

YARRA VALLEY WATER CITIZENS' JURY OUR RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS



Every five years all water utilities in Victoria undergo a Water Price Review run by the Essential Services Commission (The Commission). Our price submission proposal aims to establish the services that our customers want at what they determine is the right price.

We have been listening to feedback and ideas for our services using a range of methods and processes to establish an understanding of what our customers value. In the lead up to our Citizens' Jury, Yarra Valley Water consulted widely with our customers to understand what they valued from their water and sanitation service.

What emerged from our research and consultation were four areas that customers told us they valued most. We defined these as the four outcomes:



QUALITY
WATER
SERVICES



RELIABLE
AND TIMELY
SERVICE



FAIR
FOR ALL
CUSTOMERS



CARE AND
PROTECTION OF
THE ENVIRONMENT

Over the duration of five, eight hour days across three months, the Jury considered the insights from our customer research and engagement, heard from speakers chosen and elected by our stakeholders and the Jury, read submissions made by the public, and deliberated over the content provided through these sources, and through the original information pack.

The Jury completed its deliberation and presented its report and recommendations to Yarra Valley Water's Chair and Managing Director in response to the remit:

WE NEED TO FIND A BALANCE BETWEEN PRICE AND SERVICE WHICH IS FAIR FOR EVERYONE

HOW SHOULD WE DO THIS?

We have summarised the Jury's criteria for assessing 'fair for everyone' and identified the following guiding principles:

- Equitable (in terms of price impact and service access)
- Representative (consideration given to all groups)
- Transparent and visible (in relation to information and pricing)
- Affordable (affordable service and support for those who need help)
- Flexible and responsive (provides choice and meets differing needs)
- Consistent service standards (for customers within the same service area)
- Sustainable over the long-term (reinvestment)

We have identified five significant underlying themes that emerged from the Jury's deliberations and have summarised them as follows:

- Assist vulnerable customers
- Ensure drinking water supply for the future, through leakage reduction, digital metering, alternative water supply options and water conservation
- Target efficiency and research to reduce costs and pass on benefits
- Protect the environment
- Use communication and education mechanisms to enhance the achievement of the above objectives

We have considered the Jury's recommendations along with its rationale for providing them. We have noted the 'fair for everyone', criterion and summarised the themes or objectives which underlie the Jury's recommendations, as outlined in its report. We have responded to the Jury's recommendations below and we have also tried to understand the sentiment behind the Jury's recommendations so we can focus our business efforts overall to deliver better value. Reflecting on our insights we have identified:

- a distinction between core service and community based outcomes
- water is a scarce and valuable resource – customers prioritise conserving water for the future

To better reflect these insights, we evolved the four outcomes to seven, to reflect what we now understand our customers expect and value.

Yarra Valley Water would like to extend our thanks and express our great appreciation to the members of our Citizens' Jury for committing their time and boundless energy to the task before them. We are grateful for their contribution.

Core service outcomes:



Water that is safe to drink



Water and sewerage services that I can rely on

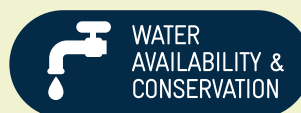


Fast response and effective restoration of my service when it is interrupted

Community focused outcomes:



Support for customers having difficulty paying their bill



Saving water now so it's available in the future



Modern, flexible service and advice that suits my needs



Looking after the environment

Yarra Valley Water will pursue all ten of the Citizens' Jury recommendations. Eight of the recommendations will be fully adopted with some minor variations to the remaining two. The table below provides our response to the recommendations and the commitments we will make.

