

# Dawson Valley Customer Advisory Committee

**Date:** 2 December 2024

**Time:** 1:00pm – 2:30pm

**Location:** Hotel Theodore

**Attendees:** Scott Becker, Andrew French, Greg Hutchinson, Michael Murray, Mitch Anderson, Kirk Anderson, Simon Green, Maxine Kerr on behalf of Scott Stevens

**Sunwater representatives:** Daryl Conway (Operations Manager Biloela), Sarah O’Grady (Stakeholder Relations Advisor) and Charlene Pearse (Customer Engagement Coordinator, online)

**Apologies:** Scott Stevens, Ian Becker, Ashley Jensen, Kelly Brebner (Anglo American)

## Minutes:

Agenda items		
Item no.	Item	Presenter
1	Meeting open	Daryl Conway
2	Service and Performance Plans (S&PPs)	Daryl Conway
3	Vote and close out following topics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 20% differential discussion</li> <li>• MP and MPA pricing</li> <li>• Operation height of Theodore Weir</li> <li>• Meter reads</li> <li>• Carryover</li> <li>• Announced Allocations review timeframes</li> </ul>	Daryl Conway
4	General business <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update on Announced Allocations</li> <li>• Update on draft Water Plan</li> <li>• Action Items</li> <li>• Further requests from the CAC</li> <li>• Propose next meeting dates and locations</li> </ul>	Daryl Conway
5	Meeting close	Daryl Conway

## 1. Meeting open

- Acknowledgement of Country delivered.
- Sunwater gave an overview of the agenda.
- Attendees were introduced and apology from Scott Stevens tabled, noting Maxine Kerr attending as his delegate.
- Sunwater presented and discussed the minutes of previous meeting. Members accepted the additions. Member suggested further amendment – indicated that they found evidence that channel customers didn't take up the 1989 water offer.

**ACTION:** Sunwater to make further edit to the minutes before finalising and publishing on the Sunwater website.

## 2. Service and Performance Plans (S&PPs)

- Link to the S&PP presented at the meeting available on Sunwater's website: [2024 Service and Performance Plan - Dawson Bulk Water Service Contract](#)
- Sunwater presented on the performance of the scheme in 2023-24 and what is planned for 2024-25.
- Member requested that they receive the S&PP before the meeting to review. Sunwater confirmed that a notification went out to all customers about four weeks ago.
- Member enquired about why the revenue information wasn't included in the S&PP.

**ACTION:** Sunwater to confirm why the revenue and expenditure summary wasn't included in the S&PP.

- **SUNWATER RESPONSE:** During the Irrigation Price Path review in 2023, Sunwater engaged with the Consultative Committee to test and refresh the content in the S&PPs. We then sought customer feedback, having outlined the reason for our proposal. Customer feedback indicated support of the refresh. One of the proposals was to remove the *financial summary – revenue and expenditure* section. The rationale for removing this section was that the information did not talk to performance and provided data for scheme financial performance that was subject to misinterpretation. The content in the refreshed S&PPs has a greater focus on the comparison of actual expenditure against QCA allowances.
- Sunwater presented comparison of forecast and actual annuity-funded projects. Sunwater noted that Orange Creek Weir and Theodore Weir require additional protection works and are big civil engineering jobs. There have been delays in expenditure due to environmental issues and land tenure issues (the State owns the land that the two weirs are located on, not Sunwater).
- Discussion about arc flash program. Member queried the high cost. Sunwater explained that wholesale equipment replacement is required, and that there are concerns about people getting injured at Moura pump station. Member queried if replacement was necessary. Sunwater confirmed that replacement is necessary.
- Discussion about meter replacement program. Member questioned why Sunwater is replacing meters that are working and why isn't the landowner responsible for replacing their own meter. Sunwater explained that the focus is on replacing broken meters and that it's a rolling program. Sunwater has discussed the program with the department, and it was agreed that Sunwater must maintain and replace them. Discussion about whether the meters would reduce efficiency;

the cost of the meters (\$50,000 per meter); and the cost-benefit of replacing them. Member queried if new meters would have remote reading. Sunwater responded that new meters do not have back-to-base functionality, which is an additional cost, but there is an ongoing back-to-base trial in the Dawson Valley.

- Members expressed concern that the meters will work at both low and high flow rates, and that there is a preference for the Siemens electromagnetic flowmeter. Sunwater agreed it is a good meter, but it is cost prohibitive at \$50,000 a unit.

### 3. Close out of long running topics

- Sunwater presented slides on the 20% differential, MP and MPA pricing and operational height of Theodore Weir. Sunwater explained that the 20% differential was a solution at the time and the paper is a historical summary of issue. Discussion about the start of water year, water delivery, carryover and SWIR.
- Discussion about whether an independent facilitator to help the group resolve the issue would be a good idea. Member noted that it may be best to keep the rules as they are, as every time you make a change, someone is impacted.
- Note: A vote to close out topics did not occur.

**ACTION:** Sunwater to develop plan to work through issues to close out.

- Sunwater presented on meter reads. Discussion about the system and the fact that it only recognises one read per day. Member noted that a meter was read on 24 September, but reading wasn't entered into system until six days later.

**ACTION:** Sunwater to investigate whether meter reads can be entered into the system on the day of reading.

### 4. General Business

- Discussion about Announced Allocations and the review timeframes. Sunwater noted that the current rule is that AA is reviewed if there is an increase by five or more percentage points, or it's an increase to 100 per cent. Sunwater is aiming to do that within two weeks after a major inflow occurring or within five days of the first calendar day of each quarter. There is a review every quarter, unless a major inflow occurs.
- Member asked why text messages come from different mobile numbers and noted that an earlier communication didn't mention the area i.e. Upper or Lower Dawson. This caused confusion for a customer with offtakes in both sections. Sunwater noted that it will aim to include that descriptor going forward.

**ACTION:** Sunwater to investigate whether the same alias can be used when issuing Dawson Valley communications and seek to consistently identify zones in messages.

- Sunwater noted that all storages are full except for the Moura offstream storage.

- Regional water assessment: discussion about Nathan Weir and Glebe Weir. Member queried if the water (27,000 ML) at Nathan Weir is new, usable water. Sunwater confirmed that would be the case.
- Sunwater provided update on the draft water plan.

**ACTION:** Sunwater to email members a potential date in 2025.

## 5. Meeting close

- Meeting closed at 2.40pm.

## Approval and review

Chair:	Daryl Conway
Minutes:	Charlene Pearse
Date:	17 December 2024