

SunWater Irrigation Customer Reference Group (SICRG)

Terms of Reference (ToR)

Objectives

One of SunWater's core strategic enabling goals is to foster supportive stakeholders. SunWater wishes to generate customer support through active engagement and transparent communication to build long-term value for both customers and SunWater. SunWater wishes to:

1. Engage with customers to identify current and future water needs and deliver improved service and customer satisfaction
2. Engage with customers to build and sustain trust to ensure all are fully aware of our operating environment and constraints and our performance expectations for customers are influenced accordingly.

Purpose

The following terms of reference define the parameters of the SunWater Irrigation Customer Reference Group (SICRG) and provide a framework for the establishment and effective operation of the Group.

Role of the SICRG

The function of the SICRG is to advise SunWater on a range of strategic matters relating to SunWater's management and maintenance of irrigation assets to ensure the reliable and efficient delivery of water to irrigation customers.

The SICRG will function as a reference body for SunWater in relation to, but not limited to:

- Costs associated with operations, to assist with the next Queensland Competition Authority Irrigation Price Path recommendation
- Purpose and format of the Network Service Plans
- Levels of service and customer reporting systems
- The design of annuity, renewals and capital works programs
- Water metering standards, improvements, reporting and compliance
- Standard Contract Terms and Conditions
- Growth opportunities
- Feedback and advice on improved customer communication and education
- Scheme modernisation and efficiency
- Understanding major changes, opportunities and challenges facing customers across water supply schemes

The SICRG is not intended to be a forum for the discussion of scheme-specific issues, as these are already addressed in the Irrigation Advisory Committee for each scheme. Consequently, there will be no voting on issues. Where consensus on an issue is reached in a meeting, this consensus will be noted in the minutes.

Terms of appointment

It is anticipated the SICRG will function for a period of two years, with membership reviewed after 12 months. SICRG members are asked to commit to the SICRG for this first 12-month period.

Membership will also be reviewed when schemes transition to Local Management Arrangements.

Resignation

A member may resign by notifying SunWater in writing.

Frequency of meetings

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It is intended the SICRG will meet quarterly with special purpose meetings as required. The duration of each meeting will be approximately three to five hours.

Meetings may also be convened on an 'as needed' basis.

The location of SICRG meetings will be held in Brisbane and the timing of each quarterly meeting will be as agreed for each year by the SICRG Members.

Attendance/replacement of members

If a member is unable to attend a meeting, they must contact the Chairperson a minimum of 72 working hours prior to the meeting.

If a member is unable to attend three or more meetings, the Chairperson may ask them to reconsider their position on the SICRG.

Responsibilities of SICRG members

SICRG members agree to the following operating principles to facilitate and support successful group functioning:

- represent the interests and views of their sector to test assumptions on level of service and efficient costs
- review information/materials, documents and papers being provided as required before meetings
- help inform SunWater customers in relation to material discussed at the meeting
- provide a customer advisory role where appropriate, and act as a reference body to provide advice to SunWater on the communication of water costs information to irrigation customers in an open and transparent manner
- provide feedback to SunWater on opportunities to realise efficiencies where possible and practicable
- suggest agenda items.

Ground rules

- Allow all SICRG members to present their views
- Respect the rights and views of other members
- Attend meetings and actively participate in discussions
- Maintain confidentiality requirements
- Have their contact details circulated among SICRG members
- Abide by, and commit to, the Terms of Reference

Responsibilities of the SICRG Coordinator

The SICRG Coordinator will be responsible for setting up the SICRG and for undertaking all administrative responsibilities to ensure its smooth operation, including but not limited to venue organisation, circulating documents in advance, managing RSVPs, and designated follow-up actions. Agendas and support material will be forwarded to members at least one week before the meeting.

