

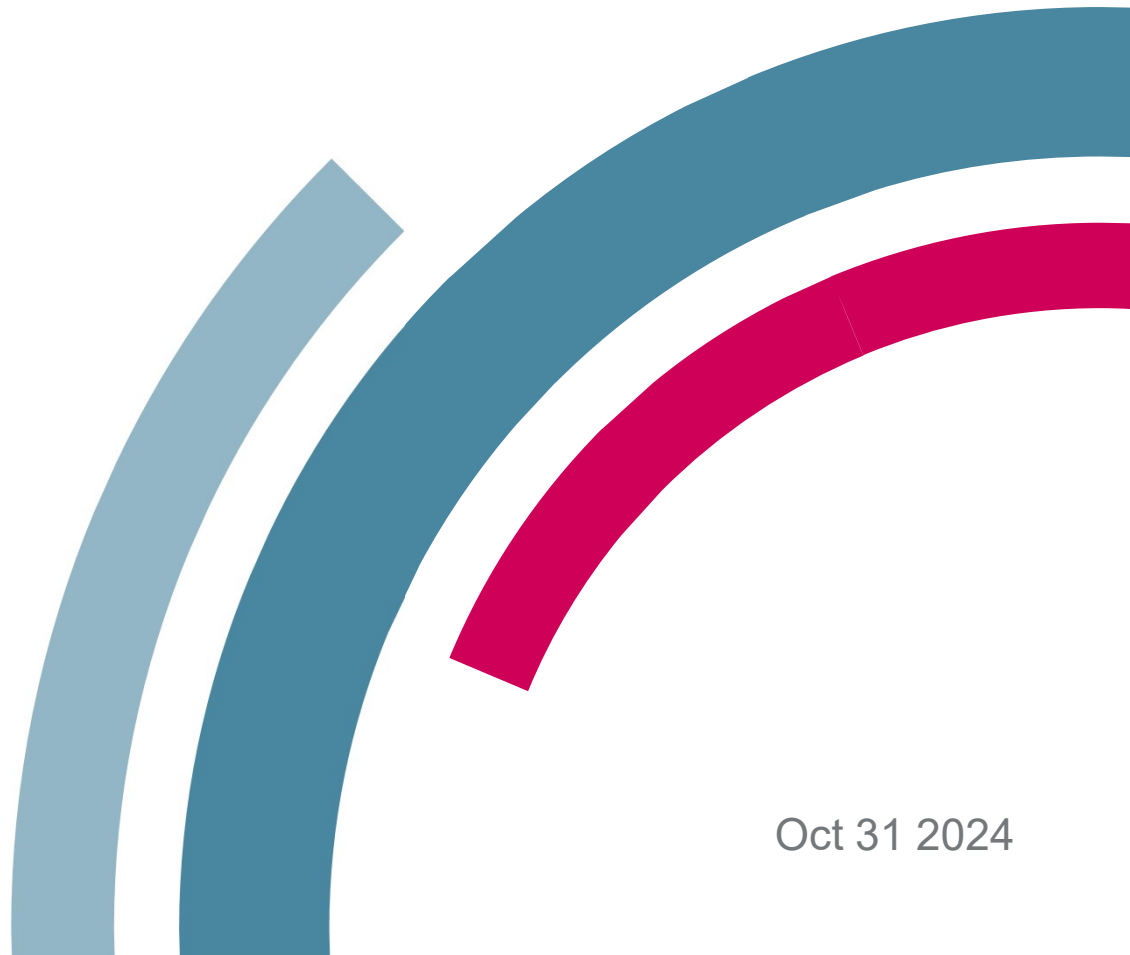


Effective and inclusive engagement with customers experiencing vulnerability

Welcome! We will start shortly.

Please note your cameras and mics are turned off and will be turned back on during the Q&A section.

