

Upper Condamine

Date: Wednesday, 24 June 2026

Time: 2.00pm – 4.00pm

Location: Brookstead Community Hall (Madeline Street, Brookstead)

Attendees

Chair: Nathaniel Ash (General Manager South)

Committee members: Fraser Bligh, Paul McMahon, Peter Brownhalls, Graham Sweetlove (joined later)

Sunwater representatives: Rinesh Ram (Water Security & Policy Advisor), Brodie Shepperd (Senior Project Manager), Alyssa Sennema (Commercial Advisory Manager), Darrell McKinlay (Senior Operator Maintainer), Benita Tiernan (Customer Engagement Advisor)

Apologies: Lindsay Kreig, Johannes Roellgen

Minutes:

Agenda items		
Item no.	Item	Presenter
1	Meeting Open	Nathaniel Ash
2	Operations Manual Amendment	Rinesh Ram
3	Operational update	Nathaniel Ash
4	PCM Works	Nathaniel Ash
5	Smart Schemes	Brodie Shepperd
6	General Business	Nathan Ash
7	Meeting Close	

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1. Business and Organisational Update

- Sunwater advised of recent organisational changes, including the appointment of an interim CEO.
- Customer functions have now been integrated into the Operations business unit under the leadership of the Executive General Manager, Operations and Customer.
- The change is intended to strengthen customer focus alongside operational delivery.

2. Operations Manual Amendment Update

2.1. Update

- The Operations Manual amendment process commenced in 2023 and has now been finalised.
- Approval has been received from the Department.
- A key outcome is greater flexibility to offer shorter-term announced allocations rather than only annual allocations.
- The changes will begin influencing announced allocations from July 2026.
- Internal documentation has been updated, and public website updates are pending.

2.2. Customer Feedback

Committee members raised concerns that:

- Customers may not understand the new allocation process.
- Existing communications have not sufficiently explained the practical implications.
- More accessible information is required showing:
 - Previous rules versus new rules.
 - How short-term allocations will operate.
 - Worked examples of customer impacts.
- Members requested clearer communication materials and broader customer engagement.

3. Water Storage, Forecasts and Allocations

- Leslie Dam storage trends and drawdown projections were reviewed.
- Forecasts indicate the possibility of drier conditions in coming years.
- Preliminary allocation modelling suggests the Upper Condamine scheme may remain around the 100% allocation range, subject to formal announcement.
- Committee members discussed usage trends, inflows, losses and storage forecasts.

4. Planned Corrective Works and Capital Program

4.1. FY26 Delivery

- Several projects were deferred due to site conditions, revised methodologies or procurement issues.
- Significant savings were achieved through alternate delivery approaches and project reassessments.
- Planned expenditure was approximately \$2 million, with actual expenditure significantly lower due to project delays and optimisation opportunities.
- Key Projects Discussed
 - Leslie Dam riprap assessment and future remediation works.
 - Leslie gate valve replacement and refurbishment strategy.
 - North Branch works deferred due to wet conditions.
 - Gate refurbishment program.

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- Yarramalong sheet piling remediation study.
- Crane upgrades across southern region schemes.
- Pittsworth office remediation works.
- Fishway Discussion
- Ongoing assessment of whether fishway requirements apply to Yarramalong remediation works.
- Early indications suggest a fishway may not be required under current Queensland arrangements.
- Final determination is still pending.

5. Smart Schemes Program

5.1. Objectives

- Develop hydraulic and hydrological models for the Upper Condamine scheme.
- Improve visibility of water movement throughout the system.
- Reduce losses and improve water delivery efficiency.
- Increase water resilience and operational decision-making capability.

5.2. Key Components

- Additional telemetry and gauging stations.
- Expanded smart metering network.
- Hydraulic modelling of water movement.
- Hydrological modelling of rainfall and catchment inflows.
- Integration of customer pumping data.

5.3. Benefits Discussed

- Improved water ordering and delivery accuracy.
- Reduced losses from schemes.
- Better operational planning.
- Less travel for operators.
- Improved visibility of meter data for customers in future customer portal developments.

5.4. Customer Concerns Raised

- Future water ordering process changes.
- Customer portal functionality.
- Access to telemetry data.
- Costs and value proposition associated with the Smart Schemes program.
- Maintaining operator engagement rather than relying solely on remote system management.

6. Renewals, Annuity and Service & Performance Plans (SPP)

- Discussion occurred regarding renewals, annuity and potential future regulatory arrangements.
- Committee members requested improved access to historical renewal information.
- Interest was expressed in being able to track:
 - Proposed expenditure.
 - Actual expenditure.
 - Deferred works.
 - Historical trends over time.

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- Sunwater advised it is exploring more dynamic ways of presenting Service & Performance Plan information rather than relying solely on annual PDF documents.

7. Pump Station Upgrade Discussion

- Yarramalong upgrades were discussed.
- Current estimate is approximately \$2 million.
- Works include:
 - Main switchboard replacement.
 - Electrical upgrades.
 - Internal building upgrades.
 - Associated design works.
- Pump replacement is separate from this scope.

8. Department Update

8.1. Water Planning

- Great Artesian Basin Water Plan replacement process is underway.
- Queensland Murray-Darling Basin water plans are expected to undergo review and replacement processes leading up to 2029.
- Stakeholder consultation and submissions will form part of future engagement activities.

8.2. Basin Plan

- Surface water recovery targets have been met in Queensland Murray-Darling Basin catchments.
- Groundwater recovery remains underway in some tributary systems.
- Basin Plan and Commonwealth Water Act reviews are progressing.
- Further consultation opportunities will become available as discussion papers and reports are released.

9. Meeting close

10. Action Items

#	Action Item	Owner	Due/Timing
UC002	Operations Manual changes - distribute a clear customer communication package explaining new allocation rules, differences from previous arrangements and practical examples.	Sunwater	Following meeting
UC003	Conduct future customer engagement sessions regarding Smart Schemes rollout and new water ordering processes.	Sunwater	Prior to implementation
UC004	Provide CAC with clearer access to historical renewals and Service & Performance Plan expenditure information where possible.	Sunwater	Ongoing
UC005	Continue investigation and determination regarding Yarramalong fishway requirements.	Sunwater	Pending regulatory determination
UC006	Progress customer portal enhancements to provide greater visibility of telemetry and pumping information.	Sunwater	Ongoing
UC007	Schedule next CAC meeting around release of updated SPP information.	Sunwater	To be confirmed

11. Approval and Review

Chair:	Nathanial Ash, General Manager
Minutes:	Benita Tiernan, Customer Engagement Advisor
Date:	Friday 26 June 2026