OUTCOME	THE CITIZENS' JURY SAID....	WHAT WE'VE UNDERSTOOD
 RELIABLE WATER & SEWERAGE SERVICES		
RELIABLE WATER AND SEWERAGE SERVICES	<p>Recommendation 1.</p> <p>Targeted research and development to reduce maintenance costs, self-repair infrastructure and prevent leakage to secure future water supply</p>	<p>To keep pace with climate change impacts and population growth to ensure efficient and uninterrupted water, the Citizens' Jury expects us to continue to undertake research and development initiatives with a focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensuring sufficient water supplies for the future reducing short and long term costs delivering services with minimal interruptions. <p>The Citizens' Jury has recommended that YVW maintain existing service levels although have expressed their support for potential spending increases for research and development to ensure objectives around future supply and new asset innovations are achieved.</p> <p>The Jury has recommended we make our research and development process transparent to potentially drive community innovations.</p>
 FAIR ACCESS & ASSISTANCE FOR ALL		
FAIR ACCESS AND ASSISTANCE FOR ALL	<p>Recommendation 4.</p> <p>Further enhance welfare education and services to support vulnerable customers (concession, pensioners, hardship)</p>	<p>The Citizens' Jury supports an increase in education and support programs being offered to customers having difficulty paying their bill. By increasing the education and support, more people will be aware of the options available to them so that they can pay their bills. YVW should maximise our partnership with external welfare agencies for the delivery of these services.</p>

We have additionally included performance measures which we will use to monitor our performance in the achievement of our commitments and we will report on our progress against delivering those for the duration of the 2018-2023 price period.

WHAT YARRA VALLEY WATER WILL DO

PERFORMANCE COMMITMENT



RELIABLE WATER & SEWERAGE SERVICES

YVW accepts the Citizens' Jury recommendation.

For the pricing period, we will invest in research and development opportunities and will spend around 0.2% of revenue on research and development each year which is approximately \$2 million. This includes spending approximately \$850,000 per year on asset related research and development.

For the pricing period, the research and development program will focus on the following innovation areas identified by the Citizens' Jury:

- ensuring sufficient water supplies for the future
- reducing short and long term costs
- delivering services with minimal interruptions.

We will continue to achieve efficiencies in our research program by pursuing larger exposure to industry wide research at lower costs through Water Services Association of Australia, VicWater's Intelligent Water Network Program and other research and development organisations.

In relation to self-repairing infrastructure, YVW will continue to monitor the development and suitability of any technology over the pricing period.

We make the following commitment:

We will report annually the research, develop and innovation program undertaken to deliver on the Citizens' Jury recommendation.

We will target asset related innovations and focus on the following objectives:

- ensuring sufficient water supplies for the future
- reducing short and long term costs
- delivering services with minimal interruptions.



FAIR ACCESS & ASSISTANCE FOR ALL

YVW accepts the Citizens' Jury recommendation.

We will increase the investment in our education, awareness and support programs by an additional \$6 million over five years to increase the number of people (cumulative total of 150,000) who are aware of the services available for those having difficulty paying their bills.

We will:

- have additional staff to work more closely with at risk communities and their community advocate organisations in developing programs, outreach and communication materials for the wider customer base
- run targeted education campaigns to address specific issues such as the support available to customers impacted by family violence, medical health issues, mental health, disability etc
- create additional educational and communications materials about our WaterCare program to ensure customers can be aware, access and understand the support they can have access to, if in need
- increase the accessibility of our education material that includes: Aboriginal communities, multiple languages, large print, simple English and animations.

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We make the following commitments:

To support customers who face barriers accessing our services we will extend our WaterCare program to reach 150,000 customers (cumulative total).

To protect customers who may not have a capacity to pay, we will not restrict water supply without first ascertaining ability to pay.

We will manage and monitor these measures and indicators that are important to ensure the delivery of the overall customer outcome:

- % of customers who have experienced difficulty paying for essential water and sewerage services say that they are satisfied with the assistance they have received
- % customers are confident that we will look after customers experiencing difficulty paying for essential water and sewerage services
- number of customers who have accessed our support services.

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OUTCOME

THE CITIZENS'
JURY SAID....

WHAT WE'VE UNDERSTOOD



FAIR ACCESS
& ASSISTANCE
FOR ALL

FAIR ACCESS
AND ASSISTANCE
FOR ALL

Recommendation 4.

