



# Water utility customer satisfaction survey

29 June 2021

## 1 What is the customer satisfaction survey?

IPART conducts a customer satisfaction survey (Survey) to understand how satisfied customers are with their water providers. In NSW, these include Sydney Water, Hunter Water and Central Coast Council (NSW utilities).

## 2 Why are we conducting the Survey?

**i** Customer satisfaction is an indicator of the effectiveness of the utilities' services.

It helps protect the customers' interests, particularly in NSW where the public water utilities largely operate as monopoly suppliers.

## 3 How are we conducting the Survey?

We have been surveying Sydney Water and Hunter Water customers since 2019. We included Central Coast Council in the Survey in this 2020-21 financial year.

We survey customers for their views on their utility 4 times a year. In each round of the Survey, we aim to survey 100 customers per utility, totalling around 400 customers per utility per year.

- i** We ask customers 4 questions (responses rated from 0-10):
- How would you rate your water/wastewater provider on delivering value for money?
  - How would you rate your trust for your water/wastewater provider?
  - How would you rate your water/wastewater provider's reputation in the community?
  - How would you rate your satisfaction with your water/wastewater provider as a service provider overall?

Due to the limited availability of comparable utilities within NSW, we use the same Survey as the Essential Services Commission (ESC) in Victoria, to allow us to compare the NSW utilities' performance with similar utilities in Victoria.

The ESC shares the results for the Victorian utilities on its website ([www.esc.vic.gov.au](http://www.esc.vic.gov.au)).

## 4 When did we conduct the Survey?

We surveyed customers of the NSW utilities 4 times in the 2020-21 financial year:



## 5 How did the utilities perform?

We have set out the customer satisfaction results for the NSW utilities in Figures 1 and 2. Each graph corresponds to the customer satisfaction results (rated from 0-10) collected for each of the questions posed to the customers.

We have compared Sydney Water's results with the results of City West Water, South East Water and Yarra Valley Water in Victoria. These 3 Victorian utilities are most similar to Sydney Water in their functions and customer base. Between them, the 3 Victorian utilities supply water to the Melbourne region.

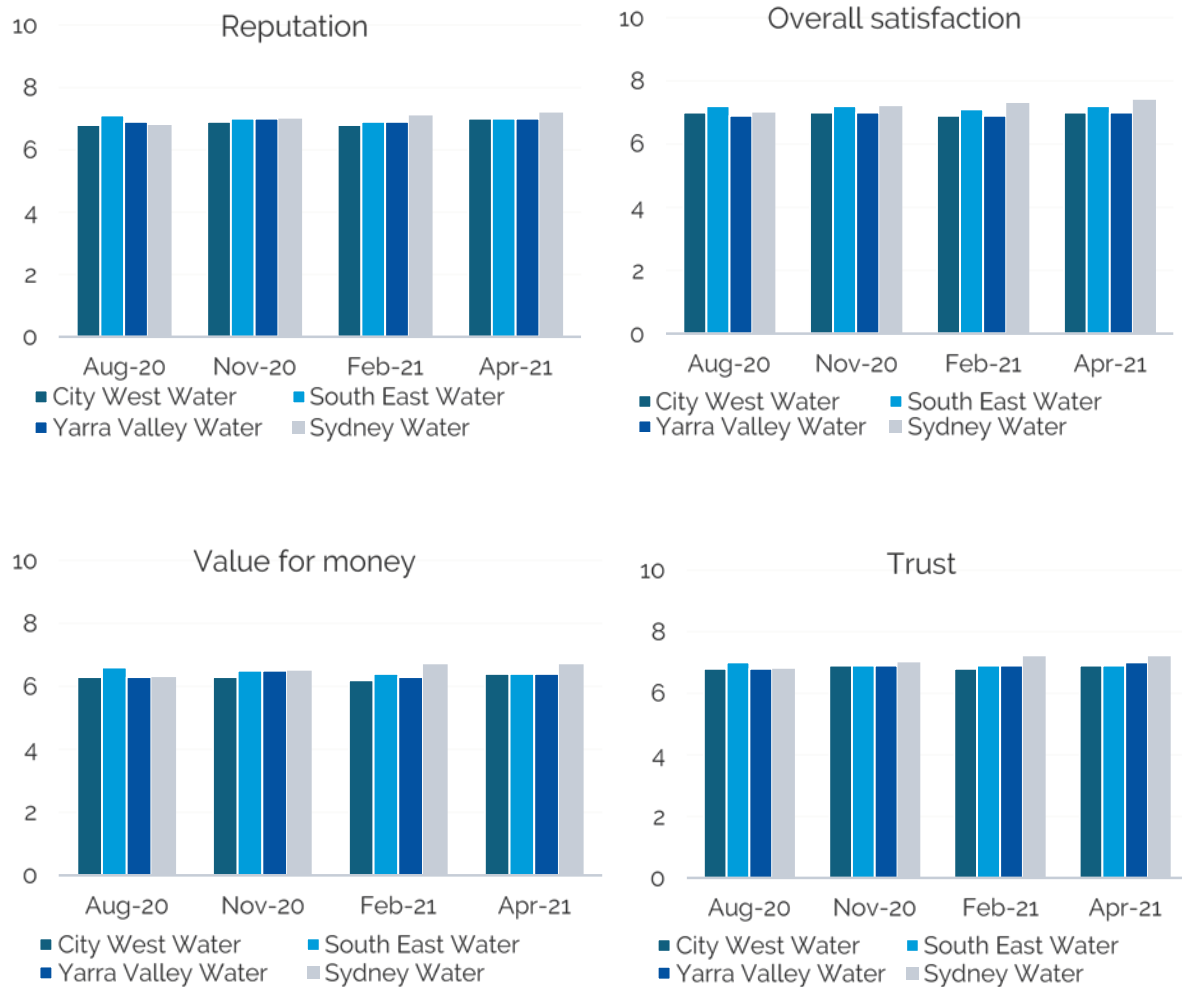
Similarly, we have compared Hunter Water and Central Coast Council's results with each other's and with Barwon Water's results (in Victoria). Hunter Water, Central Coast Council and Barwon Water are comparable in their functions and customer base.

