

2 October 2020

WHAT

In 2019-20, IPART trialled a water utility customer satisfaction survey for Sydney Water and Hunter Water.

Following the success of the trial, we are continuing the survey in 2020-21 and including Central Coast Council.

WHY

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

We have surveyed customers of Sydney Water, Hunter Water and Central Coast Council.

HOW

We continue to use the same organisation as we did last year to survey Sydney Water, Hunter Water and Central Coast Council's customers.

We will conduct the survey four times during the year (ie, in every quarter – August and November 2020, and March and June 2021). We ask 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 (www.esc.vic.gov.au).

On the next page, we have included the average of Sydney Water and Hunter Water's customer satisfaction results over the past year, and Central Coast Council's results from the first quarter of 2020-21. These utilities are compared with similar utilities in Victoria.

WHAT NEXT

We will next survey and publish the results for Sydney Water, Hunter Water and Central Coast Council customers in November 2020.

Please direct any enquiries to:

Mamata Titus, Principal analyst

(02) 9113 7750

mamata_titus@ipart.nsw.gov.au

What are the results from the customer satisfaction survey?

We have set out the average of the results collected over the past year for Sydney Water and Hunter Water in Tables 1 and 2.

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. Similarly, Hunter Water and Central Coast Council are comparable to Barwon Water in Victoria (and to each other in NSW), in its customer base and functions.

Sydney Water continues to perform favourably in comparison to similar utilities in Victoria, as demonstrated in Table 1. Hunter Water did not perform as favourably as Barwon Water, as shown in Table 2. Barwon Water's customer satisfaction results have increased over the past year. In the first quarter of 2019-20, Hunter Water's results were similar to Barwon Water's. Since that time Hunter Water's results have remained relatively unchanged, whereas Barwon Water's results have improved.

Table 2 includes Central Coast Council's customer satisfaction survey results. This quarter was the first time we surveyed Central Coast Council's customers. Central Coast Council did not perform as well as Hunter Water or Barwon Water. However, the difference with Hunter Water's results is small. More data collected in future surveys will provide a better understanding of Central Coast Council's customer satisfaction.

Table 1 Sydney Water's customer satisfaction results (scored out of 10)

| Customer satisfaction indicator | Sydney Water | City West Water | South East Water | Yarra Valley Water | Total available score |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| | (Average over last year) | (Average over last year) | (Average over last year) | (Average over last year) | |
| How would you rate your water / waste water provider on delivering value for money? | 6.3 | 6.3 | 6.5 | 6.3 | (10) |
| How would you rate your trust for your water / waste water provider? | 6.8 | 6.8 | 6.9 | 6.9 | (10) |
| How would you rate your water / waste water provider's reputation in the community? | 6.8 | 6.8 | 7.1 | 6.9 | (10) |
| How would you rate your satisfaction with your water / waste water provider as a service provider overall? | 7.0 | 7.0 | 7.2 | 6.9 | (10) |

Note: All results are the average of results obtained from surveys during the period November 2019 – August 2020.

Table 2 Hunter Water and Central Coast Council's customer satisfaction results (scored out of 10)

| Customer satisfaction indicator | Hunter Water | Central Coast Council | Barwon Water | Total available score |
|--|---------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| | (Average over last year) | (Q1 2020-21) | (Average over last year) | |
| How would you rate your water / waste water provider on delivering value for money? | 6.1 | 5.9 | 6.6 | (10) |
| How would you rate your trust for your water / waste water provider? | 6.4 | 6.2 | 7.0 | (10) |
| How would you rate your water / waste water provider's reputation in the community? | 6.6 | 6.0 | 7.2 | (10) |
| How would you rate your satisfaction with your water / waste water provider as a service provider overall? | 6.6 | 6.3 | 7.3 | (10) |

Note: Hunter Water and Barwon Water's results are the average of results obtained from surveys during the period November 2019 – August 2020. Central Coast Council's results are from 2020-21 Quarter 1 only, as this was the first time we surveyed Central Coast Council.