

Upper Condamine Customer Advisory Committee

Date: Wednesday 24 May 2023

Time: 10:00am - 12:00pm

Location: Brookstead Hall

Attendees:

Representing customers: Fraser Bligh, Paul McMahon, Jan Lafrenz, Johannes Roellgen

Sunwater representatives: Craig Cahill (General Manager South), Darrel McKinlay (Senior Operator Maintainer), David Towner (Operations Coordinator, South), Sheridan Ward (Stakeholder Relations Advisor), Keelie O’Sullivan (Stakeholder Relations Advisor), Casey Macfarlane (Water Planning Officer)

Department representatives: Peter Brownhalls (DRDMW) and Jackie Lee

Apologies: None received.

Minutes:

Agenda items		
Item no.	item	Presenter
1	Meeting open and previous actions	Craig Cahill
2	Previous meeting actions	Craig Cahill
3	Operations update	Craig Cahill
4	End of Water Year	Casey Macfarlane
5	CAC Membership Review	Craig Cahill
6	Operations Manual Amendment	Craig Cahill
7	Water Trading Board updates	Craig Cahill
8	General business	All
9	Meeting close	Craig Cahill

1. Meeting open

- Introductions - in room and online
- Sunwater confirmed minutes were circulated and published on the Sunwater website

2. Previous meeting actions

2.1. Changes in insurance

Sunwater advised that it has been communicating with insurance companies to help them understand how we operate. This enabled Sunwater to share protocols, procedures and asset management plans to ensure they can apply the appropriate risk profile. While not concrete, it is hoped that this work with the insurance underwriters will minimise how much insurances will increase. No additional clarification on this matter was sought from members.

2.2. West Bank breakout

DRDMW advised that additional inspections were required. It is a challenging topic for the department when it's a naturally occurring event within the water course. No simple solution to this. If there's a remedy identified through interested parties it needs to be via a process such as a regional body or trust.

It was raised during the meeting that this seems skewed - as a landowner with riparian land there is no additional support, however it is expected that a formal process is followed for maintenance of that riparian zone.

It was noted that DRDMW will do what they can to assist, however there is not a simple or fast solution.

There may be some opportunities for funding (flood repair funding). It was also noted by Sunwater that there may be state funding available should landowners wish to individually research.

3. Operations update

3.1. Dual Purpose Meters

There is a requirement that all dual-purpose meters are validated by 30 November 2025. There are 53 dual purpose meters that are required to meet standards by 30 November 2025.

Member Q: How are usage patterns determined?

Sunwater A: The data is based on historical extraction data. The scheme will cover 50% and the landowner covers 50%.

3.2. Point Orange Device

First one was trialled on 27 March in St George in a location where no phone service was available. It uses the Telstra network on the Narrowband network Internet of Things (IoT) and enables data to be pushed backwards and forwards accordingly. It is intended to provide data to the department and customers, so information is accessible in real time once the trial is complete.

Next year telemetry will be available and government grant opportunities may arise to reach those telemetry requirements. Sunwater is looking at options within schemes and is liaising with the Department about options to offset costs.

Sunwater is providing a transparent view of current position and intends to share data that is important for landowners and the Department. To date, not a lot of data has been received and it is still not viewable on the platform. Sunwater will be a third-party provider and assist to extract relevant data to relevant parties.

There are conversations occurring between Sunwater and the Department to roll out metering across the catchments, provided telemetry is available and Sunwater is required to have telemetry on allocation.

Member Q: Have irrigators had access to the pump flows?

Sunwater A: No, it is currently within a trial period and it has not been provided.

4. End of Water Year

4.1. Temporary Water Transfers

Newsletter distribution to occur week of 29 May 2023. Temporary water transfer applications need to be submitted by 23 June to ensure Sunwater can action by 30 June. Voluntary meter reads can occur prior to 4 July. Breach notifications follow if necessary.

5. CAC membership

5.1. Membership Review

This CAC has been operating for a period of 12 months now – how are things? What do members think? Responses included:

- does not feel different
- important to have meaningful conversations
- wondered why Council do not attend?

Action – Sunwater to discuss attendance with Council.

6. Operations Manual Amendment

6.1. Overview

Sunwater provided an overview of the amendments and scenarios available under the new rule. Key takeaway is that medium priority allocations will occur earlier in the year and a higher announced allocation. We are in the final stages with comments closing shortly. The application is due to the Department by 9 June and will not be assessed in the current water year. Essentially stakeholders will have access to a parcel of water that previously was not accessible.

7. Water Trading Board

7.1. Overview

It is in everyone's interests to ensure more people are aware of the water trading platform. Essentially a noticeboard and Sunwater has created the platform to connect sellers and buyers.

8. General business

None

9. Meeting close

12:00pm

10. Approval and Review

Chair:	Craig Cahill
Minutes:	Sheridan Ward
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