Oct 31 2024





Marcus Crudden

Acting CEO & Executive
Director Price Monitoring and
Regulation Division



Acknowledgement of Country



*Dill-ba-din Balluk Biik –
Protect Community and
Country
by Simone Thompson.
Reproduced with
permission.*

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the lands and waterways on which we work and live.

We acknowledge all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and pay our respects to Elders past and present.

As the First Peoples of this land, belonging to the world's oldest living cultures, we recognise and value their knowledge, and ongoing role in shaping and enriching the story of Victoria.

Agenda



Welcome



Coliban Water, South Gippsland Water and GWM Water.



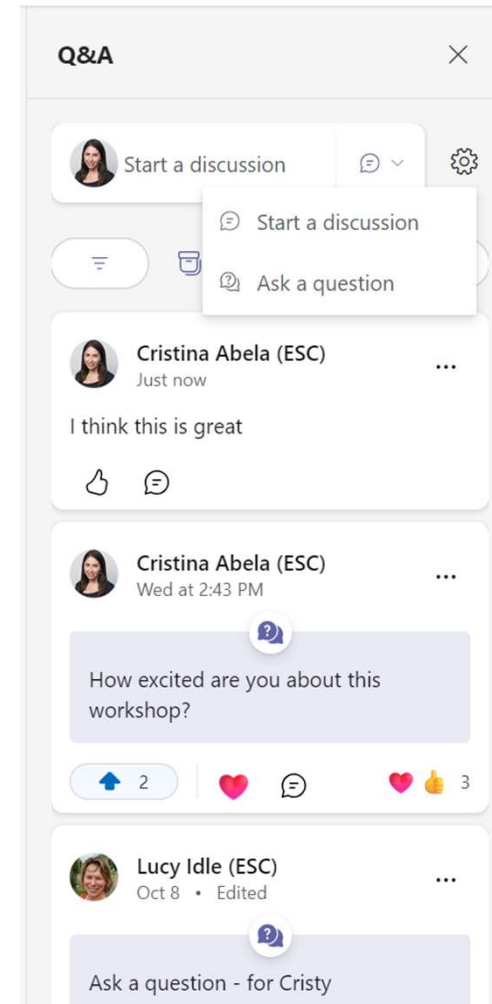
Q&A Panel



Closing remarks & survey

Housekeeping

- We will hear from presenters first and will respond to questions as part of the Q&A panel.
- Please note your cameras and mics are turned off and will be turned back on during the Q&A panel.
- Please use the Teams Q&A function to add questions or comments, you can up vote or react to questions.
- Event will be recorded and shared once its uplaoded on our website.