Responsibilities of the SICRG Secretariat

The SICRG Secretariat will be responsible for minute-taking and distribution. Furthermore:

- Minutes will record issues, actions and responsibilities arising.
- Draft minutes will be reviewed by the Chairperson within a week of each meeting.
- Draft minutes will be issued by the Secretariat to SICRG members within two weeks of each meeting.
- The SICRG will, if necessary, amend, and endorse the circulated draft minutes at the next meeting.
- Final minutes will then be circulated to all members and published on the SunWater website.

Responsibilities of the SICRG Chairperson

A Chairperson will be selected from within the members of the SICRG to convene and facilitate SICRG meetings. The Chairperson is responsible for:

- the smooth running of meetings
- allowing SICRG members to have their say

- conducting business as set out in the agenda, and keeping discussion focused on the item as set by the agenda
- ensuring a decision has been reached (where appropriate) before moving onto the next item on the agenda
- liaising with the SICRG Secretariat to arrange and draw up the agenda to be discussed at meetings
- ensuring minutes are properly drafted, issued prior to the next meeting, and endorsed.

The Chairperson will not:

- attempt to influence the outcome of a decision based on their own personal views
- display bias towards any party.

Conflicts of interest

If a member believes they may have a conflict of interest in relation to a particular issue or item of discussion at any time, the member should make this position clear to the SICRG. The SICRG will then make a determination on an appropriate code of conduct during that particular item of discussion.

Agenda items for discussion

Agenda items for discussion will be advised prior to each SICRG meeting. Additional items may be nominated by the Chairperson or individual members of the SICRG in the period leading up to meetings. The SICRG Coordinator needs to be advised of proposed agenda items one week prior to each meeting.

The number of issues placed on the agenda may be limited to allow for appropriate levels of discussion.

Remuneration

SICRG membership is voluntary. No financial remuneration will be paid to members. SunWater will meet costs associated with the meeting venue and reasonable travel, meals and accommodation where required.

Confidentiality

SICRG members will not be identified by name in the minutes to protect privacy (unless they agree otherwise). The use of broad terms (such as 'SunWater representative' and 'customer representative') will be used. Documents distributed in SICRG meetings will be subject to copyright, and permission will be required for further distribution or reproduction.

Should members wish to distribute their own information to the wider customer group, they must clearly indicate on distributed materials that the information is not an official SICRG document.

These documents must not display SunWater logos.

Dispute resolution

If a dispute arises that cannot be resolved within the scope of the meeting discussion, the members involved will be asked to participate in mediation discussions (arranged by the Chairperson) to resolve the matter and maintain the integrity of the group.

Changes to the Terms of Reference

Changes to the Terms of Reference may be made by group consensus, with the agreement of the Chairperson and SICRG Coordinator, and the approval of the SunWater Chief Executive Officer.

Media protocols

The following protocols will apply to media contact:

- While general discussions from SICRG meetings may be made public, details of individuals and their individual opinions must remain confidential.
- While SICRG members are entitled to speak to other members of the customer base about SICRG matters (unless specifically asked to maintain confidentiality), SICRG members must not speak on behalf of the SICRG to the media.
- If SICRG members are approached by the media, they must direct the enquiry to SunWater.

CRG Coordinator details:

Member of the Stakeholder Relations & Communication Team.

Membership of the SICRG

The SICRG will be made up of between eight to ten irrigation customer and sector representatives who have previously expressed an interest in participation in the SICRG and have an interest in better understanding SunWater's services, operations and costs. This number enables diversity, while still allowing for individual participation and group cohesion.

The principles that were utilised to identify individual members of the SICRG include:

1. Obtain a cross section of representatives from across the water supply schemes
2. Obtain representation from customers producing the main crop types supplied by SunWater (i.e. sugar cane, cotton, chick peas, horticulture, etc)
3. Achieve diversity in backgrounds and experience in dealing with SunWater across various issues, e.g. level of service, pricing, operations, etc.

The names of the SICRG members, and their affiliated organisation, will be published on SunWater's website, along with these Terms of Reference. :

Endorsed by SICRG membership: 8 March 2018