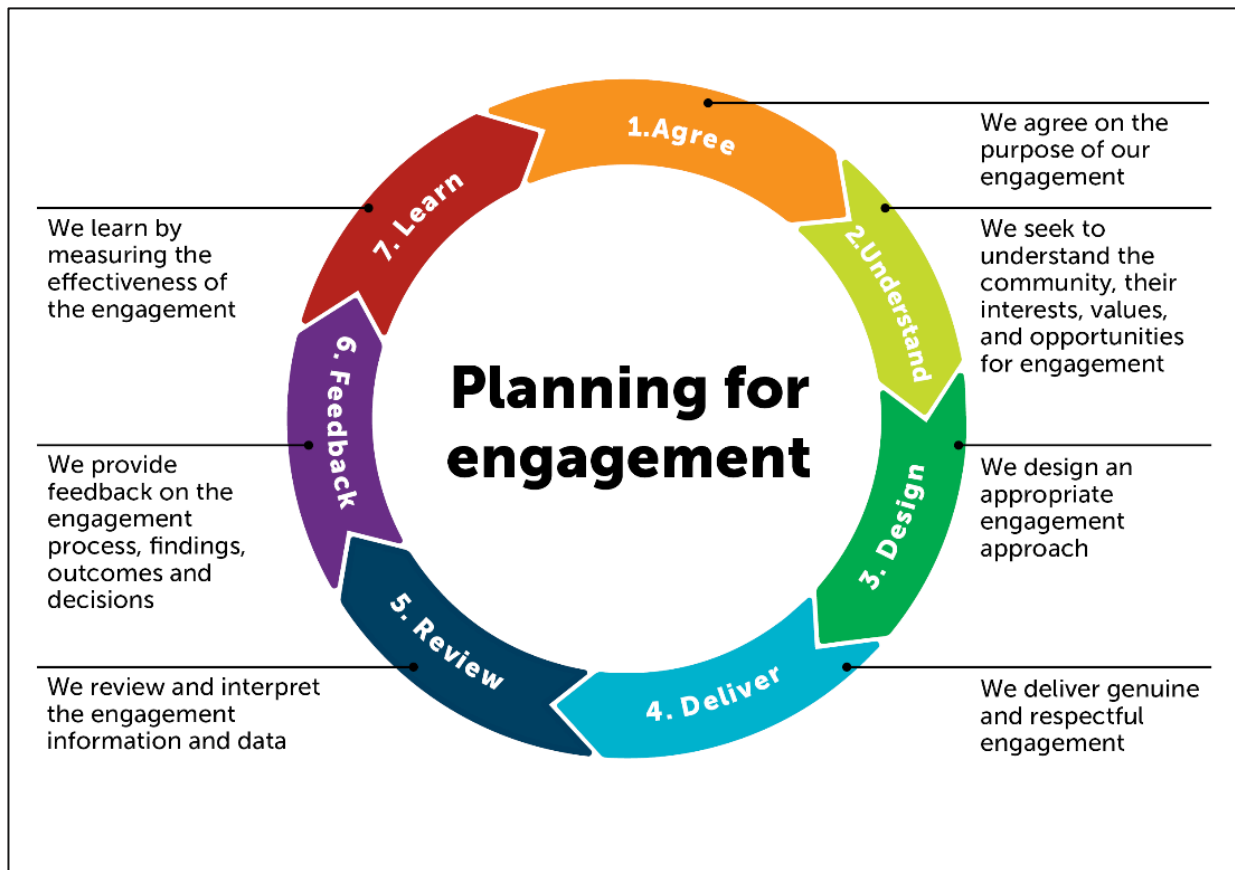
Our approach to engagement

Our Community Engagement Framework (CEF) aligns with the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) 'core values' and other best practice in consumer engagement.

The CEF guides our engagement planning and implementation, ensuring that customers and other community members are involved in the decisions that impact them.

All Wannon Water engagements, including project engagements and our annual Wannon Water Engagement Cycle (referred to as the 'WVEC' within the business), follow a seven-step methodology as shown in the following diagram:

Wannon Water Engagement Framework



This structured approach supports us to produce better outcomes for our customers by being responsive and able to adapt as their needs change.

The framework helps us build ongoing relationships with key stakeholder groups and integrates customer-driven practice into our decision-making.

Wannon Water Engagement Cycle (WVEC)

The WVEC is an annual process that ensures customers, stakeholders and community members provide valuable input and advice to help shape decision-making, our annual corporate plans and five-year price submission.