Welcome

Amy Rouse

Coliban Water



Effective & Inclusive Engagement

With customers experiencing
vulnerability

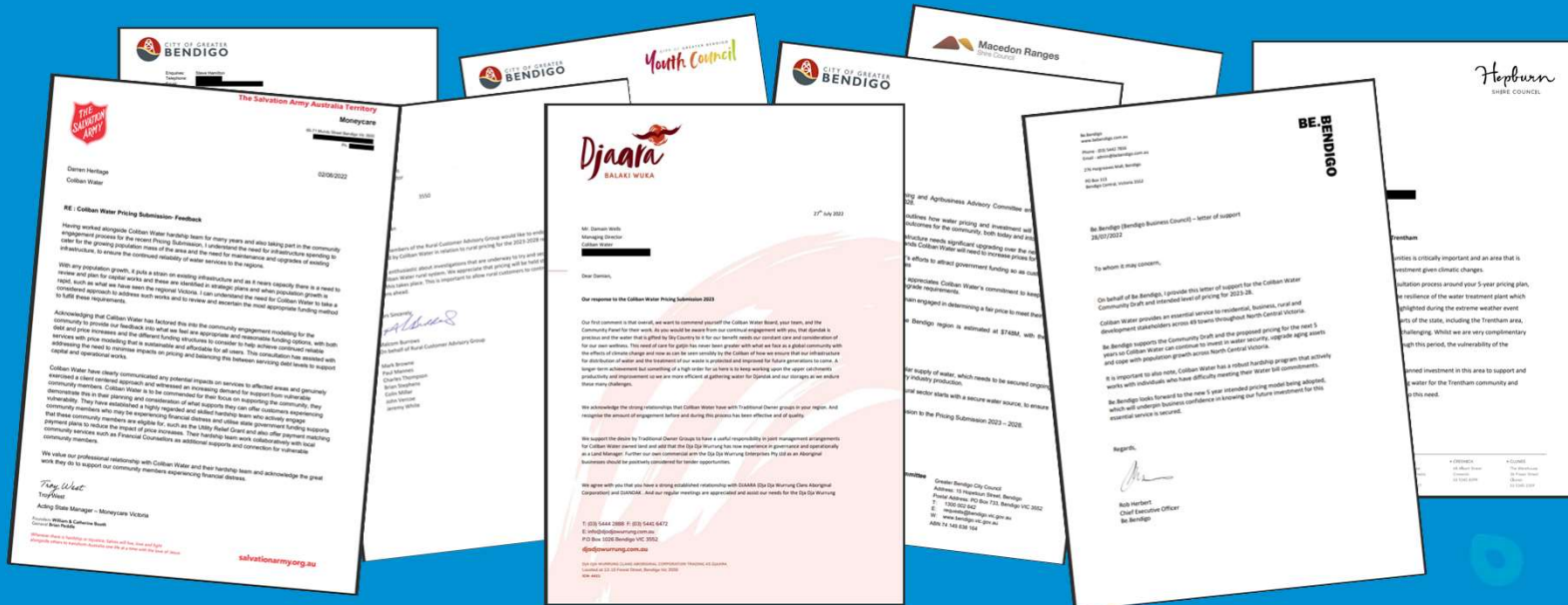
The Coliban Water region



How does Coliban Water prepare for tomorrow while being fair to customers today?

A decorative pattern of light blue water droplets is scattered across the bottom right portion of the blue background.

‘Our 32 member group was carefully selected to represent the broadest possible cross section of our customers.’



Customer Participation.

How many customers are participating in the Coliban Assist Program?

Coliban Assist Program

	1 Jul 2023 to 22 Oct 2023	1 Jul 2024 to 22 Oct 2024
Number of contracts in Coliban Assist Program:	193	246
Total value of contracts in Coliban Assist Program:	\$126,845.95	\$106,849.95
Average debt per contract:	\$657.23	\$434.35

- **Number of participants increased by 53**
- **Total value of debt on contracts in the Coliban Assist Program decreased by \$19k**
- **Average debt per contract reduced by \$222.88**

This data tells us our program is working

Temporary Hardship

	1 Jul 2023 to 22 Oct 2023	1 Jul 2024 to 22 Oct 2024
Number of contracts in Temporary Hardship:	359	322
Total value of contracts in Temporary Hardship Program:	\$455,833.73	\$439,688.02
Average debt per contract:	\$1,269.73	\$1,365.49

- **Number of participants decreased by 37**
- **Total value of debt on contracts in Temporary Hardship decreased by \$16k**
- **Average debt per contract increased by \$95.76**

This data highlights an opportunity to better understand the needs of customers in Temporary Hardship

Utility Relief Grant Approvals

	1 Jul 2023 to 16 Oct 2023	1 Jul 2024 to 16 Oct 2024	Increase
Number of approved Utility Relief Grant applications:	361	417	56
Total value of approved Utility Relief Grants:	\$122,793.76	\$154,669.74	\$31,875.98

- **Number of customers that received a Utility Relief Grant increased by 56**
- **Total value of approved grants increased by \$31,875.98**

Staying Engaged.

How are we keeping our engagement and support offerings relevant and on-point?





