



# Customer Outcomes Report

20/21



# About Wannon Water

Wannon Water is Victoria's second largest regional urban water corporation by area, covering 23,500 square kilometres and a total population of 100,400.

Our region extends from the Otway Ranges to the South Australian border.

Each day we deliver clear, fresh drinking water to more than 43,000 customers in 34 towns. We also take away sewage and trade waste from 37,000 customers across 16 sewerage systems, which we treat and return safely to the environment.

Our 14 water supply systems are diverse and include rivers and streams, deep geothermal aquifers, and shallow aquifer systems.

As a key regional organisation, Wannon Water also strives to be an influential community partner, contributing to the wellbeing and prosperity of the region as a whole.



- ▲ Towns with urban water and sewerage services
- Towns with urban water supply only
- Towns with a non-potable urban water supply
- Pipelines

## Our strategic direction



**Our purpose: To deliver water and sewerage services and improve the lives of people in south-west Victoria**



OUR FOCUS IS ON:

2025 OUTCOMES:



# Introduction

In our Price Submission 2018-23 we set out seven outcomes which reflected the things that matter most to our customers.



This report provides a summary of how we performed against these outcomes for 2020/21.

## Summary



In this third year of this five-year (2018- 2023) pricing period, we rate our performance as being achieved and consider that we have performed well overall. We remain on track to achieve our outcome commitments during this period.

Of our seven outcomes commitments we classify one as red, one as amber and five as green by traffic light status (red, amber, green). Of our 15 individual indicators, 11 were green, three were amber and one was red. We have assigned 'green' status for overall performance on balance.

Predominantly we have achieved great results in areas of importance to our customers. As always, there are opportunities for improvement. Plans to rectify some aspects we want to improve for our customers are outlined in this report.

Our ongoing customer and community engagement program continues, and we plan to share these outcomes with customers during the next three months to gain further insights into what is important to them.

# Our performance

Outcome 1:	Provide safe and reliable water supplies	18/19 Actual	19/20 Actual	20/21 Actual	20/21 Target
	Number of Safe Drinking Water Act non-compliances (water sampling and audit)	2	5	1	0
	Percentage of surveyed customers satisfied with water quality (who scored us 5 or more out of 10)	81%	82%	80%	Improving trend over time
	Percentage of surveyed customers who experienced water service interruptions who are satisfied with Wannon Water's management of the interruption (who scored us 5 or more out of 10)	87%	88%	92%	83%

Providing safe and reliable drinking water is an important deliverable. We have a comprehensive water quality monitoring program that ensures the water we supply across 34 customer zones is safe to drink. This was the case in all of our serviced locations and at all times during the year. The one reported non-compliance occurred at Cavendish during planned improvement works to replace the liner of the clear water storage. With smaller temporary tanks in place to ensure water supply continued during the works, an increased level of chlorine dosing was required to ensure adequate disinfection of the water. The works were completed and normal operating conditions resumed.

Customers' satisfaction with water quality dropped by 2% compared to last year. Our 2021 customer survey results show that satisfaction with aspects of water quality varied greatly by area, reflecting the varied water sources in our region. Dissatisfaction with water quality, specifically taste, continues to stem primarily from Portland, Heywood and Port Fairy. We have been actively engaging with these communities (and beyond) about possible solutions. Solutions require significant investment and we have been advocating at various levels of government for funding. We will continue to advocate and engage with customers and stakeholders as we develop our Price Submission in the next 12 months. We have considered the maximum margin of error on the survey result when assessing achievement as 'close or largely met'.

Our management of water service interruptions remains ahead of expectations. Customer satisfaction has increased each of the past three years, with the five year rolling average being 89%.

Outcome 2:	Provide sewerage services that protect public health and the environment	18/19 Actual	19/20 Actual	20/21 Actual	20/21 Target
	Percentage of customers who experienced sewer spills, on or within their property, who are satisfied with Wannon Water's management of the spill (who scored us 3 or more out of 5)	96%	100%	100%	Improving trend over the period

Sewer spills are not pleasant for our customers or employees. This drives our performance and the results reflect the importance we place on effectively managing a spill should it occur.

Our 2021 customer survey results show that an increasing number of customers knew their property was connected to Wannon Water's sewerage services. Customer's satisfaction with our sewerage services remained high with 83% expressing they were satisfied or very satisfied.

Outcome 3:	Ensure the long-term resilience of our services	18/19 Actual	19/20 Actual	20/21 Actual	20/21 Target
	Maintain top quartile rank in WSAA Asset Management Customer Value Benchmarking Result	Achieved	Achieved	Achieved	Achieved
	Number of towns placed on water restrictions in a year	0	0	0	0

We manage more than \$1 billion dollars of assets that are critical in delivering services to customers. We therefore place a high level of importance on effective management of these assets. An external assessment of our asset management system occurred during 2020. Compared to best practice Wannon Water placed in the top quartile of participant entities.

No towns were placed on water restrictions during the year. Whilst this result is somewhat climate dependant, proactive planning and significant works undertaken to secure water supplies in our region have provided a greater level of certainty that water restrictions will be a rare occurrence for our customers.