Continued



FAIR ACCESS & ASSISTANCE FOR ALL

- train community outreach officers to increase visibility of support by attending Community Events to promote the WaterCare service offering and through working with trusted community organisations such as financial counsellors, maternal health centres, Centrelink, multicultural services, domestic violence centres
- increase support through several of our community partners such as front-line support agencies, including financial counsellors, family violence workers etc. to ensure customers are being referred to the appropriate support agencies.

We will undertake these actions, activities and programs to deliver the customer outcome:

We will continue to:

- provide hardship and vulnerability programs for customers who are unable to pay
- provide programs for customers that have difficulty accessing our services, including Culturally and Linguistically Diverse communities
- partner with other organisations to ensure customers can access support services more broadly
- provide customers with a variety of payment options that suit their circumstances.



MODERN FLEXIBLE CUSTOMER SERVICE

Recommendation 5.

Installation of digital meters for all customers to help change behaviour and protect our natural resource

The Citizens' Jury supports the implementation of digital meters when the technology is available and any bill increase is capped at \$12.50 per annum.

MODERN FLEXIBLE CUSTOMER SERVICE

Recommendation 6.

Price discount incentive for electronic bills and direct debit

The Citizens' Jury would like us to reduce the costs and environmental impact of paper bills and pass on savings to the individual customers adopting e-billing and direct debit.

MODERN FLEXIBLE CUSTOMER SERVICE

Recommendation 8.

- To delete rebates paid for short term disruption of water supply (4 hours)
- Rebates of \$100 to be paid long term disruptions (longer than 12 hours)
- Repeat failures (more than twice in one year) should be compensated
- Continue rebates of \$1,000 for sewage spills

The Citizens' Jury would like to see the following changes to Guaranteed Service Levels (GSLs):

- delete rebates paid for short term disruption of water supply (4 hours)
- rebates of \$100 to be paid long term disruptions (longer than 12 hours)
- repeat failures (more than twice in one year) should be compensated
- continue rebates of \$1,000 for sewage spills
- no rebates for one off supply interruptions but rebates for frequent disruptions (more than twice a year).

We understand that an objective of the Citizens' Jury making recommendations about GSL's was to save money that it would value being spent in other areas.

The Citizens' Jury rationale for deleting rebates for short term disruption of water supply was that 'people can cope for a short period without water and there is no need to compensate with money.'

The Citizens' Jury do not want to see a reduction in service levels because of changes in GSL payments.



YVW accepts the Citizens' Jury recommendation.

Together with the other water utilities in Melbourne, we will continue to trial digital metering and the associated telecommunications technology. These trials are expected to be completed during the 2018-2023 pricing period.

If the technology trials are successful and the bill increase is less than the \$12.50 per annum, we would likely commence roll out in 2021/22 over a three-year period. At the time the digital meter is installed and customers commence receiving the benefit of the digital meter, bills would increase by up to \$12.50 per year (this is only if required, as our goal has been for digital metering to be cost-neutral). This cost will be incorporated into the fixed charges.

YVW accepts the Citizens' Jury recommendation.

We will implement a financial incentive for customers who register for both e-billing and direct debit. Each eligible customer will be provided with a \$2.00 discount per bill.

Customers who are already registered for direct debit will also be provided with the discount.

We accept three of the four Citizens' Jury recommendations for rebates but will retain the rebate for the short-term disruption to water supply (4 hours).

Customer research conducted in June 2016, identified that a service interruption extending beyond 4 hours will result in significant dissatisfaction. In keeping with this insight, we will continue our current business practices and investment to achieve this service level and pay a \$50 rebate to those customers who experience a water supply disruption of greater than 4 hours.

Acknowledging the Citizens' Jury understood that removing this rebate would save approximately \$500K per year, we will not charge customers the estimated cost to retain this rebate.

Through our ongoing Customer Insights program, we will seek customer views associated with service levels and the point at which a rebate should be paid.

