

Diversions Cost Review – Meeting summary

COMMITTEE NAME	Diversions Cost Review Customer Reference Group
MEETING DATE	26 November 2024 (online meeting via MS Teams)
ATTENDEES	Reference Committee: Nicholas Legge, Geoff Voight, Cameron Reid, Graeme Watson, Christopher Ramsay, Heather Thompson, Peter Serpell, Jason Reid, Adrian Tuddenham, Richard Carter, GMW attendees: Peter Clydesdale, Geoff Coburn, Steve Gemmill, Dale McGraw, Lisa Dudley, Chloe Warburton Facilitator: Cath Botta
APOLOGIES	Brian Reid

Main Topics Discussed

Meeting 1 recap and future agenda items
Facilitator Cath Botta welcomed the group to the meeting and provided a recap of the first meeting, which was held on Wednesday 28 August 2024.
Water 101 – Understanding Water Entitlements
Geoff Coburn provided an overview of Victoria's water entitlement framework and how the diversions entitlements and services fit into it.
Diversions landscape
- Peter Clydesdale, Steve Gemmill and Dale McGraw provided an overview of the diversions landscape, including the various zones and the water use activities that take place within them. - They also provided a "heat map" of which tasks are undertaken by Diversions Inspectors throughout the year, including: - Campaign meter reading - Use estimation - Stream flow monitoring and rosters and restrictions - Compliance tasks – observation, monitoring and surveillance for irrigation and domestic and stock, and investigation - Meter inspection, testing, certification/validation, repairs and maintenance - Customer enquiries - Non-customer enquiries - Complaints via EWOV. - Group members requested some clarification around which categories certain tasks were undertaken in. - It was queried how the Diversions Inspectors have fared with testing the new system for logging work against job numbers to track time on tasks, and GMW advised it had been received well and was relatively efficient. - Group members queried how Diversions Inspectors undertook compliance while travelling the region. It was explained that the DIs know their areas well and which properties are licensed and which aren't, and while travelling actively observe and note issues that require further compliance follow-up. - The Group also discussed the importance of the Cost Review determining who is paying for what, and the costs that go into making up what a customer is charged. - Group members expressed concern about the allocation of 50% of the driving time being allocated to "compliance observation" – some felt that 50% was too much and some felt that 100% of the driving needs to be allocated to the job they are driving too. Further clarification/understanding around driving/observations involved in job activities is required.

- The Group also discussed the importance of the Cost Review determining who is paying for what and clarifying the costs that go into making up what a customer is charged.
- GMW to consider how the data can be better presented.
- The Group expressed interest in the data showing the breakup of time allocation between customer type and entitlement type.
- The Group were curious to hear from the DIs if the cost review process had led to changes in how they do/plan their work.

Customer Fee

- Lisa Dudley presented information on the Customer Fee, which is charged annual on customer accounts.
- The Customer Fee is \$138 for 2024/25 and is a fee for maintaining customer land and water records, billing, debt management and central customer service, and is payable by all GMW customers.
- The Customer Fee is charged per 'Account' issued by GMW. An 'Account' may be made up of one or many properties and services.
- Customers can opt-in to having properties included under an 'Account'. If the application is lodged between 1 July and 30 September, the customer fees on the individual property/accounts will be removed and one Customer Fee will be raised on the Consolidated Customer Account.
- Group members queried whether complex accounts made up of multiple licenses and services require more work than a single stock and domestic licences, and whether they should be paying the same Customer Fee. Lisa clarified that the Customer Fee does not cover transactions, and generating and servicing accounts doesn't differ greatly based on the size of the account.

Proposed timeline going forward

- Peter Clydesdale advised the Group would meet again around late February-early March, which is planned to be a face-to-face meeting.
- GMW will gather further data on Diversions Inspector tasks prior to this meeting.

Group reflections

- It was reflected that GMW has done good work so far to collect data that demonstrates their operating costs, though members continue to query the average Customer Fee for different classes of customers.
- It was also noted that it hasn't been determined what components of the tariffs are outside of GMW's remit to change, and it should be done so they can be put aside.
- The Group expressed a preference for presentations to be sent out prior to the meeting.
- Trade issues for unmetered customers was raised as a potential future topic for discussion.

Actions for Reference Group

- Nil.

Actions for GMW

- Share the Diversions Inspectors "heat map" with the Customer Reference Group
- Consider how to best present data for future meetings