SAFCA

South Australian Financial Counsellors Association

MINOR AND INTERMEDIATE RETAILERS RESEARCH AND ADVOCACY PROJECT REPORT

to the

Department of Communities and Social Inclusion

Water and Sewerage Suppliers in South Australia

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November 2016

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Executive Summary

Many South Australians receive their water and sewerage services from minor and intermediate size providers. These providers are mainly in regional South Australia, with approximately 5,700 customers receiving drinking water and 89,000 people serviced by either a Community Wastewater Management System (CWMS) or Septic Tank Effluent Drainage Service (STEDS).

The South Australian Financial Counsellors Association (SAFCA) has recently undertaken a research project that surveyed 200 residential home owners who receive one or both services, to understand their levels of customer satisfaction. The majority of customers were contacted by phone and asked to answer a short survey regarding satisfaction, communications with the provider, billing arrangements and difficulties in paying their bills. The remaining customers were surveyed face to face and several responded by email and post. Eight community clubs and associations in South Australia in receipt of non-potable water for greening purposes were also surveyed.

Responses indicated that residential customers were largely satisfied with the services they received. 85% of drinking water customers and 94% of sewerage service customers said that they were satisfied or very satisfied. There were some localized issues regarding services and a wider issue regarding comparative costs with metropolitan areas, however most people viewed these services as essential. The highest rated responses for what was important to customers was reliability and water quality.

Some residents around the state saw the need for new or extended recycled water schemes to be developed for improved amenities in their townships and many people saw the implementation of water provision and sewerage schemes as a distinct improvement on providing these services themselves.

The community clubs and associations surveyed were extremely satisfied with their service provider agreements with 100% expressing satisfaction.

Based on the above findings SAFCA believes no additional regulation of small and intermediate providers is necessary from a consumer viewpoint. However, SAFCA has made several recommendations regarding the application of hardship provisions and extending concessional arrangements to customers of private providers. SAFCA also recommends service providers consider using a consumer engagement model for the next round of regulatory determinations.

SAFCA believes improvements must always be balanced against costs, and any plans for new or maintenance projects must be clearly communicated to residents who ultimately bear these costs either directly through their rates or indirectly through tenancy rents.

Introduction

The South Australian Financial Counsellors Association (SAFCA) was contracted by the Department of Communities and Social Inclusion (DCSI) to prepare a submission to the Essential Services Commission of South Australia (ESCOSA) as part of their 2016/17 Inquiry into appropriate pricing and consumer protections for minor and intermediate water and sewerage service providers.

To achieve this objective, SAFCA committed to:

1. Work with the South Australian Council of Social Service (SACOSS) to develop a survey of minor and intermediate water and sewerage services retailer customers;
2. Use a sample size of at least 200 customers;
3. Introduce survey into the field by September 15 2016;
4. Produce a report analysing the survey by mid November 2016; and
5. Provide formal input into the ESCOSA Inquiry in 2017.

Points 1 – 4 were achieved by the dates required, and SAFCA looks forward to providing input into the ESCOSA Inquiry in 2017.

Methodology

A survey was co-developed by SAFCA and SACOSS and surveying began on September 15. Customers of minor and intermediate water and sewerage service providers were identified by the following methods:

1. Local Government and private supplier listings provided by ESCOSA;
2. Written communication to the above providers to investigate which townships receive services;
3. Utilising multiple networks and progress associations to reach customers living in those locations by telephone and email;
4. Conducting a separate survey of clubs and associations for non-potable water services; and
5. Undertaking road trips to visit townships to speak face to face with customers.

SAFCA met with ESCOSA at the beginning of the contract period to ensure good communication and that its needs were being met. ESCOSA received a copy of the survey, which built on one that it had developed for distribution at public meetings held to support the Inquiry.

Survey Instruments

The survey to residents consisted of 14 questions covering satisfaction levels, information provided on bills, issues resolution and payment provisions for those facing financial difficulty. It generally took between two and five minutes to go through the survey with each customer and elicit their views. Confidentiality was ensured, with an undertaking that no information would be individually identified and released.

