

Barker Barambah Customer Advisory Committee

Date: Thursday 20 November 2025

Time: 12:30pm - 2:00pm

Location: Bjelke-Petersen Dam Office, Haager Drive, MOFFATDALE

Attendees:

Customer representatives: Jason Godden; Jacob Berghofer; Cindy Godden; Damien Sippel; Stuart Nicholson; Adam McVeigh

Sunwater representatives: Kayleen Walsh (Sunwater Board member); Darren Large ((General Manager Burnett and Lower Mary (BLM)); Shannon Lancaster (Operations Manager BLM); Gary Goschnick (Senior Storage Operator, Operations BLM); Matthew Pearce (Head of Regulatory and Pricing); Letisha Lim (Stakeholder Relations Manager) (online); Sarah O'Grady (Stakeholder Relations Advisor) (online).

Apologies: Claire Kapernick

Minutes:

Agenda items		
Item no.	Item	Presenter
1	Meeting open	Darren Large
2	Customer engagement	Sarah O'Grady
3	Regulated asset base (RAB) Irrigation Price review	Matthew Pearce
4	Service and Performance Plan (S&PP) Barker Barambah	Darren Large
5	General business	Darren Large
6	Meeting close	

1. Meeting open

- Meeting opened at 12:30pm.
- Introductions delivered, including Sunwater's Board member, Kayleen Walsh.
- Sunwater gave an overview of the agenda.

2. Customer engagement

Sunwater provided an overview of the CAC member survey, revised CAC Terms of Reference and Sunwater's Customer Survey.

- **Member question:** Member asked if the customer survey started in 2019.
- **Sunwater response:** Sunwater confirmed it did.

3. Regulated asset base (RAB) Irrigation Price review

In response to the Queensland Government's consideration of a regulated asset base (RAB) methodology for renewals recovery, Sunwater presented on its RAB review, its purpose, scope and key dates; Queensland Competition Authority (QCA) methodology and the significance of closing annuity balances.

- **Member question:** Member commented the RAB appears to be the better option in the short-term and asked whether, at some point in the future, the annuity approach might become the preferred option for the Barker Barambah Water Supply Scheme (WSS).
- **Sunwater response:** Sunwater noted there's a cross over point for each scheme, and it varies for each scheme. While the RAB methodology extends cost recovery over a longer period, both approaches are designed to ensure Sunwater recoups its costs.
- **Member question:** Member asked whether different schemes could choose which methodology they prefer.
- **Sunwater response:** Sunwater explained that operating two methodologies would be challenging from an accounting perspective. Therefore, Sunwater's preference is to apply a single methodology across all schemes. Ultimately, the decision rests with the Queensland Government.
- **Member question:** Member asked whether the decision would be made by the Queensland Government or by vote.
- **Sunwater response:** Sunwater confirmed it is a Queensland Government decision. However, customers are encouraged to share their views with Sunwater, and any feedback will be included in Sunwater's proposal to the QCA.
- **Member question:** Member asked who will cover the cost of the repairs to the outlet gate at Silverleaf Weir.
- **Sunwater response:** Sunwater confirmed that as Silverleaf weir forms part of the Barker Barambah scheme these costs are shared across the entire scheme and will be included in the fixed charge, as it relates to ongoing maintenance.
- **Member question:** Member asked whether the operating costs for Barlil Weir would fall under Barker Barambah costings.
- **Sunwater response:** Sunwater explained this represents a reliability uplift for customers and allowable costs will form part of Barker Barambah costings. It is up to government to determine what costs are considered allowable.
- **Member question:** Member asked Sunwater to confirm what interest rates were used in the calculator.
- **Sunwater response:** Sunwater noted it uses the weighted average cost of capital (WACC) set by the QCA, which is currently 6.66% under the existing price path and applied in the annuity. The QCA reviews and resets this rate every four years.

- **Member question:** Member asked whether the subsidised price represents the difference between the customer price and the target price shown at the top.
- **Sunwater response:** Sunwater confirmed this is correct.
- **Member comment:** Member asked about the Irrigation Pricing Rebate Scheme and who is promoting it.
- **Sunwater response:** Sunwater confirmed the scheme is administered by QRIDA and applications are now open. Sunwater will provide a link to the QRIDA portal. **ACTION**
Action response: <https://qrda.qld.gov.au/program/irrigation-pricing-rebate-scheme>. Sunwater has shared information about the 15% rebate with all irrigation customers.
- **Member comment:** Member confirmed applications can be completed online through the QRIDA portal or via a paper application form. The 15% rebate supports owner-operated businesses that use water for irrigation and earn primary production income.

4. Service and Performance Plan (S&PP) Barker Barambah

Sunwater provided an overview of the S&PP Barker Barambah 2025.