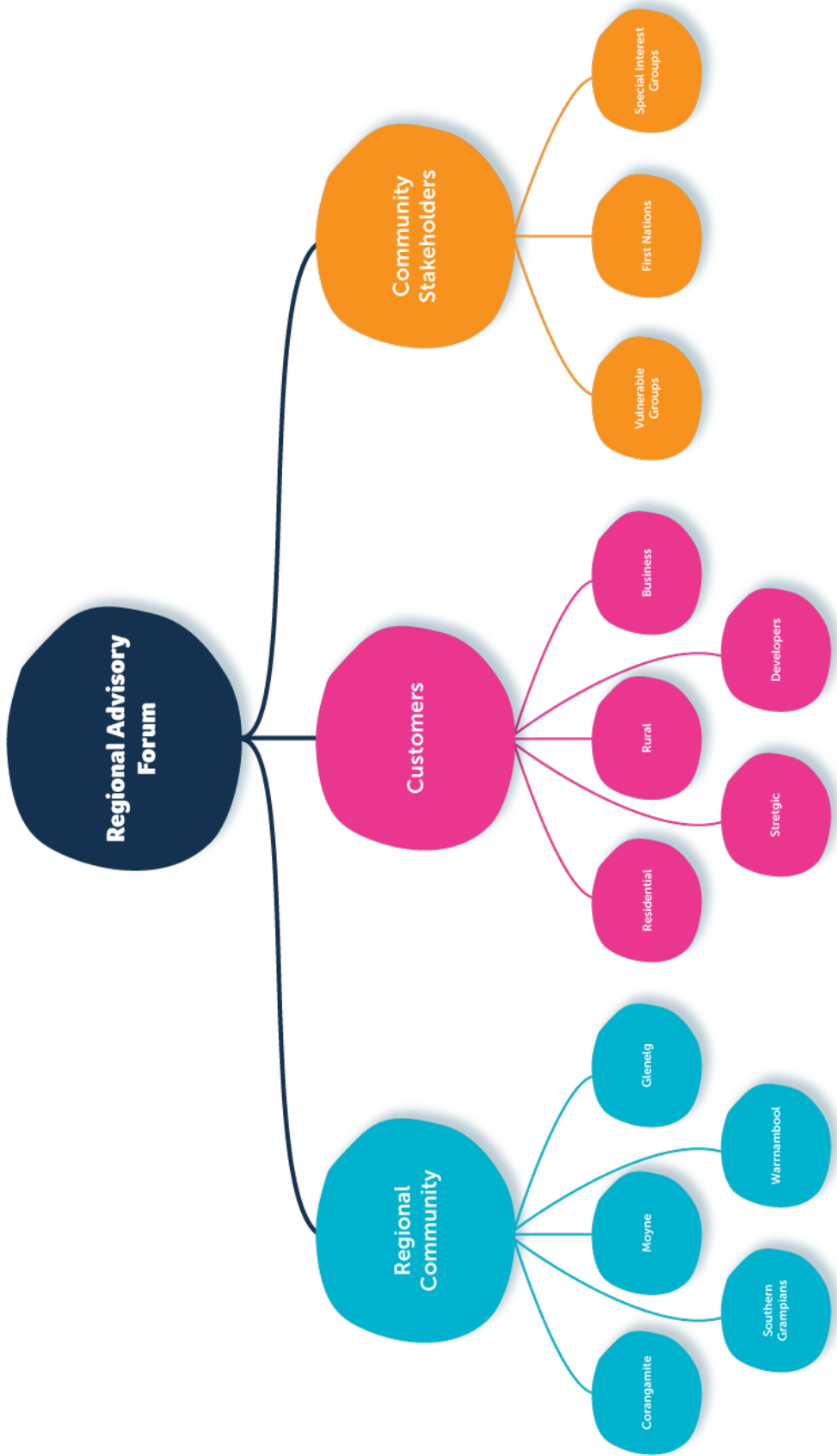
Importantly the WVEC aims to deliver on our strategic direction, *beyond water for strong communities*, and our focus on *putting people first*.

The WVEC includes engagement through the following methods:

Key engagement methods

Method	Monthly	Annual	Bi-annual
Customer pulse surveys			
Customer Value Survey			
Stakeholder Perceptions Reviews			
Unsolicited customer feedback			
Face-to-face engagement			
Participation in community events across the region			

Wannon Water Engagement Stakeholder Groups



The Regional Advisory Forum

The Regional Advisory Forum (RAF) is our peak customer and stakeholder group to help guide our annual engagement cycles and wider engagement approach.

The RAF provides a place for the consolidation of our engagement findings from feedback received from various stakeholders as shown in the graphic above.

Our customer engagement captures extensive insightful feedback from across different stakeholder groups and locations. We consider these insights to inform our annual corporate plans and our five-year price submission. Previous engagement data and feedback is available to the RAF members upon request.

RAF purpose and scope

The purpose and objectives of this forum are to:

- Provide greater visibility of issues relevant to your communities and how best to engage with them.
- Hear, discuss and provide feedback on annual engagement findings to inform annual planning.
- Review the penultimate engagement insights and draft price submission in July 2027.

Members are reflective of our customers and communities in South West Victoria. However, they do not represent a particular stakeholder group.

Feedback collected from the RAF will inform the Wannon Water Board in its decision-making for our annual corporate planning and Price Submission 2028-2033.

Roles and responsibilities

We ask RAF members to commit to:

- Attending a minimum of two meetings per year, including arriving on time and remaining for the duration of the session.
- Taking advantage of the information provided to learn as much as you can about our engagements and feedback captured.
- Treating all people in a respectful and courteous manner and allowing others to express their views.
- Maintaining a strategic focus for determining the long-term needs of South West Victorians and not using the engagement to raise individual issues.
- Ensuring confidentiality as described in the section below.
- Providing COVID-19 vaccination status or evidence of exemption.

In turn, we commit to:

- Creating a safe space in which a diversity of views can be shared and discussed.

- Providing meeting schedules in advance for each calendar year and keeping our meetings on time.
- Providing relevant background information prior to the RAF meetings, and summary notes of discussions in a timely manner.
- Developing the RAF online hub, a purpose-built private portal, with relevant information for self-paced learning, updates on key engagements and a practical way to keep in touch between meetings.
- Providing support for participation and processing reimbursements, as per below, in a timely manner.

RAF program

The RAF will commence on Thursday 31 August 2023 via a welcome and induction meeting and will conclude in July 2027.

Participation support

We acknowledge and appreciate the commitment of volunteers to Wannon Water's engagement program. To cover costs associated with participating in the RAF, members may choose to access reimbursements for travel and other expenses.

Confidentiality

Over the course of the forums, issues may be raised that should remain confidential. If this is the case, we will inform you at the time.

Please remember, this group operates as advisory only to Wannon Water, and no member of the group is authorised to speak to external third parties on our behalf. If you are contacted by an external third party, such as the news or media, it is an expectation that you refer these contacts to us as soon as possible.