An additional survey aimed at community clubs and associations was developed. This short survey focused on non-potable water supply.

The Survey questions and responses are included as Appendices to this report.

Drinking Water

Customers of 10 local councils or private providers were surveyed. This covered 10 townships identified as receiving a drinking water service. These townships were generally quite small with 50% structured as holiday home locations rather than main residences. 35 surveys were completed for drinking water.

Some Councils supply drinking water to no more than a handful of residences so these were not considered large enough to provide valuable information (i.e. 3 residences in the Clare Caravan Park supplied by the Clare and Gilbert Valleys Council).

Some areas proved impossible to survey:

- The Cape Jaffa development with water supplied by Cape Jaffa Anchorage Essential Services. These are new homes with only three permanent residences and they were not contactable; and
- The areas of Riverglen and Woodlane where the Rural City of Murray Bridge supplies water. Again, these are mainly holiday homes, and although an attempt was made to speak with customers in these towns by visiting the areas, no one was available on the day.

Inquiries were made through Yankalilla Council as to where drinking water is provided. The Council advised this service is not provided, and that only non-potable water was supplied to Wirrina Cove.

BHP Billiton – Olympic Dam Corp (ODC) supplies water to Roxby Downs and by pipeline to Andamooka. Customers of these two townships were included in the survey.

Table 1: Drinking Water Townships

DRINKING WATER			
Council or Provider (10)	**Township (10)**	**Postcode**	**Customers (36)**
FB Pipeline (private)	Fisherman's Bay	5522	6
Outback Communities Authority	Copley	5732	4
Ceduna Council	Denial Bay	5690	3
Roxby Downs Council & ODC	Roxby Downs	5725	3
Coober Pedy Council	Coober Pedy	5723	4
Andamooka (ODC)	Andamooka	5722	6
Rubusto (private)	Mt Compass	5210	2
Mt Remarkable Council	Weeroona Island	5594	2
Yorke Peninsula Council	Hardwicke Bay	5575	1
Franklin Harbour Council	Lucky Bay	5602	4

The above list compares to the statewide figures from ESCOSA[1]:

> As at 30 June 2015, 14 entities are licensed to provide drinking water services to around 5,700 customers with over half of these located in Roxby Downs and Coober Pedy (ABS 2011 Census reported 1,320 households and 1,235 households respectively). Of these 14, ten are council-run schemes and four are private companies.

Summary of Survey Results

The results of the survey demonstrate that customers are generally satisfied with the drinking water service they are provided with 85% very satisfied or satisfied. However, 15% expressed some level of dissatisfaction;

Reasons given for a change in satisfaction levels over the last 5 years were both positive and negative, the positive mainly being that it was better than the systems they had previously;

> *"Better than when the community ran it themselves. Breaks in service attended to very quickly, although planned shutdowns are not always communicated to residents well".*

Water customers reported reliability (79%) and water quality (71%) as more important than value for money (53%).

When asked if their service provider ever inquired into how satisfied their customers were, only one water customer said yes.

31% of customers said they would like to see more information on their bills;

Many customers (57%) believed their bills had adequate information. However, suggestions included detail around meter reading, comparisons with previous years' consumption and progress/status of payment plans for water.

Of note, respondents living in Andamooka do not receive a bill. They pay on delivery by a water truck and seem mostly happy with this arrangement.

97% of water customers reported that they knew who to contact to resolve an issue.

Almost 80% of water customers felt that their supplier would listen and try and resolve an issue. Commentary of the remaining 20% is provided below.

> *"Council is in disarray and difficult to get to anyone who can help".*
>
> *"I would be listened to but not sure if I would get resolution. One issue I had was resolved, but it cropped up again 6 months later".*

Coober Pedy stands out as one council that customers felt was unresponsive.