Welcome

Liz Rowland

South Gippsland Water





START SAFE 
WORK SAFE 
HOME SAFE 

Engaging with Vulnerable & 'At Risk' Customers

An overview of program delivered
for 2023 Price Submission

Oct 2024 | ESC Forum





Acknowledgement of Country

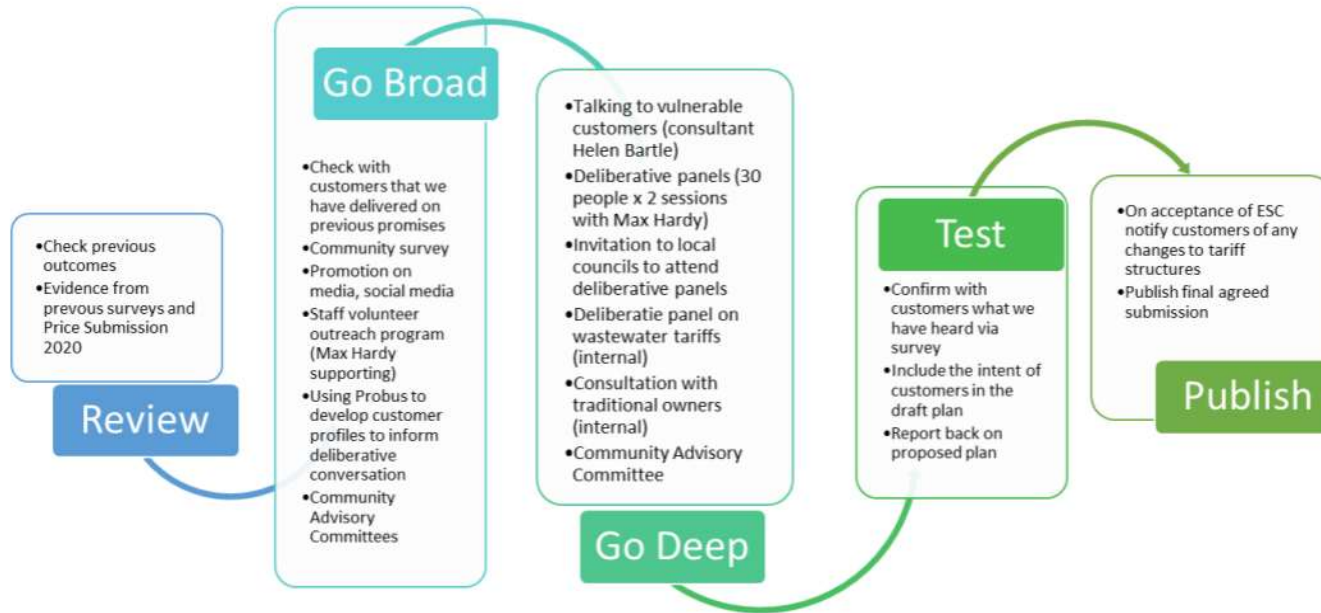
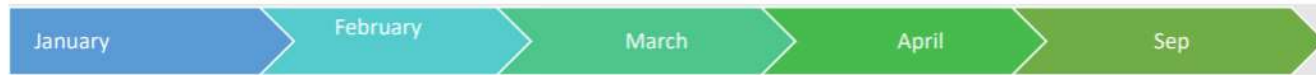
South Gippsland Water proudly acknowledges Aboriginal people as Australia's first peoples and the local Traditional Owners, Gunaikurnai and Bunurong, as the original custodians of the land and water on which we rely.

We pay our deepest respects to their Elders, past and present. We acknowledge the continued cultural, social, and spiritual connections that Aboriginal people have with the lands and waters and recognise and value that the Traditional Owner groups have cared for and protected them for thousands of generations.

In the spirit of reconciliation, we remain committed to working in partnership with Gunaikurnai and Bunurong to ensure their ongoing contribution to the future of the water management landscape while maintaining their cultural and spiritual connections.

