



Customer Reference Group meeting summary

Time: 10:00am – 12:00pm, Wednesday 22 May 2024

Location: Traralgon office

Tour: - Nil

<p>Attendees</p>	<p>Customer Reference Group (CRG) members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Diane Wilkinson (Chair) - Adam Tyson - Robert Gaulton - Tania Brown - Simon Ortega - Desley Gray - Olivia Brewer <p>Gippsland Water:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sarah Cumming, Managing Director - Michael Crane, General Manager People and Culture - Paul Young, Manager Asset Planning - Danielle Simpson, Developer Works Advisor (Agency Commander) - Glenn Nankervis, Project Officer capital Planning (Agency Commander) - Danny Rodaughan, Healthy Country Lead - Katrina Coulson, Manager Communications and Engagement - Emma Lewis, Senior Communications and Engagement Lead - Mark Vitlin, Communications and Engagement Advisor
<p>Apologies</p>	<p>CRG members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Suzie Lewis

Items for discussion

1. Welcome – Diane Wilkinson
2. Our response to the Mirboo North storm incident
3. Our role in mine rehabilitation planning
4. Proposed Traditional Owner mural for the Stratford water tower
5. Updates
6. Other business



Safety and wellbeing

Customer focussed

Innovation

Accountability

Collaboration

Integrity and respect

Following an Acknowledgement of Country and welcome from Diane Wilkinson (CRG Chair), the meeting moved to key discussion items.

Item 2. Our response to the Mirboo North storm incident

Danielle Simpson and Glenn Nankervis

Danielle and Glenn outlined the severe impacts of the storm at Mirboo North on our facilities and the resulting effect on services. The storm also affected over 70 assets across our service area, creating a serious challenge for the organisation.

Access to Mirboo North was restricted by fallen trees and other hazards. Our response was immediate, with the cooperation of the SES clearing key access roads. Restoring services took some time because of the extent of damage and limited communications. Temporary work arounds were required for an extended period. We were quick to supply bottled water and keep the community informed throughout the emergency. Their response and public comments reflected their appreciation.

Learnings and future actions include being better prepared technically and the importance of open and ongoing public communication.

CRG members expressed great support and thanks for our actions.

Item 3. Our role in mine rehabilitation planning

Sarah Cumming and Paul Young

The evolving nature of mine rehabilitation planning in the Latrobe Valley was highlighted. The scale and long-term nature of the project presents challenges in water supply and management. Once resolved, however, it could provide predictability and stable income for Gippsland Water. This would help contain tariff costs for all customers over the longer term.

Chief concern at this point was identifying potential volumes and time frames. A yet to be completed environmental effects statement will also be an important influence.

CRG members noted the uncertainty of the situation and yet to be identified environmental impacts as well as long term impact on tariffs.

Item 4. Proposed Traditional Owner mural for the Stratford water tower

Danny Rodaughan

Danny provided background on our use of Traditional Owner artwork prepared by Alice Pepper. The artwork is designed to demonstrate our commitment to working with Traditional Owners to care for land and waterways and build a sense of pride in local Aboriginal culture.

We've partnered with Gippsland Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation (GLaWAC) to determine the best location for a large-scale installation of the artwork. The Stratford water tower has been selected for the project, and we expected it will be well received locally. Stratford is home to the culturally significant Knob Reserve and hosts a popular arts trail through the town.

The CRG expressed strong support for the Traditional Owner relationship and this project. They were keen to see further art projects and highlighted the potential for projects like this to bring people together.



Item 5. Updates

Katrina Coulson and Emma Lewis

- A survey is soon to commence asking for community views on the taste of Sale water. Comparative surveys will also take place in Warragul and Morwell. The CRG will be advised of results.
- We're selling water bottles as a fundraiser for the Gippsland Emergency Relief Fund (GERF). The bottles are branded with our 'Drink Gippy Tap' campaign. The initiative has attracted positive community comment as well as raising funds.
- We've been focusing on sharing environmental messages with our community through our Caretakers for tomorrow campaign. We're attending events to engage with our community, and distributing seeds for drought tolerant native plants, Billy Buttons and Everlasting Daisies.

Item 6. Other business

Conducting future CRG meeting remotely (via Teams) was discussed. Consensus was that in-person meetings were supported, however the ability to join remotely when the meeting allowed would be a positive.

Adam noted the state budget listed a number of GW projects to be delayed. (This will be checked and clarified.)

The Chair closed the meeting at 12:00pm.

Next meeting

August. Date to be confirmed.