Seven people surveyed reported difficulty with paying their bill, and there was a mixed response to the satisfaction of arrangements to pay. This matter is discussed at more length on page 11 under Hardship Arrangements and Concessions.

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[1] ESCOSA 2016, *Minor and Intermediate Retailers Regulatory Performance Report 2014-15*, http://www.escosa.sa.gov.au/ArticleDocuments/547/20160510-Water-MIR-RegulatoryPerformanceReport2014-15.pdf.aspx?Embed=Y, p. 6.

Other Small Water Suppliers

During this research, a number of small water providers (potable and non-potable) were identified. These are mainly located in the Adelaide Hills and range from 3 to 50 customers. These supplies are mainly from bores, but also from springs. One person we spoke to said there are probably hundreds of these bore type supplies in operation. Examples include arrangements in Summertown (bore water) and Greenhill (spring water) with residents holding “shares” in the scheme, or bores from which the owner sells water to neighbours.

SAFCA understands that these small schemes are either exempted or unlicensed by ESCOSA, but may be subject to regulation by the Natural Resource Management Boards and/or the Department for Health. SAFCA is not in a position to make recommendations regarding this.

Sewerage Services

51 townships in 27 Councils were covered by this survey, with 160 home owners surveyed.

The only private sewerage service provider identified was the Cape Jaffa Anchorage Essential Services (CJAES). However, the General Manager of CJAES (Mark Hayward) did say that the developers had only undertaken the provision of water and sewerage services to this new area as quotes for provision of services by SA Water were exorbitant. Unfortunately, these customers were not contactable as this is a new development with only three permanent residences.

Table 2: Sewerage Services Townships

SEWERAGE			
Council (27)	**Township (51)**	**Postcode**	**Customers (160)**
Adelaide Hills Council	Kersbrook	5231	4
	Mt Torrens	5244	2
	Woodside	5244	2
Alexandrina Council	Mount Compass	5210	2
	Strathalbyn	5255	3
Barossa Council	Lyndoch	5351	3
	Tanunda	5352	2
	Williamstown	5351	3
Berri Barmera Council	Berri	5343	1
	Barmera	5345	1
Ceduna District Council	Ceduna	5690	3
	Thevenard	5690	2
	Smoky Bay	5680	2
Clare and Gilbert Valleys Council	Clare	5453	6
	Riverton	5412	4
	Saddleworth	5413	4
Cleve Council	Cleve	5640	5
Coober Pedy Council	Coober Pedy	5723	1
Coorong District Council	Meningie	5264	3
	Tailem Bend	5260	3
Grant District Council	Port Macdonnell	5291	2
Hindmarsh Island marina	Hindmarsh Island marina	5412	3
Kangaroo Island Council	American River	5221	5
Kimba District Council	Kimba	5641	6
Light Regional Council	Kapunda	5373	3
	Freeling	5372	3
	Greenock	5360	4
	Roseworthy	5371	3
Lower Eyre Peninsula District Council	Cummins	5631	5
	Coffin Bay	5607	5

Mount Barker Council	Mount Barker	5251	3
	Macclesfield	5153	1
	Nairne	5252	2
	Littehampton	5250	2
Mount Remarkable District Council	Melrose	5483	4
City of Onkaparinga	Mclaren Vale	5171	5
	Sellicks	5174	5
	Willunga	5172	5
Northern Areas Council	Jamestown	5491	5
	Gladstone	5473	2
Port Pirie Regional Council	Crystal Brook	5523	3
Roxby Downs Municipal Council	Roxby Downs	5725	3
Southern Mallee Regional Council	Pinnaroo	5304	2
Tumby Bay District Council	Tumby Bay	5605	2
Wakefield District Council	Blyth	5462	3
Wattle Range Council	Millicent	5280	2
	Penola	5277	3
	Tarpeena	5277	2
Yankalilla District Council	Yankalilla	5203	5
	Normanville	5204	5
Yorke Peninsula District Council	Black Point		1

The above compares to the statewide figures from ESCOSA[2]:

> As at 30 June 2015, 52 entities are licensed to provide sewerage services (through either a Community Wastewater Management System (CWMS) or a sewer system) to around 89,000 customers (serving about 13 percent of the State's population). Of these retailers, 49 are council-run schemes and three are private companies.

