

Wannon Water – Outcomes – 2023-2028

In this document, the water business provides a summary report of its actual performance against each of its outcome commitments for the 2023-2024 reporting year. The business has given itself a “traffic light” rating (green = met target, red = not met, yellow = close or largely met) for its performance on each measure, outcome and an overall rating. The business has provided its own comments about its performance on each outcome and overall.

Summary table

Outcome	23-24	24-25	25-26	26-27	27-28	Overall for the period to date
1. Ongoing reliability of water and sewerage services	Green					Green
2. Ongoing protection of the environment through action and education, prioritising Country and our communities	Green					Green
3. Fair and reasonable bills for all	Yellow					Yellow
4. Improved water quality in identified communities	Yellow					Yellow
5. Improved customer experience of our products and services	Red					Red
6. Active partnerships for healthy and resilient communities	Green					Green

Overall, for reporting year

Business comments

This is the first year reporting against our Price Submission 2023-28 customer outcomes. Our progress has been satisfactory in 2023/24 as outlined in the following pages.

Of our six outcome commitments, we classify one as red, two as orange and three as green by traffic light status (red, amber, green). Of our 23 individual indicators, 13 were green, four amber and six red. We have assigned 'orange' status for overall performance on balance.

As always, there are opportunities for improvement and our Price Submission 2023-28 prioritises initiatives that, when delivered, should address areas of customer concern.

Our customer and community engagement program continues, and as reflected in our engagement approach, customer insights drive what is important for us to deliver.

Outcome 1: Ongoing reliability of water and sewerage services

Output	Unit		22-23	23-24	24-25	25-26	26-27	27-28
a Customers surveyed who agree they can rely on their sewerage service from Wannon Water (average score from 1-10, via the annual customer value survey)	Average score of survey responses	Target		8.6	8.6	8.6	8.6	8.6
		Actual	8.8	8.8				
b Average satisfaction score of customers surveyed with water supply reliability (average score from 1-10, via the annual customer value survey)	Average score of survey responses	Target		9	9	9	9	9
		Actual	8.9	9.0				
c Number of customers who experienced two or more unplanned interruptions to their water service	Number	Target		≤86	≤416*	≤416	≤416	≤416
		Actual	624	651				
d Number of sewer spills to customer properties	Number	Target		≤35	≤35	≤35	≤35	≤35
		Actual	35	31				
e Number of unplanned water interruptions	Number	Target		≤119	≤119	≤119	≤119	≤119
		Actual	166	171				
f Number of residential sewer supply interruptions	Number	Target		≤79	≤79	≤79	≤79	≤79
		Actual	66	61				

How is WNW tracking for outcome 1 in the regulatory period so far?



Business comment

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Customer responses to our 2024 Customer Value Survey highlighted that reliable water and sewerage services was the most important customer outcome for our residents.

Customers continue to be 'very satisfied' with the reliability of our water supply and sewerage services, with 74 per cent 'very satisfied' with the reliability of the water supply and 70 per cent 'very satisfied' with the reliability of the sewerage services.

We know sewer spills are not pleasant for our customers or employees. The improved spill and interruption results reflect the importance we place on maintaining our sewer network assets.

Unplanned water interruptions increased during the year. The dry weather in our region impacted ground conditions and made underground pipes more volatile to breakage. This was particularly evident in the Hamilton and Camperdown areas. Notably, 95 per cent of the 171 interruptions were restored within five hours.

* Note: Our 'equal to or less than 86' target for the number of customers experiencing two or more unplanned water interruptions is an error. We have four years of reliable data for this indicator which shows the four-year average is 416 (the three-year average is 520). Future year targets are amended to reflect the lower four-year average.

Outcome 2: Ongoing protection of the environment through action and education, prioritising Country and our communities

Output	Unit		22-23	23-24	24-25	25-26	26-27	27-28
a Number of non-compliance events with our EPA Amalgamated Licence	Number	Target		≤5	≤5	≤5	≤5	≤5
		Actual	0	6				
b Annual greenhouse gas emissions created directly from our operations (scope one)	Tonnes CO2-e	Target		19,954	14,417	6,980	6,980	6,980
		Actual	22,950	19,954				
c Install disinfection system as the first step of the Warrnambool Sewage Treatment Plant upgrade by 31 December 2025	Project status	Target		On track	On track	Complete	N/A	N/A
		Actual	N/A	On track				
d Complete an evaluation study report which identifies alternative wastewater disposal methodologies for further upgrades of the Warrnambool Sewage Treatment Plant by 30 June 2025	Project status	Target		On track	On track	Complete	N/A	N/A
		Actual	N/A	On track				

How is WNW tracking for outcome 2 in the regulatory period so far?