We accept the Citizens' Jury recommendation in relation to the other rebates:

- rebates of \$100 to be paid for long term disruptions (longer than 12 hours)

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We make the following commitments:

To meet customer needs, we will:

- complete digital metering trials that will enable the rollout of digital meters to all customers
- introduce the option for customers to receive a \$2 discount on their bill when electing to receive an e-bill and pay by direct debit
- answer phone calls within 2 minutes and respond to all other contacts (e.g. letters) within four days
- focus on resolving issues at the first contact.

We will manage and monitor these measures and indicators that are important to ensure the delivery of the overall customer outcome:

- % of customers who have contacted us say that their issue has been satisfactorily resolved
- % of customers who call to report a fault or emergency will have their phone call answered within 30 seconds
- % of customers who contact us with an account enquiry will have their phone call answered within 2 minutes
- % of customer say they are satisfied with Yarra Valley Water overall
- % of customers say that the services they receive from Yarra Valley Water represent value for money
- % of customers say that they have confidence that Yarra Valley Water will meet their needs now and in the future.

We will undertake these actions, activities and programs to deliver the customer outcome:

We will:

- have a customer centred approach to our customer contacts and enquiries, including:
 - maintaining a local customer contact centre as the primary avenue for customers supported by various online and social mechanisms

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OUTCOME

THE CITIZENS' JURY SAID....

WHAT WE'VE UNDERSTOOD



MODERN FLEXIBLE SERVICE

MODERN FLEXIBLE CUSTOMER SERVICE (CONT...)

Recommendation 8.

Continued...

MODERN FLEXIBLE CUSTOMER SERVICE

Recommendation 10.

Increase education and awareness

The Citizens' Jury supports increased education and raising awareness across all topics as a means of supporting their objectives and broadly YVW's plans and strategies for the future.

Areas for increased education and awareness includes bill payment options, water saving techniques and strategies, support for vulnerable customers and plans and strategies for the future.



MODERN FLEXIBLE SERVICE

- \$100 to be introduced for disruptions longer than 12 hours
- a \$50 rebate will be paid to repeat water complaints (more than twice in one year)
- a \$50 rebate will be paid to repeat unplanned water supply interruptions (more than twice in one year)
- a \$50 rebate will be paid to repeat sewerage services failures (more than twice in one year)
- continue rebates of \$1,000 for sewage spills.

Consistent with the Citizens' Jury recommendation with regards to sewerage spills, customers who experience multiple sewage spills inside their house or on their property will receive rebates. We propose to double the rebate with each occurrence.

In addition, customers who experience water flow below our minimum obligation will have their Service Charge waived until the flow meets this requirement.

We will not change our business practices negatively or decrease our expenditure on service levels because of the changes to Guaranteed Service Level rebates.

YVW accepts the Citizens' Jury recommendation.

In addition to the proposed increase in communication and education regarding vulnerability and hardship (Recommendation 4), we will increase our expenditure by \$1 million (doubling our current investment) to enable targeted communication and education appropriate to the audience., e.g. high water users – sensible water use information.

Potential strategies include:

- increased activity in the community (increase existing emphasis), participation in community events, school education programs, etc
- targeted communication programs to address different customer's needs
- maximise digital channels and engagement.

- providing a reliable meter and based on an accurate read and correct customer and property information, and provide customers a bill consistent with their preferences
- developing customer relationships & communications, including for developers, builders, plumbers and trade waste customers
- a range of bill payment options and channels that allow customers to manage their payments in a way that suits them
- fair and equitable debt management and collection approaches that ensure customers that are unable to pay are identified and supported
- ensure that customers who want to have a self-serve relationship are supported by accessible and clear communications and channels
- engage with customers, including those segments that have traditionally been hard to reach, to gather insights and reflection of their needs and experiences to continually improve our services
- evolve design of tariffs and prices considering the potential impacts on all customer segments
- provide rebates to customers where minimum service levels have not been delivered.

OUTCOME

THE CITIZENS' JURY SAID....

WHAT WE'VE UNDERSTOOD



WATER AVAILABILITY & CONSERVATION

WATER AVAILABILITY AND CONSERVATION

Recommendation 2.

