



Essential Services Commission

Charter of Consultation and Regulatory Practice –
Consultation Paper

Barwon Water response

Response Date: 29 January 2018

Barwon Water would like to thank the ESC for the opportunity to comment on the revised Charter of Consultation and Regulatory Practice given the focus and value of customer consultation in the water and other industries throughout Australia.

Barwon Water response

Principles based approach

The approach demonstrates a considered and respectful approach to engagement and consultation. The approach provides opportunities for stakeholders, including Barwon Water, to learn and seek leadership from the Commission in areas of engagement and, in return, foster and continue to build on our direct engagement and consultation with each other.

Barwon Water position: Overall support for the engagement approach.

Principles

We are transparent and accountable

Barwon Water supports this principle.

Our engagement is considered, planned and genuine

Barwon Water supports this principle.

Our engagement is inclusive

Barwon Water supports this principle.

Our information is clear, accessible and simple to understand

Barwon Water supports this principle.

We will listen and learn to improve our consultation and engagement

Barwon Water supports this principle.

Barwon Water position: Overall support for the engagement principles. The principles outlining transparency, inclusion, listening and learning align with industry best practice as defined by the International Association of Public Participation and align with Barwon Water's engagement framework and practices when engaging and consulting with customers and the broader community.

Approach to regulatory practice

We will ensure our regulatory regimes are designed to promote outcomes that are in the interests of consumers.

Barwon Water supports this objective so that short term outcomes are not the key drivers of policies and investments in the Victorian water industry.

We will create effective and efficient incentives for businesses to perform.

Barwon Water supports this practice however would like greater clarity on how 'value' will be measured and assessed and in return how any incentives and disincentives will be levied.

We will deliver high quality advice to government on issues related to economic regulation.

Given the ESC's access to the broad range of data of Victorian water businesses, we agree that the ESC creates value in producing such reports and advice.

The only exception applies to the 'Victorian Urban Water Utility Benchmarking' report as per industry feedback to the ESC via WSAA.

We will be an organisation that promotes thought leadership and delivers great performance.

Barwon Water supports this objective.

We will continue to improve the way we engage with key stakeholders.

Barwon Water supports this objective.

We will encourage better engagement practices.

Barwon Water supports this objective.

It would be beneficial to reference what 'good' and 'better' engagement is my perhaps relating it to IAP2.

Barwon Water position: Overall support for all objectives. The objectives demonstrate the ESC continuing to improve its own understanding of customer needs, the quality of industry publications and its own processes.