Business comment

We are licensed to discharge treated water from our winter storages into waterways at many of our treatment sites. The six non-compliance events with our EPA Amalgamated Licence related to discharges from our Hamilton and Heywood winter storages and the Warrnambool Sewage Treatment

Plant (STP). The minor exceedances at Hamilton and Heywood were caused because we needed to discharge during early winter when water quality is poorer than at later times of the year. Exceedances at the Warrnambool STP were caused by persistent challenges stemming from high and fluctuating waste loads. Based on subsequent waterway monitoring and the flow of the receiving waterways at the time, we are confident there were no adverse impacts on human health, beneficial uses, or the health of the waterways. We are taking several steps to enhance wastewater effluent quality management from these sites.


For the 2023/24 reporting year, we achieved our annual emissions target of 19,954 tCO₂e. This target aligns with our plans towards achieving our pledge target of a 40 per cent reduction in emissions by June 2025. Our annual emissions before offsets were 25,935 tCO₂e. This was high because we experienced the lowest rainfall on record in our catchment area over the past 12 months. Due to this extremely dry season, the electricity used for water pumping reached unprecedented levels and increased our electricity emissions. To meet our target, we surrendered 5,981 offsets from our inventory of Large-scale Generation Certificates.

Equipment for the disinfection system at the Warrnambool Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) was purchased during the year. Aligned with the STP upgrade project, the construction and installation of the equipment for two of its six tanks began during the year and is due to be completed in 2024/25. Construction and installation for the remaining four tanks is due to start in 2025/26 after the STP upgrade is completed.

The Warrnambool STP Effluent Management Strategy Project Reference Group continued to work towards identifying alternative wastewater disposal methodologies for further upgrades of the Warrnambool STP. An evaluation study report is expected to be completed in 2025.

Outcome 3: Fair and reasonable bills for all

Output	Unit		22-23	23-24	24-25	25-26	26-27	27-28
a Customer satisfaction with services in terms of value for money (average score from 1-10, via the annual customer value survey)	Average score of survey responses	Target		7	7	7	7.1	7.2
		Actual	6.8	6.5				
b Percentage of customers surveyed who are aware of financial/customer support program (answering 'yes' via the annual customer value survey)	Percentage of survey responses	Target		40%	45%	50%	55%	60%
		Actual	39%	47%				
c Percentage of a residential customer's bill that is variable (Group A, owner, average kL water use)	Percentage	Target		19.00%	19.20%	19.40%	19.60%	19.90%
		Actual	16.52%	17.72%				

How is WNW tracking for outcome 3 in the regulatory period so far? 

Business comment

Our 2024 Customer Value Survey showed that value for money remained our customer's primary driver of overall satisfaction. Customers' experiences of our products and services have not shifted significantly over the past 12 months. Despite an overall decrease in customer satisfaction with services in terms of value for money, around two thirds are 'very satisfied' with the manner of the person they spoke with, and the understanding of what they told them. The proportion of those 'very satisfied' with response time lifted to 64 per cent, returning to pre-2023 levels. We will continue to focus on the activities in our Price Submission with the aim of improving customer satisfaction in terms of value for money.

Due to our promotion activities, nearly one in two (47 per cent) of customers surveyed are aware of our financial hardship support measures. This is a significant uplift from 39 per cent the prior year.

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The variable component of a customer's bill increased by 1.2 per cent during the year. However the outcome is lower than the target due to the prior year outcome being considerably lower than forecast. Achieving a 19 per cent outcome by 2027/28 is a stretch. Driving the improved percentage this year was higher than forecast water use and an increased variable water tariff. This was offset by an unusually high consumer price index which increased fixed charges from 1 July 2023 more than anticipated. With similar water use in the coming year, we expected the percentage to increase by a further 0.25 per cent.

Outcome 4: Improved water quality in identified communities

Output	Unit		22-23	23-24	24-25	25-26	26-27	27-28
a Surveyed customers' satisfaction with their water quality (average score from 1-10, via the annual customer value survey)	Average score of survey responses	Target		7.3	7.3	7.5	7.7	8
		Actual	7.2	7.2				
b Surveyed customers' satisfaction with their water quality in terms of taste (average score from 1-10, via the annual customer value survey)	Average score of survey responses	Target		6.6	6.6	7	7.2	7.2
		Actual	6.6	6.6				
c Percentage of surveyed customers in Area 1 (Portland, Heywood, Port Fairy) who drink the water we supply (answering 'yes' via the annual customer value survey)	Percentage of survey responses	Target		47%	47%	55%	62%	69%
		Actual	43%	43%				
d Surveyed customers from Area 1 (Portland, Heywood, Port Fairy) who are satisfied with water quality in terms of taste (average score from 1-10, via the annual customer value survey)	Average score of survey responses	Target		3.7	3.7	4.5	5.2	5.9
		Actual	3.9	3.7				
e Install additional water treatment to improve taste of water in at least one of Portland, Heywood or Port Fairy communities by 2026	Project status	Target		On track	On track	Complete	N/A	N/A
		Actual	N/A	On track				

How is WNW tracking for outcome 4 in the regulatory period so far?



