

Bundaberg Customer Advisory Committee

Date and time: Wednesday 10 September 2025, 10am – 11.30am

Location: Sunwater Bundaberg Office, 34 Enterprise Street, Bundaberg

Attendees

Customer representatives: Peter McLennan, Dean Akers, Tanya Howard, Simon Doyle, Dale Holliss, Bree Watson

Sunwater representatives: Darren Large (GM Burnett & Lower Mary) Sarah O’Grady (Stakeholder Relations Advisor, online), Emma Natty (Senior Stakeholder Relations Advisor), Stuart Low (Owners Representative), Gordon Delaney (Environmental and Approvals Lead), Brodie Kenzler (A/Operations Manager)

Department representatives: Amanda Casey, Bruce Bass

Apologies: Mark Pressler

Minutes:

Agenda items		
Item no.	Item	Presenter
1	Meeting open and introduction	Darren Large
2	Fred Haigh Filter Patch project	Darren Large
3	Bundaberg Scheme Distribution Capacity Upgrade (BSDCU) project	Darren Large
4	Paradise Dam Improvement Project update	Emma Natty, Stuart Low, Gordon Delaney
5	Operations update	Darren Large
6	General business	Darren Large
7	Meeting close	Darren Large

1. Meeting open

- Meeting opened 10am.
- Introductions conducted.
 - Sunwater noted new members who have joined the committee and acknowledged outgoing Chair Mark Mammino's long standing commitment to the Bundaberg scheme. Sunwater thanked him for his dedication, support and guidance over many years particularly acknowledging the journey with regards to Paradise Dam Essential works and dam improvement projects.
- Sunwater gave an overview of the agenda.

2. Fred Haigh Filter Patch project

- Sunwater provided an update on the Fred Haigh Filter Patch project.
- Member asked how the work was paid for.
 - Sunwater explained it was a dam safety improvement initiative, which is part of regular maintenance required for long life assets such as dams.

3. Bundaberg Scheme Distribution Capacity Upgrade (BSDCU) project

- Sunwater provided an update on the BSDCU project.
- Member asked whether Sunwater was disappointed to receive only five survey responses.
 - Sunwater explained although only five survey responses were received, the 12 detailed interviews provided the economists with the necessary data to support their analysis. Historical survey results also informed the study.

4. Paradise Dam Improvement Project (PDIP) update

- Sunwater provided an update on the PDIP.
- This included the likely scenario for implementing and managing a temporary reduced full supply level (FSL) to facilitate some initial works to lower the environmental intake level in the existing intake tower.
- This work needs to be undertaken prior to construction of the new dam to provide increased outlet capacity and better manage the impact of inflows and flood events on construction (duration of overtopping events).
- This work is expected to take two to three months and will potentially be scheduled in either mid-2026 or mid-2027. Timing of this work is to be confirmed.
- Member requested an estimate of the initial water allocation customers are likely to receive.
 - Sunwater explained allocations will depend on available storage levels at the time. However, the plan is to model various scenarios to help customers understand the potential outcomes.
- Member asked if it would be roughly 60 or 70 per cent.
 - Sunwater confirmed it would likely be in that range.