We have included the rolling averages from the Survey for Sydney Water and Hunter Water, updated 4-times a year (i.e. each time we conducted the Survey). As 2020-21 was the first year that we surveyed Central Coast Council, we have only included the average at the end of the year. We can include rolling averages for Central Coast Council in 2021-22.

**i** Sydney Water's results have remained stable.

Figure 1 shows that after a slight increase in November 2020, Sydney Water's results have remained relatively stable in 2020-21. Further, Sydney Water has performed favourably when compared to the Victorian utilities.

Figure 1 Customer satisfaction results for Sydney Water and City West Water, South East Water and Yarra Valley Water (Vic) scored from 0-10



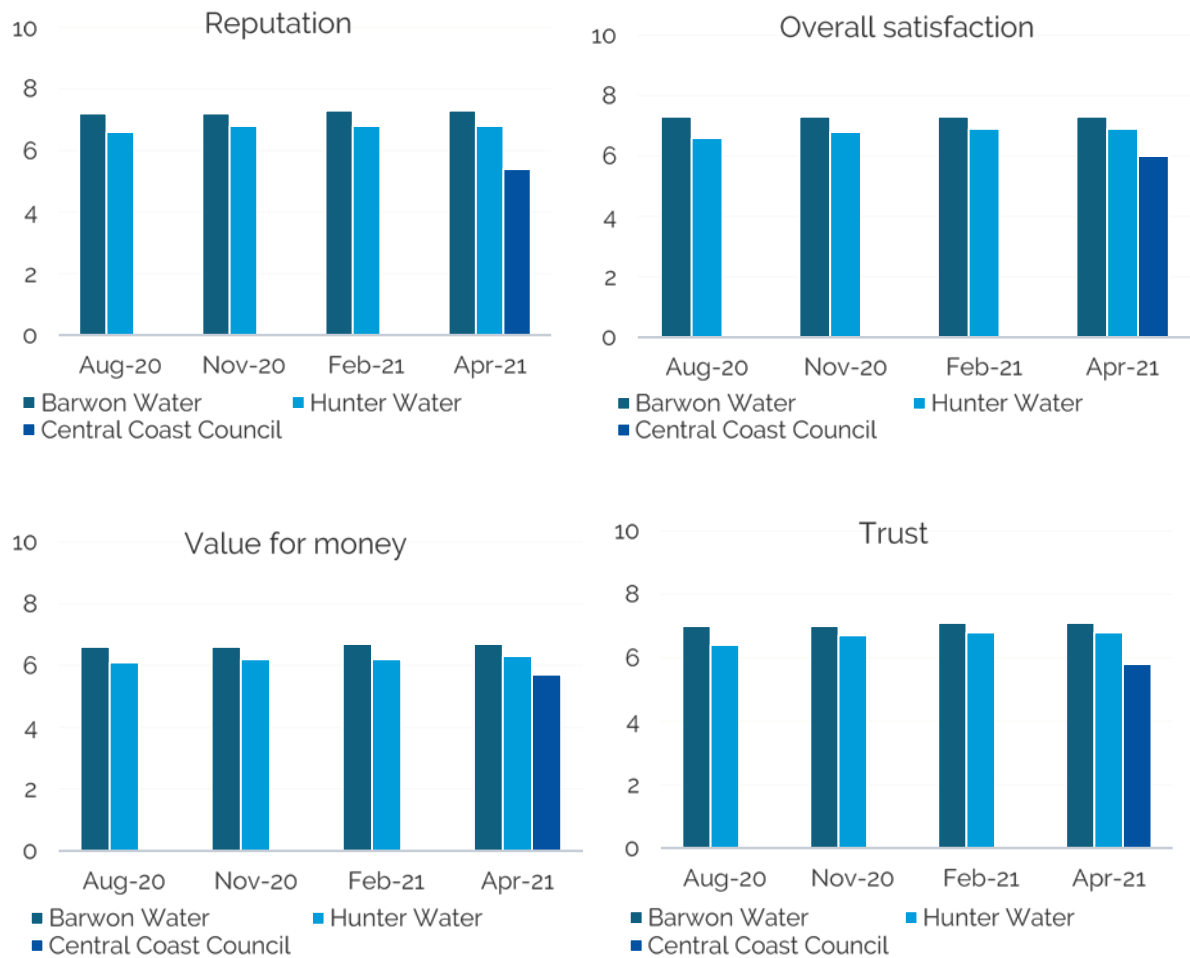
**i** Hunter Water's results have remained stable.

Neither Hunter Water nor Central Coast Council performed as well as Barwon Water in Victoria.

We have not yet collected enough data on Central Coast Council to draw accurate conclusions about its performance, having only surveyed its customers in 2020-21.

Future surveys may provide greater clarity on Central Coast Council's performance.

Figure 2 Customer satisfaction results for Hunter Water, Central Coast Council and Barwon Water (Vic) scored from 0-10



## 6 What next and who to speak to?

We intend to continue surveying the customers of Sydney Water, Hunter Water and Central Coast Council in 2021-22. We will publish the next round of Survey results by October 2021.

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