Summary of Survey Results

The results of the survey to those residents who received either a Community Wastewater Mangement System (CWMS) or Septic Tank Effluent Drainage Service (STEDS) service was overwhelmingly positive, with 94% of residents expressing satisfaction. Reliability was the biggest factor, with most people thankful they did not have to think about it.

Of those that expressed dissatisfaction (dissatisfied or very dissatisfied) the basis included cost, smell, additional costs for pump-outs prior to scheduled visits and the need for customers to remove the concrete lid for Sewer Customers:

- Residents of Sellicks have had problems with smell for some time, although it is understood that this is being rectified with remediation works currently being undertaken;
- One council required residents to remove the concrete lid from their septic tank before the pumping out service could take place. If the lid was not removed by the time the truck arrived,

[2] [2] ESCOSA 2016, *Minor and Intermediate Retailers Regulatory Performance Report 2014-15*, http://www.escosa.sa.gov.au/ArticleDocuments/547/20160510-Water-MIR-RegulatoryPerformanceReport2014-15.pdf.aspx?Embed=Y, p. 5.

residents are charged for a call back service. This seems an excessive requirement on the elderly and disabled;

- Some residents expressed some annoyance with the fact that the schemes were “sold” some years ago as a capital expense, that when paid off would see a lowering of their rates. This has not happened as maintenance costs are high;
- There may be an issue with capacity of the system in the Light Council; and
- A few areas reported a smell from time to time, usually leading up to a pump out, but nothing too bad.

93% of sewer Customers reported reliability as more important than value for money (44%) and service quality and timeliness (2%).

As with water provision, customers were not asked about their satisfaction with the service by the councils, however nearly all are aware of who to contact if there was a problem. Most customers (85%) indicated they would be listened to.

Most customers were satisfied with the information on their bills with many stating they never looked at the breakdown of rates, ‘just the bottom line’.

20 surveyed reported difficulty with paying their bill, Again, this matter is discussed at more length in the following section - Hardship Arrangements and Concessions.

Hardship Provisions and Concessions

Payment Difficulties

20% of water customers and 12% of sewer customers reported having financial difficulty paying a bill.

Of these, around 50% of water customers felt their provider was helpful. Customers were offered either an extension of time to pay or a payment plan.

> *"Council, decides how much you will pay, without taking into consideration affordability. No hardship arrangements".*

> *"Make you pay reconnection fees before reconnection, then dictate how much needs to be repaid every fortnight. No allowance for affordability".*

> *"No fines for late payment, as long as they are kept informed of situation. Flexible with arrangements".*

> *"Would prefer negotiated repayment based on affordability".*

> *"Would prefer to be able to negotiate the payment amount. No flexibility".*

> *"Happy with payment plan".*

80% of sewer customers felt their provider was helpful. Customers were offered either an extension of time to pay (30%) or a payment plan (70%).

The majority of customers (83% water and 79% sewer) identified their payment difficulty as a temporary issue.

Other comments

Customers of private water suppliers raised issues with the ease of access to the water concession:

> *"Takes a long time to get the concession amount paid. Would be automatic through SA Water".*

> *"Only issue is around the concession, which has to be applied for and takes sometimes 3 months".*

> *"DCSI concession arrangements. Need to pay bill then apply. Can take up to four months for the money to come through. However, it seems to have improved".*

Concern was also expressed about the financial sustainability of a water carting service:

> *"The two trucks are old, and the business model would not allow for purchase of new expensive trucks".*

Responses from sewer customers were largely positive with some specific issues raised:

> *"24 emergency service connected to a real person is valued".*

> *"Why do we pay so much compared to other regions?"*

> *"When last here the fellow doing the pumping out broke the concrete lid to the septic tank but nothing was said".*

SAFCA believes that some improvements could be made in this area as people living in many regional centres are at a disadvantage to those in areas of the State receiving services from SA Water.