Preventative maintenance to reduce network water loss

The Citizens' Jury wants YVW to take a proactive approach before being forced into reactive, high cost resolutions to:

- reduce network water loss
- minimise inconvenience caused by interruptions to water and sewerage services
- charging customers fairly (by reducing the cost of water loss)
- reducing the number of Guaranteed Service Levels payments.

We have understood that the Citizens' Jury want us to prevent water wastage even where the direct cost of doing so causes a minor bill increase.

WATER AVAILABILITY AND CONSERVATION

Recommendation 3.

Access to two sources of water of different qualities;

- High quality water used for drinking
- Lower quality water used for toilet flushing, washing clothes, gardening, etc.

YVW understand that the Citizens' Jury's objective is to reduce the consumption of potable water. We understand that the Citizens' Jury supports the ongoing provision of alternative water sources to greenfield areas and other areas of urban redevelopment as appropriate.

The Citizens' Jury would like us to provide water of different qualities for different uses:

- high quality drinking water used for drinking
- lower quality water used for toilet flushing, washing clothes, gardening, etc.

The Citizens' Jury would like us to look at how to get recycled water to the existing houses.



WATER AVAILABILITY & CONSERVATION

YVW accepts the Citizens' Jury recommendation to reduce network loss with some minor variation in how we charge customers.

During 2016/17, 14 billion litres of non-revenue water was lost. To reduce this to 11.5 billion litres per year (2.5 billion litres less) by 2022-2023, we will focus on reducing the size of our metered zones to an average of 3,000 connections, or less than 30km of water main length. Reducing the meter zone allows for more rapid leak detection as the zone is smaller. Any change in water flow is more discernible and we can respond and address issues more quickly.

Taking a more proactive and focused monitoring approach will allow improved management of our water supply network, reducing leakage and identifying problems before they become costlier reactive repairs that impact on our customers.

To reduce network water loss, we will invest \$27 million to identify and save an additional 2.5 billion litres of water.

Consistent with the ESC guidance not to charge customers where there is significant uncertainty about the outcome, we propose only to charge customers whichever is least: the cost of the investment or the value of the water savings that we achieve.

YVW accepts the Citizens' Jury recommendation.

Our Urban Water Strategy evaluates all forms of water supply and demand options for the next 50 years and is reviewed every five years. Through that strategy we will continue to assess the most efficient and effective options for securing water for Melbourne.

Storm water recycling and recycled water will be implemented where it is identified as a key part of the local servicing solution.

We will:

- provide recycled water for over 100,000 properties by 2040 in Melbourne's northern growth area. When development is complete, six billion litres of recycled water will be supplied to customers each year
- pursue the provision of recycled water for more than 5,000 properties in the Doncaster Hill precinct, including the nearby Tullamore development (formerly the Eastern Golf Course) and will save about 2.5 million litres of water each week. Approximately 25% reduction in drinking water will be saved for the area
- pilot advanced processes to recycle storm water to drinking water standard at Kalkallo.

We make the following commitments:

To conserve water for the future we will:


- prioritise our response to water interruptions to reduce water loss
- invest in leakage programs to save 2.5 gigalitres of water that would otherwise be lost through leakage in our pipes by 2023
- provide \$1 million per annum additional water conservation advice, information and programs for customers and the community that shape the way water is valued and used by future generations
- provide recycled water to homes and businesses.

We will not impose water restrictions except in the instance where unforeseeable circumstances require us to ensure the supply of water.

We will manage and monitor these measures and indicators that are important to ensure the delivery of the overall customer outcome:

- per capita household drinking water usage (KL)
- per capita household recycled water usage (KL)
- % of recycled water from our sewage treatment plants
- % of unaccounted water
- infrastructure leakage index.