- Member asked how many megalitres would be flowing down the river at that point in time, and whether a free water system would be used again.
 - Sunwater confirmed out-of-allocation events may be invoked again (to allow customers access to water being released), but agreement and details need to be reviewed with government agencies. Sunwater explained it would calculate and confirm the volume, which may be in the order of 30,000 to 40,000 ML (**ACTION**).
- Member asked about the notice period provided to customers for work related to Storage Level Management.
 - Sunwater explained it is engaging early in the process, and this meeting is the first of many conversations. Timeframes are yet to be confirmed and will be communicated later in the year.
- Member asked whether the northside could support the southside by accessing water from Fred Haigh Dam while the project is underway.
 - Sunwater explained the water sharing rules and announced allocations (AA) are designed to accommodate such scenarios. When calculating the AA, Sunwater considers the volume of water in Fred Haigh Dam due to the existing capacity-sharing arrangement. A member noted up to 15% of Fred Haigh's storage is allocated to the southside.
- Sunwater provided an update on the proposed Resource Operations Licence (ROL) amendment regarding the capacity of the environmental outlet in the new dam
- Member asked if the proposed amendment to the ROL would still allow capture of water downstream for into Ned Churchward Weir and Ben Anderson Barrage.
 - Sunwater explained water moves slowly down the river, with some being retained in downstream storages, the balance would be released via the sluice way at Ben Anderson Barrage or spill over the crest.
- Member noted past requests from environmental groups to release water gradually rather than in large amounts or through intermittent flows.
 - Sunwater responded it would aim to reduce the extent of large pulse flows and confirmed releases could be up to 14,000 ML/day as is the status quo.
- Member asked if Sunwater is seeking written feedback from customers who are supportive of the ROL amendment proposal.
 - Sunwater explained it welcomes any feedback, and evidence of consultation will help to support ROL amendment.
- Sunwater provided an update on the Mt Rawdon Pumped Hydro project (MRPH).
- Member asked if enabling MRPH access to the quarantined of Burnett Water is part of the project scope.
 - Sunwater confirmed that it is not.
- Member asked how many ML Sunwater currently has quarantined.
 - Sunwater explained that approximately 100,000 ML as a mix of medium priority (MP) and high priority (HP) water has been set aside.
- Member asked whether temporary trades are conducted through a broker.
 - Sunwater confirmed it makes water available for trading and uses a broker for this process.

- Member asked if the water would be sold through a tender process.
 - Sunwater clarified it would not be a tender process; the water would be released to the market.
- Member asked whether Sunwater only uses one water trader.
 - Sunwater confirmed it does.
- Member asked if the 1000 ML of existing allocation MRPH hold is HP water.
 - DLGWV confirmed MRPH hold 500 ML and it is HP.

5. Operations update

- Member commented that the November acrolein shutdown in recent years has been cancelled due to heat intensity, leading to a significant build-up of algae in filters. They suggested that September is a more suitable time for the shutdown and that they can't afford to have another shutdown until March.
 - Sunwater explained acrolein treatment is required every 8–10 weeks—ideally in September, around Christmas, and again in March—and acknowledged the need to balance operational factors with customer interests.
- Member asked whether late October could be considered the cutoff for the final treatment (of the calendar year).
 - Sunwater responded this timing would not allow sufficient weed growth.
- Member asked if there's an alternative to acrolein.
 - Sunwater explained no other treatment is as effective. Other chemical options take significantly longer to break down. Trials have been conducted, but the main challenge is the holding period—some alternatives require up to three weeks.
- Member asked whether physical removal could be done.
 - Sunwater explained it's not effective as acrolein, is time-consuming, and requires manual extraction of debris.
- Member asked whether Quart Pot Pump Station still floods.
 - Sunwater explained it is a dry well pump station, specifically designed to manage incoming water without flooding.

6. General business

- Member asked when the Service and Performance Plans (S&PP) would be released.
 - Sunwater confirmed S&PPs will be released in November, and the Bundaberg S&PP will be emailed to CAC members and all scheme customers ahead of the next Bundaberg CAC meeting. **(ACTION)**.
- Member asked about the electricity cost pass through (ECPT) and when it would be applied if there was any over recovery in this period.
 - Sunwater explained the trial got extended and it will follow up and provide an update **(ACTION)**.

Action update post meeting: The ECPT numbers are currently being calculated and validated, potentially to be included in next billing run but not confirmed as yet.

- Member asked whether Sunwater is involved in the Prosper 2050 process.
 - Sunwater explained four Sunwater GMs applied to participate but were not selected, so Sunwater isn't currently involved in the process.
- Member asked what would happen if Paradise Dam doesn't receive federal approval.
 - Sunwater explained it's working closely with the Office of the Coordinator-General to secure the necessary approvals.

7. Meeting close

8. Actions

Action Item	Action Owner	Status of Action
Calculate and confirm the volume reduction for the proposed temporary lowered full supply level, to facilitate for construction works for the Paradise Dam Improvement Project	Stuart Low	
Sunwater to email S&PP ahead of next CAC meeting	Sarah O'Grady	
Sunwater to provide an update on the ECPT	Darren Large	Completed (see Section 6 above)

9. Approval and review

Chair:	Darren Large
Minutes:	Sarah O'Grady
Date:	17 September 2025