Although all water providers are obligated to have a hardship policy, application of that policy around affordability may be causing difficulties for some customers. We recognize, that in many cases, an assessment of affordability might be straightforward, especially where there is a temporary financial difficulty. Some customers may have a good idea of their ability to pay a negotiated amount, and can keep up that payment into the future until arrears are covered. However, others may need specialized assistance and counselling, particularly if the water bill is only one of a complex debt position.

We recognize that it is difficult for those applying the policy at Councils and private providers to be able to assess affordability. However, financial counselling services receive few referrals from these organisations to help assess customers' ability to pay. Whilst the provider must adopt the residential customer hardship policy published by the Minister (or submit a modified), in accordance with the Water Industry Act 2012, and refer to an accredited financial counsellor where it is deemed necessary, council and private provider employees may not be trained to understand that process.

SAFCA recommends that ESCOSA consider some training be provided to councils and private providers around how a financial counsellor can help identify the true financial position of a customer to assist with a realistic and sustainable payment plan or other course of action.

As to the water concessions, this too raised some concerns. SA Water customers can apply to DCSI for the concession, which is then applied to future SA Water accounts. A similar opportunity exists for customers of Councils. However, customers of private small and intermediate providers must first pay the account, then apply for the concession. This is taking some 3 – 4 months to have the concession amount returned. SAFCA asks that there be consideration of the private providers being able to apply the concession and bill the customer for the remainder.

Non-Potable Water

Residents

SAFCA was only able to identify a handful of residential customers of non-potable water suppliers. The suppliers in the list provided by ESCOSA of a non-potable water service were largely to businesses and to their own Council parks and ovals.

Three households were interviewed, two from the Riverland and one from the outer northern suburbs of Adelaide. Satisfaction varied from very satisfied to very dissatisfied ("water is not fit for purpose"). Reliability and water quality were cited as important. One respondent had experienced payment difficulties but their (private) supplier was helpful. Another reported the ability to pay weekly if needed "so there is no bill shock".

Community Clubs and Associations

A short survey for Community Clubs and Associations focused on non-potable water supply with eight clubs responding (2 Football Clubs, 1 Racing Club, 2 Recreation Parks and 3 Golf Clubs).

All eight clubs expressed satisfaction with their service and the quality of water supplied. In each case the supply is recycled water and supplied at a significant discount to mains water. 62.5% reported not being charged for the service with two contributing land or maintenance and one only received water when available.

All eight clubs stated they knew who to contact to resolve any issues with the service and all stated that they felt they would be listened to and that their supplier (Councils) would try and resolve any issues. Most reported good working relationships with Councils.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Generally, most customers of small and intermediate water and sewerage providers are happy with the services they receive. Of the residential customers surveyed, 85% of drinking water and 94% of sewerage services consumers expressed satisfaction.

Representatives of the eight community and sporting clubs surveyed expressed 100% satisfaction of the non-potable water service they receive.

Overall these results suggest there is little evidence of systemic issues for customers of minor and intermediate water and sewerage service providers. Based on this, SAFCA does not believe additional regulation is required to ensure consumers receive the services that meet their needs and expectations.

Recommendation 1

SAFCA recommends no additional regulation of the small and intermediate providers is required to meet customer needs and expectations.

However, the research findings also suggest several areas of policy that could be improved to enhance the customer experience. These policy areas are discussed below.

Hardship Policies

Whilst SAFCA commends service providers for accepting and engaging with the Hardship Policy as required by the Water Industry Act 2012, SACFA is concerned about the capacity of service providers to apply the policy in complex and difficult circumstances.