- **Member question:** Member asked which figure – ‘Sunwater actual’ or ‘QCA actual’ – represents the actual cost in the operations and maintenance cost table.
- **Sunwater response:** Sunwater explained the \$1394.2 is the QCA forecast, which reflects what the QCA has determined Sunwater can recover from customers. The \$1917.8 figure is Sunwater’s actual cost to run the scheme.
- **Member comment:** Member suggested the figures could be labelled more clearly.
- **Member question:** Member asked whether Sunwater could provide accurate figures for the electricity metrics (in Table 7).
- **Sunwater response:** Sunwater explained the \$18,000 figure should be approximately \$13,000. Sunwater will update Table 7 in the S&PP, upload it to the webpage, and notify the CAC. **ACTION**
- **Member question:** Member asked whether Sunwater is considering renewable energy options to help reduce electricity costs for the Upper Redgate Scheme.
- **Sunwater response:** Sunwater confirmed it is exploring options including solar energy. It’s a reasonable investment in infrastructure to offset the power costs. The payback period is about 12-years and solar panels have approximately a 10-year life.
- **Member question:** Member asked Sunwater to confirm whether the pumping usage figure (shown in Table 7) is accurate and if it represents metered allocation.
- **Sunwater response:** Sunwater confirmed the figure is correct and it represents metered allocation.
- **Member question:** Member asked why safety costs are covered by the Queensland Government.
- **Sunwater response:** Sunwater explained dam improvement costs - such as the wave wall - are funded by shareholders rather than customers. Major safety upgrades, including those that prevent dam failure, are also covered by shareholders.

5. Upper Redgate Scheme options

Sunwater provided an overview of the Upper Redgate Scheme options, including keys challenges and issues.

- **Member question:** Member asked if the figures in Table 2 (on Challenges and Issues slide) are from the Upper Redgate pump.

- **Sunwater response:** Sunwater confirmed they are.
- **Member question:** Member asked whether Sunwater could overlay the Redgate re-lift graph (on Base Case slide) with announced allocations to determine if the allocation occurred late in the year.
- **Sunwater response:** Sunwater confirmed that in 2019/20 the allocation was zero per cent and water was allocated on 17 February 2020. Sunwater will confirm the details for 2020/21. **ACTION**
- **Member comment:** Member noted parts A and B would result in significant costs for producers and expressed concern that the water scheme is too expensive.
- **Sunwater response:** Sunwater explained the purpose of the study is to develop and present options to address these issues. The scheme currently has high losses and substantial operational costs, particularly for electricity. This study aims to identify potential strategies to mitigate these challenges.
- **Member question:** Member queried whether Sunwater has considered hydro options.
- **Sunwater response:** Sunwater explained hydro has not been assessed because it requires a head of 10-15 metres, which is not available in this situation. Additionally, the capital investment needed would be significant. While electricity operating costs are high, the cost of changing the infrastructure would also be substantial.
- **Member question:** Member asked whether Queensland Government could own some of the capital infrastructure to reduce costs for customers.
- **Sunwater response:** Sunwater confirmed this could be possible; however, it is not part of the current arrangement.
- **Member question:** Member requested consultation / meetings with stakeholders affected by the initial longlist of options.
- **Sunwater response:** Sunwater confirmed its intention to engage with impacted stakeholders once the longlist has been refined.
- **Member question:** Member requested a status update on Raham Francis Weir.
- **Sunwater response:** Sunwater advised it doesn't own Raham Francis Weir; it only owns and operates the valve. There have been difficulties contacting and communicating with the owner, with the last interaction occurring during the previous price path – about two years ago.
- **Member comment:** Member advised they have contacted the owner, who is amicable and open to discussing options and a solution. The member offered to assist in facilitating communication with the owner. **ACTION**
- **Sunwater response:** Sunwater noted it would welcome the opportunity to meet with the owner to discuss options and potential solutions.
- **Member question:** Member queried how the weir could be owned by a single person.
- **Sunwater response:** Sunwater noted it's a unique arrangement and showed the property boundaries and weir location on a map.

- **Member question:** Member asked whether Sunwater has considered hybrid solutions, such as alternative pipelines, to reduce pressure so that not all water needs to be pumped over the hill.
- **Sunwater response:** Sunwater confirmed it has explored 16 different options, noting Option 13 references some individual pipeline alignments. Option 8 explores tunnelling through the hill as a means of reducing pumping head. A further option worth considering is laying new pipe around the hill.

6. Meeting close

Meeting closed at 2:35pm. Next meeting scheduled for March/April 2026.

7. Actions

Action item	Owner	Status
Sunwater to provide webpage link to the QRIDA portal	Letisha Lim	Completed (link provided above in Section 3)
Sunwater to update Table 7 in the S&PP, upload it to the webpage and notify the CAC	Darren Large	
Sunwater to progress Raham Francis Weir options	Darren Large	
Sunwater to engage with growers on Upper Redgate Scheme shortlisted options	Darren Large	
CAC member to facilitate meeting with owner of Raham Francis Weir and Sunwater to discuss options and potential solutions	CAC member / Darren Large	
Sunwater to investigate option of a shorter, more direct pipeline from the dam to the Upper Redgate system	Darren Large	

8. Approval and review

Chair:	Darren Large
Minutes:	Sarah O'Grady
Date:	16 December 2026

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