# Our performance

Outcome 4:	Be responsive and willing to adapt as customers needs change	18/19 Actual	19/20 Actual	20/21 Actual	20/21 Target
	Number of instances of two-way engagement to inform the development of Wannon Water's Corporate Plan	1,661	2,124	1,359	≥ 500
	Development and implementation of online customer portal <i>myWannonWater</i> , by end June 2019	Not achieved	Implemented	N/A	N/A
	Number of customers using online portal (once portal established)	N/A	1,209	N/A	N/A
	Number of customer interactions with the online portal	N/A	2,194	2,739	2,500

We continued to build on the significant enhancements in our community engagement activities. Our 2020/21 activities, like many other community based activities, were heavily impacted by our inability to conduct our desired face-to-face engagement. However we adapted our approach and use online and virtual methods to engage with the community. Our flagship engagement initiative, the Wannon Water Engagement Cycle, garnered valuable insights from residential, small business, industrial, rural and vulnerable customers, and traditional owners. Engagement with community groups also helped us explore expectations of Wannon Water in protecting the environment, providing value for money and strengthening communities.

Our *myWannonWater* customer portal went live in July 2019. Our customers told us they wanted increased channels to communicate and transact with us and *myWannonWater* is meeting that desire. Our registered *myWannonWater* users had 2,739 interactions with the system, a 25% increase compared to last year. We are pleased with the uptake and continue to promote the benefits of it to customers.

Our 2021 customer survey results show that satisfaction with our responsiveness and willingness to adapt as customer needs change has increased significantly in the past two years.

Outcome 5:	Protect and enhance the environment in line with community expectations	18/19 Actual	19/20 Actual	20/21 Actual	20/21 Target
	Compliance with amalgamated EPA licence (annual median result for all sewage treatment plants)	96.1%	96.0%	97.5%	100%
	Compliance with bulk entitlement and groundwater licences.	Achieved	Achieved	Achieved	Achieved
	Percentage emissions reduction compared to baseline of 31,626 tonnes CO <sub>2</sub> emissions	3.6%	15.7%	24.5%	22.4%

Wannon Water expects to report five non-compliances with our EPA Amalgamated Licence for the 2020/21 year. Fluctuating waste volumes from a major customer affected Warrnambool's Sewerage Treatment Plant (STP) performance. A new treatment process was trialled and implemented which enhanced the plant's ability to deal with fluctuating loads. We also experienced challenges at the Hamilton STP due to high volumes of rainfall infiltration causing the plant to discharge outside of licence conditions. During periods of wet weather this is not uncommon. We have committed to investigations to identify the key sources of stormwater infiltration and the development of appropriate improvement plans to reduce the stormwater infiltration. Storage capacity was exceeded during winter requiring temporary releases of treated wastewater at the Terang, Dunkeld and Mortlake plants. We have active plans in place for rectification at Dunkeld and Mortlake.

We made significant progress towards achieving our Carbon Neutrality plans during the year, reducing our CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 21% in the past two years. The emissions reduction benefit following the completion of the Portland Wind Turbine and an upgrade of the energy efficient technology at the Port Fairy STP are main drivers of the results. Our focus remains on achieving our 2025 obligation to deliver a 40% reduction.

Our 2021 customer survey tells us that our customers remain satisfied with our efforts protecting and enhancing the environment in line with their expectations and reducing our carbon emissions.

# Our performance

Outcome 6:	Partner with our customers' communities and help our region flourish	18/19 Actual	19/20 Actual	20/21 Actual	20/21 Target
	Percentage of customers surveyed who are satisfied with Wannon Water's performance partnering with communities to help its region flourish (score of 5 or more out of 10)	55%	58%	55%	54%
	Percentage of regional stakeholders surveyed who are satisfied with Wannon Water's performance partnering on areas of regional priority (score of 5 or more out of 10)	78%	78%	80%	78%
	Percentage of surveyed customers who engaged with Wannon Water satisfied with the engagement process (score of 4 or 5 out of 5)	92%	97%	100%	92%

These results inform us that our customers and stakeholders appreciate our approach and actions taken to improve the success of our region. We identified four themes where we aim to deliver shared value for the organisation and our communities. These themes are regional prosperity, education, training & volunteering, health & wellbeing and natural environment.

An important part of measuring the effectiveness of our customer engagement is assessing whether the engagement was valued by those involved. This sentiment is captured via a short survey of those customers who participated in our direct engagement sessions. All of those engaged this year either agreed or strongly agreed that the engagement session was a worthwhile use of their time.

Our 2021 customer survey results show that satisfaction with us partnering with their communities and helping our region flourish has increased significantly during the past two years.

Outcome 7:	Ensure we provide great value	18/19 Actual	19/20 Actual	20/21 Actual	20/21 Target
	Customers satisfied (5-8) or very satisfied (9-10) with value for money - from Customer Value Survey (score of 5 or more out of 10)	78%	80%	79%	84%

Our customers rating our services 'excellent' value for money increased significantly during 2019/20 and this level of satisfaction was maintained in 2020/21. Our 2021 customer survey results show that 30% of customers rate our services as 'excellent' value. A further 49% were 'satisfied' with the value they receive.

Customers who were satisfied with the value for money offered by Wannon Water felt that the costs continue to be 'fair'. Affordability remains a focus for us. An average residential customer can expect their bill to fall by \$9 (before inflation) during 2021/22. Since 2013/14, household bills have reduced by 15% (before inflation), nearly \$200 during that time. Customers provided water quality and taste of water as areas that would improve their perceived value for money (see Outcome 1).

During the year we heard customers express that the key drivers of their overall satisfaction included good service and communication, cost of water and charges, water quality and water supply reliability. Key projects and initiatives that address these areas of customer feedback have been implemented during the past three years, with further initiatives for 2021/22 outlined in our Corporate Plan 2021-26.

The above drivers will be front of mind during our Price Submission engagement and development.