Recommendation 2

SAFCA recommends building the capacity of service providers to further assist customers who are in financial difficulty. This includes educating service providers on the role of financial counsellors and developing a coordinated approach between service providers and organisations who offer financial counselling.

Water Concessions

Current arrangements for access to the water concession suggest some customers (i.e. those of private providers) must pay their bill upfront and then apply for the concession through DCSI. Customers can claim their concession either half-yearly or annually.

Recommendation 3

SAFCA recommends private service providers be given the ability to apply the concession to the customer's bill.

Customer Engagement

There was no evidence of service providers proactively engaging with sewerage customers and very little evidence of engagement with water customers regarding satisfaction levels. This suggests service providers may not consider community and customer views within their decision-making processes for service offerings.

Recommendation 4

SAFCA recommends the next round of regulatory determinations for service providers should consider a consumer engagement model. A similar approach is utilised within the energy industry, where consumers are engaged in ongoing processes and supported with market focused education.

Appendix A: Water Services Survey and Reponses

Questions 1, 2 and 3 relate to location, postcode and provider.

Q4: Satisfaction Level

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Very satisfied	37.1%	13
Satisfied	48.6%	17
Dissatisfied	5.7%	2
Very dissatisfied	8.6%	3
Comment on why		29
	answered question	35
	skipped question	0

Comments

Dissatisfaction related to cost and taste. Water pressure can be an issue.

Q5: Has your satisfaction level changed over the past five years?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	40.0%	14
No	60.0%	21
Why is that?		19

Comments

Changes mainly relate to changes in costs and taste. Improvements in service standards also noted.

"Better than when the community ran it themselves. Breaks in service attended to very quickly, although planned shutdowns are not always communicated to residents well".

Q6: What is important to you in receiving this service?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Water Quality	71%	24
Reliability	79%	27
Value for Money	53%	18
	answered question	34
	skipped question	1

Q7: Does the service provider ask you how satisfied you are with the service?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	3.0%	1
No	97.0%	32
Comment		1
	answered question	33
	skipped question	2

Comments

“But you are free to voice your opinion”.

Q8: What information would you like to receive on your bills?

Meter reading details (3)

Cost comparisons (to other regions) (1)

Price changes (1)

No bills (pay on delivery) (6)

Consumption comparison (same period last year) (3)

Payment plan progress (2)

Q9: Do you know who to contact if you need to resolve an issue with your service provider?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	97.1%	34
No	2.9%	1
Any comment?		2
	answered question	35
	skipped question	0

Comments

“There is a 24 emergency number now which is great”.

“Can be complicated if it is about the bill”.

Q10: Do you feel you will be listened to and that they would try and resolve your issue?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	79.4%	27
No	20.6%	7
Any comment?		4
answered question		34
skipped question		1

Comments

"Council is in disarray and difficult to get to anyone who can help".

"I would be listened to but not sure if I would get resolution. One issue I had was resolved, but it cropped up again 6 months later".

Q11: Have you ever had any financial difficulty in paying your bill?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	20.0%	7
No	80.0%	28
Comment		5
answered question		35
skipped question		0

Q12: If so, was your service provider helpful in assisting you with arrangements to help you pay your bill?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	50.0%	3
No	50.0%	3
Other (please specify)		1
answered question		6
skipped question		29

Comments

"Council, decides how much you will pay, without taking into consideration affordability. No hardship arrangements".

"Make you pay reconnection fees before reconnection, then dictate how much needs to be repaid every fortnight. No allowance for affordability".

Q13: If yes, what type of assistance did this entail?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Payment plan	66.7%	4
Deferral of payment	33.3%	2
Waiver of debt	0.0%	0
Water audit	0.0%	0
Other assistance	0.0%	0
Do you have any comment on this? Is there any other option you would have liked available?		4
	answered question	6

Comments

"No fines for late payment, as long as they are kept informed of situation. Flexible with arrangements".

"Would prefer negotiated repayment based on affordability".

"Would prefer to be able to negotiate the payment amount. No flexibility".