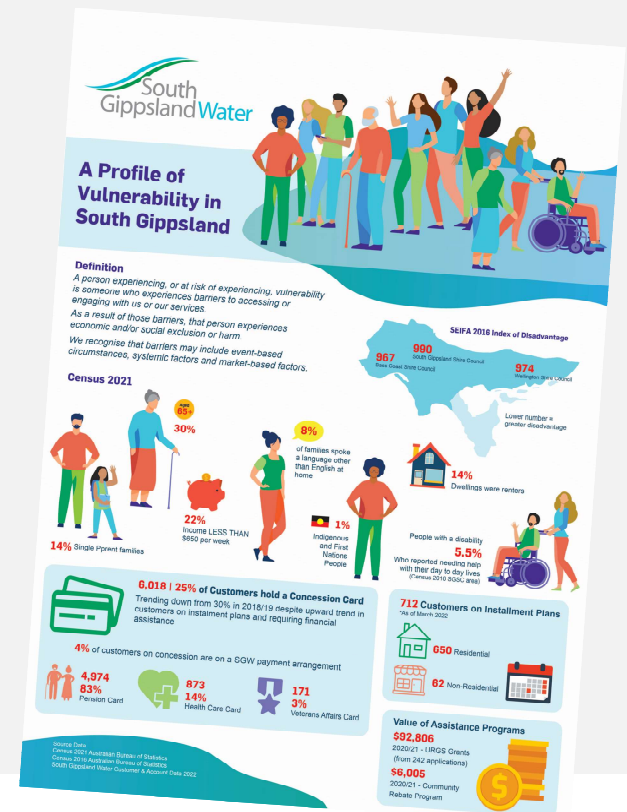
This artwork is proudly featured on our Yarram Water Tower. It was designed by Gunaikurnai Elder Sandra Patten. It is a visual expression of 'Sitting On Country' where she feels at home and connected.

PS2023 Engagement Strategy



Updated our View of Vulnerability

- Reviewed our vulnerability definition and updated this in line with ESC Getting To Fair: Decision Paper
- Refined our language and reviewed our 2019 approach
- Utilised the Census 2021 data to update customer profiles and vulnerability artifacts created in 2019 (using 2016 Census data)





Vulnerable & At Risk Customers

To access traditionally 'hard to reach' customer cohorts, to test:

- Effectiveness of our existing Customer Support Program
- Possible impacts of our Price Submission proposals on those who may be vulnerable or at risk
- To identify and test (then re-test/refine) our proposed support offerings
- Engage at the 'Involve' level on the IAP2 spectrum by refining programs over 2 phases of engagement.



Invitations to Engage

Customers were identified against SGW's vulnerability/'at risk' definition including:

Customers benefitting from the Customer Support Program

- Invitations issued via mail, email, and SMS to contact Bartley Consulting
- \$50 gift card incentive
- All feedback provided to SGW anonymously

Consumer advocates and support services

- Largely locally based agencies, charities, and community groups were approached
- Leveraging existing relationships

2 Phase Engagement Program

Additional program:
based on what we
heard from
customers

1

Phase 1

- 23 Support Agency Interviews
- 22 Customer Interviews
- 1 Group Interview

2

Phase 2

- 9 Support Agencies (inc 2 from Phase 1)
- 8 Customer Interviews

Small Business

- 8 Small Business Advocates
- 6 Small Business Customers

Topics

- Context/background
- Impact of SGW on customers
- How can SGW better support customers
- Price/service trade off
- Price path

- Context
- Co-payment program
- Debt collection/debt management process
- Community rebate program
- Other supports
- Community Grant/GSLs
- Price path

