

Our Water, Our Voice

What we
heard from
customers



Thanks to all of the customers who participated in Our Water, Our Voice and helped in shaping the future of our water services to provide you and your community with what matters most.

Our Water, Our Voice is a journey we're taking with you, our customer, to help shape Sydney Water's future water services, our waterways and our communities. Here's what you need to know.

Your voice matters

Sydney Water is Australia's largest water utility, providing water, wastewater, recycled water and some stormwater services to over 5.3 million people across Greater Sydney, the Illawarra and the Blue Mountains.

In July 2022, we began a two-year long conversation with you through Our Water, Our Voice – an intensive customer engagement program. We spoke about a wide range of topics and asked you questions, giving you a direct line to tell us what outcomes to focus on until the end of this decade.

Find out more

There is plenty more information about Our Water, Our Voice at our Customer Engagement Program website.

It includes reports on completed phases, as well as our overall strategy. Visit:

www.sydneywater.com.au/our-water-our-voice

or scan the QR Code:



Throughout Our Water, Our Voice, we spoke with and surveyed customers like you to canvass attitudes on issues like:

- 1 How we charge you for our services
- 2 Our guaranteed service standards
- 3 Our impact on waterways and the environment, including amenity and recreation
- 4 Creating cool, green landscapes for our communities
- 5 Resilience of our water supply system

Why are we engaging now?

There are important challenges we're facing that mean we need to consult with our customers. As our population grows and we experience more climatic events like droughts and floods, we'll need to continue to deliver a safe, reliable, sustainable and resilient drinking water supply. We also need to continue to provide wastewater and stormwater services.

To do this, we will need to consider alternate water supplies, protect the health of our waterways and communities from pollution and meet changing customer needs. This will involve implementing new digital technologies and upgrading our infrastructure to become future proof.

Additionally, every five years, Sydney Water undergoes a pricing review by our regulator, the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART). Our new Operating Licence commences on 1 July, 2024. Our current price determination ends on 30 June, 2025.

THE THREE MAJOR FACTORS THAT REQUIRE US TO CHANGE INCLUDE OUR GROWING CITY, CLIMATE CHANGE AND CUSTOMER EXPECTATIONS:

Growing cities



Our cities and population are growing and this has a significant impact on the service we deliver to our customers. We need to be innovative and find better, simpler ways of doing things.

Our water and wastewater systems are operating at their sustainable limits and our current demand for water exceeds our forecast sustainable supply.

Climate change



Our climate is changing, and we need to respond to make sure our services and assets are resilient.

Future climate risks and extreme events mean we cannot meet our water needs by only using traditional water supply approaches.

We need to make our city cooler and greener, and maintain healthy waterways and ecosystems.

Customer expectations



Our customers' expectations are changing every day – our customers expect and deserve more from us in terms of quality of service, reliability and pricing. We need to be able to understand what customers want and expect.

We have to use water more productively and efficiently and meet our water needs at a reasonable cost.

The impact your voice can make

Water services and service levels

The water services we provide, and the bill prices you pay in 2025-30 will reflect what we heard from you. Our Water, Our Voice will directly impact key regulatory submissions like our price proposal for IPART and has already been included in our new Operating Licence.

Long-term planning

The insights from Our Water, Our Voice will directly impact and facilitate Sydney Water's planning, construction and operational activities. We'll keep you updated about our strategic plans and price proposal on Sydney Water's website.

To find out more go to www.sydneywater.com.au/our-water-our-voice

Price Proposal for 2025-30

Our current pricing period ends in 2025. In 2024, we'll lodge a submission for a new price proposal to our regulator, the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) to review.

Findings from Our Water, Our Voice will guide what we tell IPART about the service levels we'll provide and what our customers are willing to pay for those services in the 2025-30 period.



Our engagement

We'd love to hear your thoughts. Here are some stats about the people we have spoken to throughout Our Water, Our Voice.

13,179

Residential customers

3,535

CALD customers

395

First Nations customers

12

Customer forums

5

Online surveys

1

Customer panel

75

Small to medium sized businesses

91

Stakeholders

1,818

People living with a disability

120

In-depth interviews

24

Months of engagement

58

Focus groups

10

Workshops

In languages:

KOREAN MANDARIN CANTONESE
GREEK ARABIC VIETNAMESE

1

PHASE 1: JULY 2022 – JAN 2023

Capturing customer priorities

During Phase 1, customers identified and ranked in importance, the 15 key priority outcomes for Sydney Water to deliver by the end of this decade.

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PHASE 2: NOV 2022 – JAN 2023

Capturing customer service insights

During Phase 2, you, our customer, identified your preferences for how we should communicate with you and through which interaction channels. We also gained insights into your views on service levels, planned and unplanned outages, water pressure and wastewater overflows.

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PHASE 4: MAY 2023 – FEB 2024

Service levels and investments for the future

Using insights from phases 1 to 3, we explored customer preferences for how key customer priorities should be delivered. We also tested customer willingness to pay for the outcomes we will deliver over the next 10 years, to maintain customers' preferred levels of service and address future challenges, such as Sydney's growth and climate change.

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PHASE 3: NOV 2022 – AUG 2023

Customer insights for better business planning

In Phase 3, we combined the 15 key priorities identified and ranked by customers during Phase 1, and the customer service level insights from Phase 2, asking customers to identify the level of service preferred within several customer-advocated priorities.

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PHASE 5: AUG 2023 – MAY 2024

Customer recommended price proposal – Part 1

During this phase we collaborated with customers to develop our next price proposal for 2025-2030 to IPART. In Phase 5 customers shaped and informed Sydney Water's investment plan for the next five-year price path.

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PHASE 6: OCT 2023 – AUG 2024

Customer recommended price proposal – Part 2

During this phase we collaborated with customers to develop our next price proposal for 2025-2030 to IPART. In Phase 6 customers shaped and informed how Sydney Water's services are paid for, including the costs to deliver our investment plan for the next five-year price path.