"Happy with payment plan".

Q14: Was this a temporary issue?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	83.3%	5
No	16.7%	1
Comment		0
	answered question	6

Do you have any other comment on anything to do with the service you receive?

"Takes a long time to get the concession amount paid. Would be automatic through SA Water".

"Only issue is around the concession, which must be applied for and takes sometimes 3 months", "DCSI concession arrangements. Need to pay bill then apply. Can take up to four months for the money to come through. However, it seems to have improved".

"It takes 3-4 weeks after the meter is read to receiving the bill".

Some concern was raised by residents of Andamooka, who although very happy with the service they currently received, have some trepidation as to changes to truck registration to come in 2017. The two trucks currently on the road pick up the water within the township via a pipe from Roxby Downs. They then drive slowly around the township delivering the water to the residents' tanks. There are concerns that these trucks would not meet stringent roadworthy tests, and that the business models of the two providers would make purchase of new trucks unviable.

Appendix B: Sewerage Services Survey and Responses

Questions 1, 2 and 3 relate to location, postcode and provider.

Q4 Satisfaction Level

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Very satisfied	17.5%	28
Satisfied	76.3%	122
Dissatisfied	5.6%	9
Very dissatisfied	0.6%	1
Comment on why		96
	answered question	160

Comments

Dissatisfaction related to smell, cost, aged/frail needing to remove concrete lid from septic, inflexibility/call out fee for pump-outs before due date.

Q5: Has your satisfaction level changed over the past five years

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	7.0%	11
No	93.0%	147
Why is that?		11
	answered question	158

Comments

"Worse now than what it was. Councils employ people from out of area who don't understand rural people and they change constantly".

Q6: What is important to you in receiving this service?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Service/timeliness	2%	3
Reliability	93%	146
Value for Money	44%	69
	answered question	157
	skipped question	3

Q7: Does the service provider ask you how satisfied you are with the service?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	0.0%	0
No	100.0%	156
Comment		3
	answered question	156
	skipped question	4

Q8: What information would you like to receive on your bills?

Adequate (129/156 = 83%)

Breakdown of costs (24/156 = 15%)

Q9: Do you know who to contact if you need to resolve an issue with your service provider?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	96.2%	151
No	3.8%	6
Any comment?		2
	answered question	157
	skipped question	3

Q10: Do you feel you will be listened to and that they would try and resolve your issue?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	87.7%	135
No	12.3%	19
Any comment?		8
	answered question	154
	skipped question	6

Q11: Have you ever had any financial difficulty in paying your bill?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	12.2%	20
No	87.8%	137
Comment		12
	answered question	156
	skipped question	4

Q12: If so, was your service provider helpful in assisting you with arrangements to help you pay your bill?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	80.0%	16
No	20.0%	4
Other (please specify)		4
	answered question	20
	N/A	140

Comments

"However, I did have to email them with details of how and when payments would be made. Could be difficult for some to do this. Now set up a fortnightly direct debit myself, as they would not do it their end. Would like a written record of how much has been paid, but it doesn't show".

Q13: If yes, what type of assistance did this entail?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Payment plan	70.6%	12
Deferral of payment	29.4%	5
Waiver of debt	0.0%	0
Water audit	0.0%	0
Other assistance	0.0%	0
Do you have any comment on this? Is there any other option you would have liked available?		7
	answered question	17
	N/A	143

Q14: Was this a temporary issue?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	78.9%	15
No	21.1%	4
Comment		2
	answered question	19
	N/A	141

Q15: Do you have any other comment on anything to do with the service you receive?

"Why do we pay so much compared to other regions".

"when last here the fellow doing the pumping out broke the concrete lid to the septic tank but nothing was said".

"24 emergency service connected to a real person is valued".

Appendix C: Non-Potable Water Services Survey and Responses (Residential)

Questions 1, 2 and 3 relate to location, postcode and provider.

