



Water utility customer satisfaction survey results

22 May 2024

1 What is the customer satisfaction survey?

IPART conducts a customer satisfaction survey (Survey) 4 times a year to understand how satisfied Central Coast Council's customers are with its services. We have been surveying Central Coast Council's customers since April 2021.

We first began the Survey in July 2019 but at the time we only surveyed Hunter Water's and Sydney Water's customers. We included Central Coast Council's customers in the Survey from April 2021. We stopped surveying Hunter Water and Sydney Water customers in June 2023.

2 Why are we conducting the survey and how did Central Coast Council perform?

We have been conducting the Survey to assess customers' perceptions of the level of service that Central Coast Council provides. Central Coast Council does not otherwise have to consult customers about their satisfaction with their services. Understanding customer satisfaction is an indicator of the effectiveness of Central Coast Council's services.

We have set out the results of the Survey in Figure 1 of this fact sheet. The results show that customer satisfaction with Central Coast Council's services has not varied substantially since we first began the survey in April 2021. We assess customers' overall satisfaction and specifically their satisfaction with the value for money they receive, how much they trust Central Coast Council and how they view Central Coast Council's reputation. For each of these areas, customer satisfaction was highest when we first began surveying Central Coast Council's customers in April 2021, and then it slightly decreased. Over 2023-24, it began to increase again to just below April-2021 levels.

We have compared Central Coast Council's results with 3 Victorian utilities which are similar in function and customer base: Barwon Water, Goulburn Valley Water and Central Highlands Water. In general, Central Coast Council has not performed as well as any of these utilities.

The Essential Services Commission (ESC) surveys the Victorian water utilities' customers with the same 4 focus questions. The most recent results can be found on its [website](#).

We expect our next Survey to be published by August 2024.

3 Survey results

We survey Central Coast Council's customers 4 times a year to understand their satisfaction with the services that they are provided. In each round of the Survey, we aim to survey around 100 customers totalling around 400 customers each year.

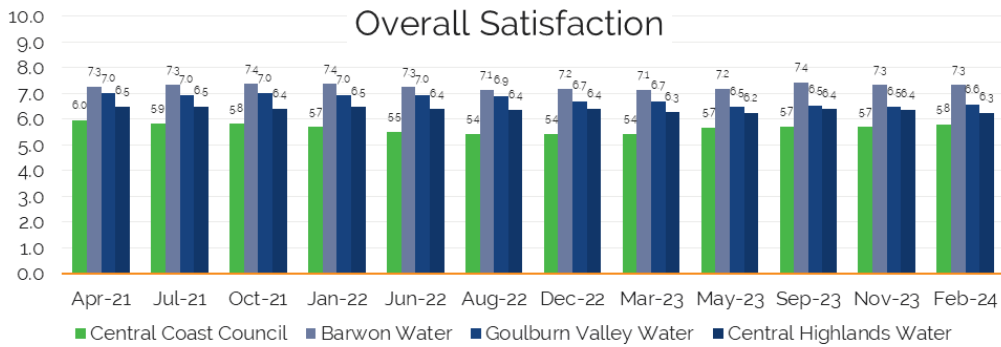
The Survey results have been summarised in Figure 1. We ask customers the following 4 questions in the Survey and each graph in Figure 1 corresponds to these questions:

1. How would you rate your water/wastewater provider on delivering value for money?
2. How would you rate your trust for your water/wastewater provider?
3. How would you rate your water/wastewater provider's reputation in the community?
4. How would you rate your satisfaction with your water/wastewater provider as a service provider overall?