Business comment

Customer responses to our 2024 Customer Value Survey highlighted that satisfaction with water quality remained steady in 2024. Like previous years, customers in Area 1 (Port Fairy, Portland and Heywood) remained the least satisfied when it came to their water quality in terms of taste. Port Fairy, Portland and Heywood are all supplied with deep groundwater which is high in naturally occurring mineral salts. While the water is safe to drink and the supply is very reliable, many people find the taste is less palatable and this leads to reduced consumption.

We're excited to be on the way to improving water quality in Port Fairy, Portland and Heywood. The \$52 million Quality Water for Wannon Program is jointly funded by the Australian Government, through its National Water Grid Fund, and Wannon Water. We will deliver the project on behalf of our customers and the Victorian Government. During the year, a funding agreement was executed, the project team resourced, engagement with community and interested stakeholders continued, and early infrastructure design work commenced. The funding allows us to deliver water treatment to all Port Fairy, Portland and Heywood communities by 2029- an outcome that is beyond our original commitment to install water treatment in one community by 2026.

Outcome 5: Improved customer experience of our products and services

Output	Unit		22-23	23-24	24-25	25-26	26-27	27-28
a Customers who experience water service interruptions that are satisfied with Wannon Water's management of the interruption (answering 5+ out of 10 in the annual customer survey)	Percentage of survey responses	Target		94.0%	95.0%	96.0%	97.0%	98.0%
		Actual	89%	83%				
b Customers who experienced sewer spills on or within their property, that are satisfied with Wannon Water's management of the spill (answering 3+ out of 5 on a follow-up call)	Percentage of check in responses	Target		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		Actual	94%	88%				
c Net Promoter Score	Number	Target		+16	+18	+20	+22	+24
		Actual	+13	+11				

How is WNW tracking for outcome 5 in the regulatory period so far?



Business comment

Customer responses to our 2024 Customer Value Survey showed there was a directional increase in those ‘very satisfied’ with the management of water service interruptions, increasing to 51 per cent from 44 per cent. However, customers ‘dissatisfied’ increased from 10 per cent to 14 per cent. Customers’ experiences of our products and services have not shifted significantly over the past 12 months. Around two thirds are ‘very satisfied’ with the manner of the person they spoke with, and the understanding of what they told them. The proportion of those ‘very satisfied’ with response time rose to 64 per cent, returning to pre-2023 levels.

Seventeen customers who experienced a sewer spill responded to a follow-up call, with two customers dissatisfied with the management of the spill. Clean up and communication were the common factors in both circumstances. The average satisfaction rating was 4.4 out of 5, indicating an overall high level of satisfaction with our management of sewer spills.

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Our Net Promoter Score (NPS) was fairly stable in 2024, compared to the past two years, with no major shifts in the proportion of promoters, passives and detractors. Our NPS was significantly stronger among females, while those aged 35-39 and customers in Areas 1 and 5 were significantly less likely to speak favourably about us to others.

Outcome 6: Active partnerships for healthy and resilient communities

Output	Unit		22-23	23-24	24-25	25-26	26-27	27-28
a Regional stakeholders surveyed who are satisfied with Wannon Water's performance partnering on areas of regional priority (answering 4+ out of 5 in the regional stakeholder survey)	Percentage of survey responses	Target		80%	80%	80%	80%	80%
		Actual	80%	80%				
b Customers who are satisfied with Wannon Water's performance partnering with communities to help its region flourish (answering 5+ out of 10 in the annual customer survey)	Percentage of survey responses	Target		55%	55%	55%	55%	55%
		Actual	56%	56%				

How is WNW tracking for outcome 6 in the regulatory period so far?



Business comment

Regional stakeholder and customer satisfaction with our community partnerships outcomes remained steady.

Our annual *Ripple Effect* Program is one example of our partnering to help communities flourish. Twenty-one organisations and schools across South West Victoria received a share of our \$44,000 *Ripple Effect* community grant funding during the year. These initiatives address areas of priority; health and wellbeing, education, the environment, and regional prosperity. Combined, they represent a total community investment of \$370,000 and will leave a lasting impact on our community.

Our *Ripple Effect* program also provides water for events. During 2024 we launched our Thirst Aid Station, a 1,000-litre trailer available for loan to provide free water refills at major local events. With our portable free-standing drinking water points and 19-litre water coolers, the Thirst Aid Station is part of our Water for Events program which delivers substantial cost and environmental savings for both event organisers and attendees.