Q4 Satisfaction Level

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Very satisfied	67.0%	2
Satisfied	0.0%	0
Dissatisfied	0.0%	0
Very dissatisfied	33.0%	1
Comment on why		3
	answered question	3

Comments

"After living out of town with no treated water available, it is now great to have access to this water".

'Water is not fit for purpose, very dirty and smelly'.

No problems with it".

Q5: Has your satisfaction level changed over the past five years

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	33.0%	1
No	67.0%	2
Why is that?		1
	answered question	3

Comments

"Water quality is poorer".

Q6: What is important to you in receiving this service?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Reliability	67.0%	2
Water quality	67.0%	2
	answered question	3

Q7: Does the service provider ask you how satisfied you are with the service?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	0.0%	0
No	100.0%	3
	answered question	3

Q8: What information would you like to receive on your bills?

"Rate per k/L".

"River flows".

"Storage capacity".

"Same as SA Water, tell us how we are going with block size and number of people".

Q9: Do you know who to contact if you need to resolve an issue with your service provider?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	100.0%	3
No	0.0%	0
	answered question	3

Q10: Do you feel you will be listened to and that they would try and resolve your issue?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	67.0%	2
No	33.0%	1
	answered question	3

Q11: Have you ever had any financial difficulty in paying your bill?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	33.0%	1
No	67.0%	2
Comment		1
	answered question	3

Comments

"We can pay weekly if we want to so there is no bill shock".

Q12: If so, was your service provider helpful in assisting you with arrangements to help you pay your bill?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	100.0%	1

answered question	1
N/A	2

Q13: If yes, what type of assistance did this entail?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Payment plan	100.0%	1
	answered question	1
	N/A	2

Q14: Was this a temporary issue?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	100.0%	1
	answered question	1
	N/A	2

Q15: Do you have any other comment on anything to do with the service you receive?

"We pay too much for any utility service in SA compared to other states. Government should not have spent $10m plus on water desal plant - instead on reservoir storage".

"CIT in Barmera great to deal with".

"Quite happy".

Appendix D: Non-Potable Water Services Survey and Responses (Clubs)

Questions 1 and 2 relate to club name and Council area.

Q3 Are you currently satisfied with your service?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	100%	8
No	0%	0
Comment on why		6
	answered question	8

Comments

"This is recycled water and is reliable at about 70% of the cost of SA water".

"We are in a dry area and mains water expensive. This water provides nice green comfortable place to visit. Before it was overhead sprinklers, pressure was poor and water would be blown away. Now underground".

"Plenty of water. We have gone from 8 gl to 18 gl as town is growing and council needs to have the water used".

"Had salinity problems before using bore water. Now have ample supply of high quality water. Would not be racing today without it, as bores unreliable and SA water too expensive".

Q5: Are you charged for this water?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	37.5%	3
No	62.5%	5
How does that work		5
	answered question	8

Comments

"Paid for by commercial projects, fundraising and grants".

"About 8c/kl. Happy with the price. Billed once per year".

"20 c / kl."

"Negotiated deal to place recycling plant on racing club land in return for no water charge".

Q6: Is there always enough water for your need?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	86%	6

No	14%	1
	answered question	7
	skipped question	1

Q7: Is the quality of the water to your Club's satisfaction?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	0.0%	0
No	100.0%	8
Comment		4
	answered question	8

Comments

"Very good B class water".

"No smell and discoloration of [racing track] rails".

Q8: Do you know who to contact to resolve any issues with the service?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	100%	8
No	0.0%	0
	answered question	8

Q9: Do you feel you will be listened to and that they would try and resolve your issue?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	100.0%	8
No	0.0%	0
Any comment?		8
	answered question	8

Q10: Do you have any other comment on anything to do with the service you receive?

"No - all works pretty well".

"We appreciate it and could not provide the facility without it".

"Pretty reliable service, although Council owned pump seems to require a lot of maintenance".

"Relationship with Council very good".

"Alano Utilities do the maintenance are very good".