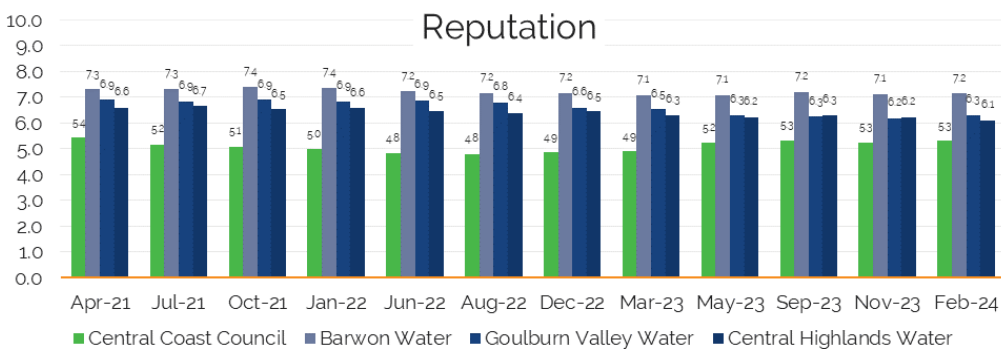
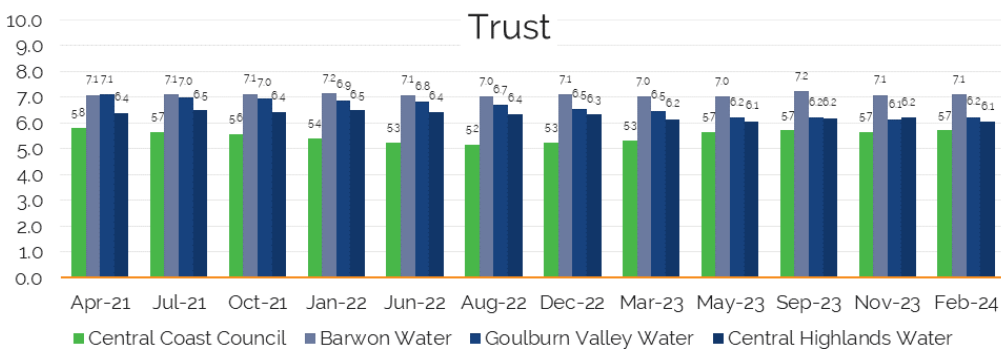
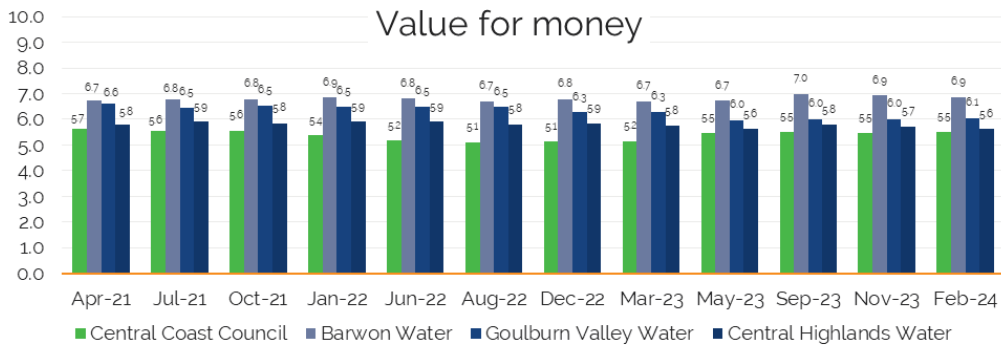
The graphs show the annual rolling averages of the Survey results for each question that we have collected over the past 4 rounds of the Survey. For example, the November 2023 results are the averages of the Survey results collected in March, May, September and November 2023, and the February 2024 results are the averages of the Survey results collected in May, September and November 2023 and February 2024.

We are not surveying Hunter Water or Sydney Water's customer satisfaction this financial year, but for information, we have noted those utilities' historical average results at the bottom of the graph for "overall satisfaction" in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1 Customer satisfaction results for Central Coast Council Water and comparators in Victoria



Note: We have compared Central Coast Council's results to utilities in Victoria which have similar functions and are of a similar size: Barwon Water, Goulburn Valley Water and Central Highlands Water. Over the 3-year period (June 2020-May 2023) that we surveyed Hunter Water's customers its 'overall satisfaction' score averaged 6.9. During that same period, Sydney Water had an 'overall satisfaction' average of 7.1.



4 Why we no longer survey Hunter Water and Sydney Water's customers

We stopped surveying Hunter Water and Sydney Water's customers as they were performing well and there was minimal variation in the Survey results between 2019, when we first began the Survey, and 2023. We consider that the costs of continuing the Survey, which are ultimately borne by the people of NSW, would not outweigh the benefits. Discontinuing the Survey will not mean that customers no longer have a voice. Both Sydney Water and Hunter Water must engage with their customers to understand their needs and preferences in preparation for their 2024 pricing reviews under the IPART pricing framework. The Tribunal may decide to return to surveying Sydney Water and Hunter Water's customers to benchmark their satisfaction results in future surveys.

As Central Coast Council does not have the same requirement to engage with its customers until it is preparing for its next pricing review in 2026, we continue to survey its customers. We consider it important to continue to test customers' perspectives on Central Coast Council because its past performance is below that of Sydney Water and Hunter Water. Further, between 2021 and 2023 its performance began to deteriorate (though we note that the variation in results is small).

5 Who can I contact if I have questions?

Please direct any enquiries to Mamata Titus, Principal Analyst, on (02) 9113 7750 or at mamata.titus@ipart.nsw.gov.au