

2019-20 Water Utility customer satisfaction survey results

23 July 2020

WHAT

IPART has undertaken water utility customer satisfaction surveys during 2019-20 for Hunter Water and Sydney Water.

This was a trial. Following the success of this trial, we will continue the survey in 2020-21.



WHY

Qualitative customer satisfaction information acts as an indicator of a water utility's customer service.

Measuring and reporting on customer satisfaction over time could help drive improvement in the utilities' performance, in line with customer preferences, through 'competition by comparison'.



WHO

In 2019-20, we surveyed customers of Hunter Water and Sydney Water.

In 2020-21 we will continue to survey these customers. We will also include Central Coast Council's customers.



HOW

We engaged an experienced organisation to survey Hunter Water and

Sydney Water's customers four times during 2019-20 (ie, in every quarter – August and November 2019, and March and June 2020). We asked customers for their views on their water service provider in those quarters.

The same organisation surveys water utility customers in Victoria, on behalf of the Essential Services Commission (ESC). The ESC shares the results from these surveys on its website.

On the next page, we have included the average of Hunter Water's and Sydney Water's customer satisfaction results during the 2019-20 financial year. These are compared with the annual average results from the relevant Victorian utilities (www.esc.vic.gov.au).



WHAT NEXT

In 2020-21, we will survey Hunter Water, Sydney Water and Central Coast Council's customers every quarter, with the specific survey dates still to be decided.

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What are the results from the 2019-20 customer satisfaction survey?

We have set out the average of the results collected during the 2019-20 financial year for Hunter Water and Sydney Water in Tables 1 and 2.

Hunter Water is comparable to Barwon Water in Victoria in its customer base and functions. Similarly, Sydney Water is comparable to City West Water, South East Water and Yarra Valley Water in Victoria. Between them, the three Victorian utilities supply water to the Melbourne region.

Sydney Water continues to perform favourably in comparison to similar utilities in Victoria. Hunter Water did not perform as favourably as Barwon Water. This may be attributable to an increase in Barwon Water's customer satisfaction results over the year. In the first quarter of 2019-20, Hunter Water's results were similar to Barwon Water's.¹ Since then Hunter Water's results have remained relatively unchanged whereas Barwon Water's results have improved.

Table 1 Hunter Water's customer satisfaction averaged results in 2019-20 compared to Barwon Water's average over the last year

Customer satisfaction indicator	Hunter Water	Barwon Water
How would you rate your water / waste water provider on delivering value for money?	6.0	6.3
How would you rate your trust for your water / waste water provider?	6.4	6.8
How would you rate your water / waste water providers reputation in the community?	6.6	7.0
How would you rate your satisfaction with your water / waste water provider as a service provider overall?	6.6	7.1

Note: All scores are out of 10

Table 2 Sydney Water's customer satisfaction averaged results in 2019-20 compared to the averages over the last year for similar utilities in Victoria

Customer satisfaction indicator	Sydney Water	City West Water	South East Water	Yarra Valley Water
How would you rate your water / waste water provider on delivering value for money?	6.3	6.1	6.5	6.3
How would you rate your trust for your water / waste water provider?	6.7	6.6	6.9	6.9
How would you rate your water / waste water providers reputation in the community?	6.7	6.6	6.9	6.9
How would you rate your satisfaction with your water / waste water provider as a service provider overall?	6.9	6.8	7.1	6.9

Note: All scores are out of 10

¹ Hunter Water's first quarter results were compared to Barwon Water's rolling average over the previous four quarters.