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OUTCOME	THE CITIZENS' JURY SAID....	WHAT WE'VE UNDERSTOOD
 WATER AVAILABILITY & CONSERVATION		
WATER AVAILABILITY AND CONSERVATION	<p>Recommendation 3.</p> <p>Continued...</p>	
WATER AVAILABILITY AND CONSERVATION	<p>Recommendation 7.</p> <p>Reduce average water use per person by rewarding people for wise water use.</p>	<p>YVW understand that the Citizens' Jury's objective is for customers to use water sensibly and protect future water supplies. The Citizens' Jury have made the following suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increase education and awareness which can be achieved partly through Recommendation 10 • more availability and distribution of recycled water • encourage more water tanks to reduce use of supplied, metered water (potable water). i.e. cost saving opportunity for using your own water • more technology to help achieve this aim (i.e. digital meters) • encourage water saving measures by retaining the existing 3-step water use tariff structure and increasing the difference in the price of the step tariffs to encourage greater adoption of wise water use • price signals could be used to do this with covenants for impact on large families • more support for those unable to reduce their usage due to circumstances (i.e. vulnerability programs – Recommendation 4).



WATER AVAILABILITY & CONSERVATION

- complete alternative water supply assessments for all new infill development like Latrobe and Monash National Employment clusters that are identified during the period
- engage with Melbourne Water, other key stakeholders and the community to explore the feasibility of stormwater harvesting to protect waterways in the Northern Growth Corridor and supplement the drinking water system
- conduct a feasibility study for retrofitting recycled water to existing properties surrounding Doncaster and Brushy Creek recycled water schemes and conduct a customer willingness to pay study with those customers to assess the potential for recycled water implementation
- monitor trends and development for use of alternative water sources around the world.

YVW accepts the Citizens' Jury recommendation.

We support the intent of this recommendation and will explore with our customers what might be a meaningful reward to assist meeting the Citizen's Jury desired objective of reducing average water use per person.

Our Urban Water Strategy evaluates all forms of water supply and demand options for the next 50 years and is reviewed every five years. We are currently on a water usage trajectory of 127 litres per person per day by 2066. In the long term, using water wisely will avoid or delay the need for new supplies. Through the strategy, we will continue to assess the most efficient and effective options for securing water for Melbourne.

All new homes, home renovations, alterations and additions need to comply with the 6 Star Standard in the National Construction Code. The 6 Star Standard applies to the thermal performance of a home, renovation or addition and includes the requirement to install either a solar hot water system or a rainwater tank for toilet flushing. As this is now a standard requirement for new homes and renovations, we believe that providing a rebate for the installation of rain water tanks would be an unnecessary incentive.

We will:

- increase education and communication to help customers to reduce their water use (consistent with Recommendation 10)
- install digital meters for all customers once technology trials are complete and at a cost for customers of no greater than \$12.50 per year to help customers to reduce their water use (Recommendation 5)
- reduce the water supply system fixed charge by \$100 and maintain the variable prices. (This initiative will strengthen the incentive for all customers to save water)
- retain step tariffs reward those customers who use less water and encourage large water users to reduce their water usage. Due to our proposed changes the variable component of the water bill is expected to change from 35% to 38% next year
- work with larger households (WaterCare programs - Recommendation 4) to reduce the impact of the higher cost of Step 3 tariffs
- undertake research to explore with our customers what might be a meaningful reward to reduce their water use.

We will undertake these actions, activities and programs to deliver the customer outcome:

- Provide targeted water conservation resources, education & programs for customers and the community
- Undertake a proactive program that identifies and resolves undetected leakage issues in our network
- Provide recycled water services to new customers in areas in line with our commitment and pursue the provision of recycled and alternative water services/ options where there is strong customer support
- Working with stakeholders and partners the optimise water resource management at a community level
- Undertake various demand and bulk water management activities including:
 - short to medium term demand management at a local and community level
 - short to medium term supply management, including management of water entitlements and annual desalination order process
 - long term water resource planning together with other water utilities in Melbourne

OUTCOME

THE CITIZENS' JURY SAID....

WHAT WE'VE UNDERSTOOD



WATER AVAILABILITY & CONSERVATION

WATER AVAILABILITY AND CONSERVATION

Recommendation 9.