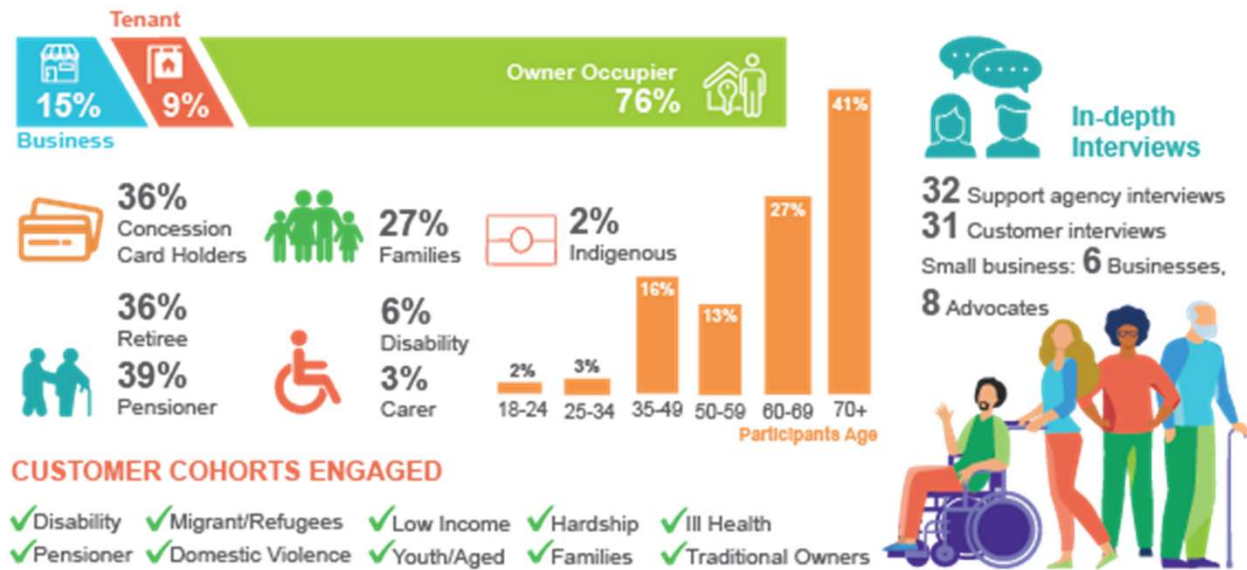
- Context
- Contact with SGW
- Co-payment program
- Debt collection/debt management process
- Other supports
- Price/service trade off
- Price path

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We had meaningful conversations with target customers

- 77 in-depth interviews
- Conducted in-person, online, and via phone
- Each interview ranging from 30 mins to 1 hour

Deliberative Engagement Demographics:



Who we spoke to:

We captured feedback from a broad cross-section of those struggling to pay their bill with us or were considered 'at risk' of experiencing vulnerability.

We captured the voices of family violence victim-survivors, the disabled, renters, long-term unemployed, and those experiencing chronic health issues.

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Outcomes for customers



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Factors for Success



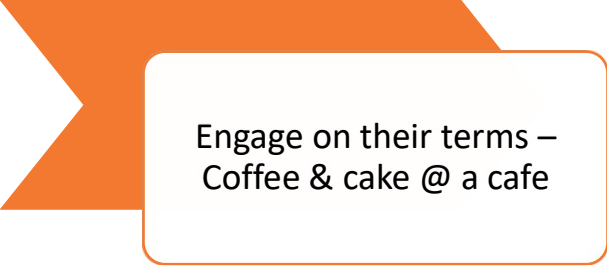
Clear engagement objectives

Build on existing relationships:
Customer & Agency

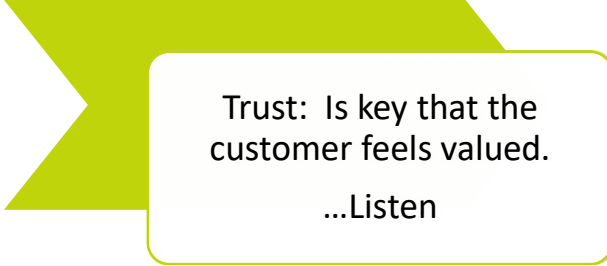
Incentives & respect
for the feedback you
are given

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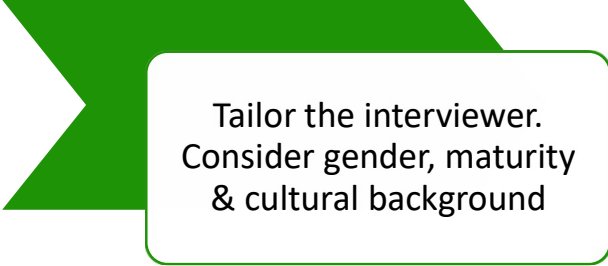
Factors for Success



Engage on their terms –
Coffee & cake @ a cafe



Trust: Is key that the
customer feels valued.
...Listen



Tailor the interviewer.
Consider gender, maturity
& cultural background

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Reflections

- How do we maintain an ongoing conversation outside of pricing submission engagements?
- Anectodely, we know many of our vulnerable customers are not seeking our assistance – how do we make it as safe and easy as possible for those who need our help?



Welcome

Adele Rohde

GWM Water





GWM

GWMWater Engagement Model

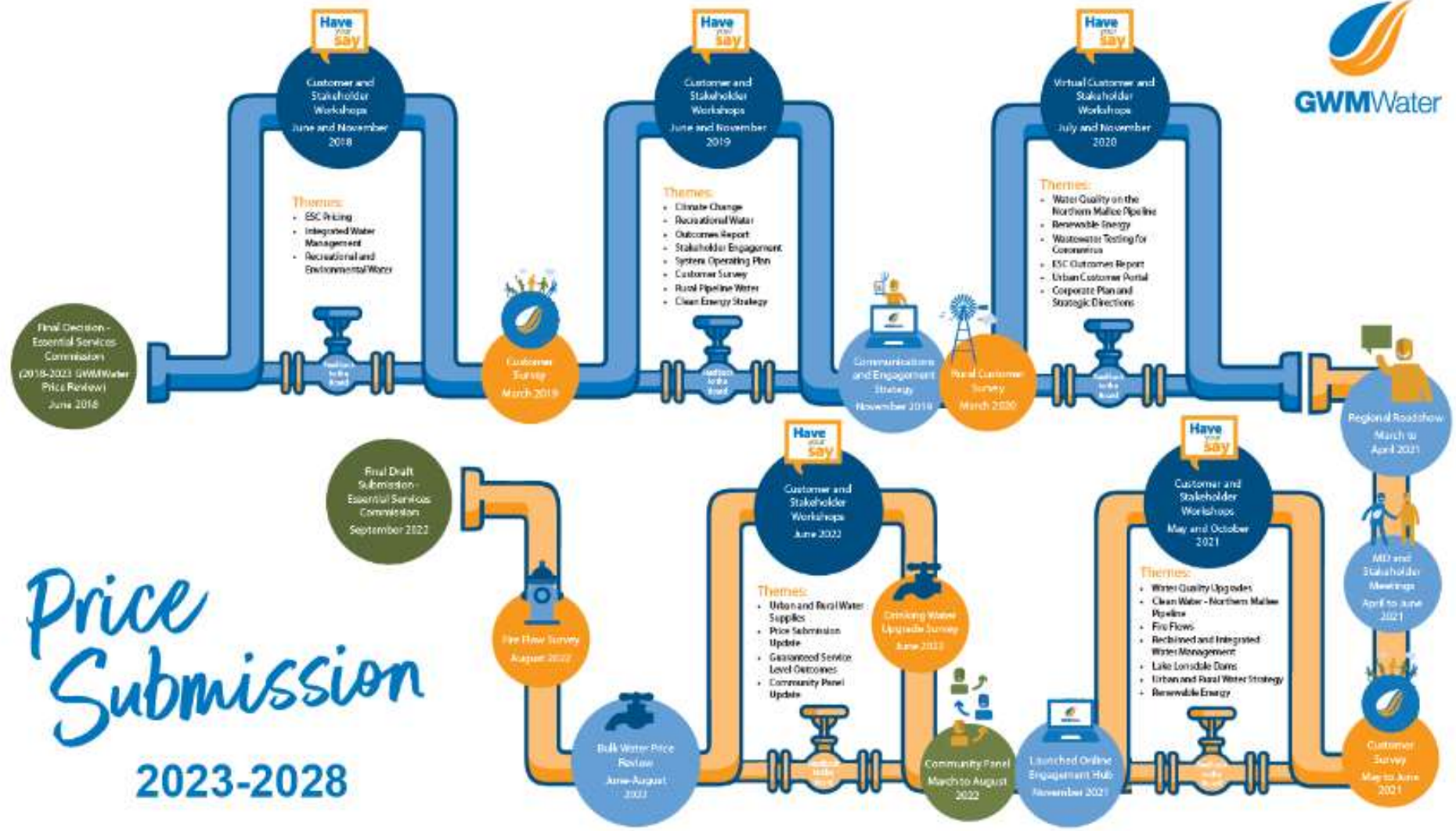
Adele Rohde
Executive Manager
Customer and Employee Experience