Investigate and pursue community based solutions for localised needs

The Citizens' Jury would like us to continue to support community place based decision making and engagement associated with providing our services relating to:

- ensuring waterways are protected
- providing modern wastewater systems (community sewerage)
- using water sensibly and ensuring sufficient water supplies for the future.



WATER AVAILABILITY & CONSERVATION

YVW accepts the Citizens' Jury's recommendation.

We will:

- engage with communities to develop solution for their local needs. Stormwater recycling and recycled water will be implemented where it is identified as a key part of the local servicing solution
- engage with Melbourne Water, other key stakeholders and the community to explore the feasibility of stormwater harvesting to protect waterways in the Northern Growth Corridor and supplement the drinking water system
- utilise an integrated planning approach to ensure that we are implementing the most efficient and effective system in consultation with local communities, council and other stakeholders
- participate in regional forums as an aspect of the Integrated Water Management (IWM) Framework for Victoria. The Framework aims to achieve greater collaboration across organisations and disciplines that influence the water cycle in Victorian cities and towns
- collaborate with the water industry and local councils to confirm the priority opens spaces within our service area. We will complete a review of opportunities to develop local water supply solutions for these priority spaces
- enable community led planning for the delivery of the community sewerage program in Monbulk, Briar Hill, The Patch, Kallista, Sherbrooke, Sassafras East, Olinda, Park Orchards, Emerald (South), Clematis and Warburton
- seek community participation in the development of the integrated water and sewerage servicing solution developed for the La Trobe and Monash National Employment clusters
- deliver the Target 155 program, schools education and water efficiency programs
- undertake water efficiency research to understand future technology trends.

For an idea to become a recommendation it required an 80% consensus rate. Minority Reports were ideas that were supported by a small number of jurors that did not meet the 80% criterion.

THE CITIZENS' JURY SAID...

Minority Report 1.

Invest in the health of waterways funded by a \$2 increase per bill

Minority Report 2.

To reduce the 50-60% fixed component of the bill for water and sewerage

Minority Report 3.

More equitable prices between business and residences

WHAT WE'VE UNDERSTOOD

The Citizens' Jury would like to see us invest an additional \$1.4 million each year to improve the health of local waterways and the Jury would like us to report annually on the outcomes achieved.

The Citizens' Jury would like to provide customers with a greater capacity to impact on their bills through their usage.

The Citizens' Jury would like us to reduce the gap between business and residential charges. The Jury would like the costs to increase for businesses without them paying the same rate as residential customers.

WHAT YARRA VALLEY WATER WILL DO

The Jury did not reach 80% support for this recommendation, as such we will not allocate resources to implement additional activities during the 2018-2023 price period. Waterway health is more aligned with Melbourne Water's responsibilities, and we will discuss waterway health outcomes with them for consideration in their next Price Submission.

We will continue to seek customer views on the Citizens' Jury Minority Reports through our Customer Insights program for consideration for the 2024-2029 price period.

We will work with Melbourne Water, other key stakeholders and the community to explore the feasibility of stormwater harvesting to protect waterways in the Northern Growth Corridor and supplement the drinking water system. (Refer to Recommendation 9).

The Jury did not reach 80% support for this recommendation, as such we will not implement this during the 2018-2023 price period.

It should be noted that we still need to maintain the same amount of infrastructure regardless of how much water is used, and sewage is discharged. That is the reason for the proportionately higher fixed to variable charges.

We will continue to seek customer views on the Citizens' Jury Minority Reports through our Customer Insights program for consideration for the 2024-2029 price period.

As previously mentioned we have proposed changes to the fixed and variable components of the water bill. The fixed component of the water bill is expected to change from 65% to 62% next year. This change will send a stronger water conservation signal to our customers. (Refer to Recommendation 7).

The Jury did not reach 80% support for this recommendation, as such we will not implement this during the 2018-2023 price period. Increasing the price to business customers, may result in unintended impacts to business, employment and the economy.

We will continue to seek customer views on the Citizens' Jury Minority Reports through our Customer Insights program for consideration for the 2024-2029 price period.