About GWMWater

- GWMWater covers a large geographical area across western Victoria (over 60,000 square kilometers)
- Involved in all aspects of the water cycle
- Rural and urban customers
- Groundwater and surface water





Engagement Model & Timeline

Community Panel

- 16 customers
- Independent chair (paid)
- Supported by consultancy
- Elevated our recruitment approach to reflect voices of all customers, including First Nations and those who had experienced vulnerability



Representation

- 50/50 split identifying as men / women
- A mix of property owners and tenants
- Ages ranging from mid 20s to 70s
- Individuals, couples and families with dependent children
- People in full time and part time paid employment and retired people
- People involved in education, health and welfare, local government, business operators, farmers, environmental roles
- Traditional Owners
- Community volunteers (Landcare, Country Fire Authority, recreation reserve and sporting group committees of management)
- Six participants who identified as having experience vulnerabilities



Hybrid Engagement

- Customer and Stakeholder Workshops and Community Panel meetings held both in-person and virtually
- Trial and error
- Used existing equipment
- Gradually built in more digital engagement technologies
- Enables more diverse participation



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AWA Customer Experience Awards Entry

7

Watch the video here: [GWMWater Customer Experience Award Submission](#)

Q&A Panel

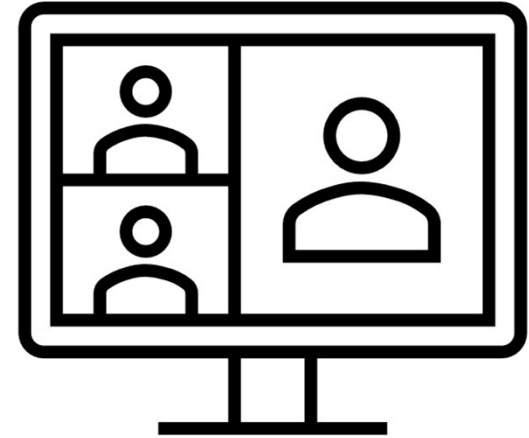
In conversation with :

Amy Rouse Coliban Water

Liz Rowland South Gippsland Water

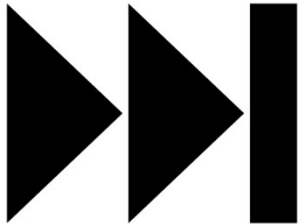
Adele Rohde Grampians Wimmera Mallee Water

Hosted by Lucy Idle, Manager Customer and Engagement ESC



Thank you for coming

- Feedback on today's session via survey on chat
- Meeting recording shared next week



Workshop 2 - Effective and inclusive engagement with First Nations people

Thursday 14 November 2024 10:00am to 11:30am

Includes presentations from Yarra Valley Water, Gippsland Water, Barwon Water, and Wannon Water

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Contact us



www.esc.vic.gov.au



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