

## Greater Western Water (previously City West Water area) – Outcomes – 2018–2024

*In this document, the water business provides a summary report of its actual performance against each of its outcome commitments for the 2023-24 reporting year. The business has given itself a “traffic light” rating (green = met target, red = not met, yellow = close or largely met) for its performance on each measure, outcome and an overall rating. The business has provided its own comments about its performance on each outcome and overall.*

On 1 July 2021, City West Water and Western Water integrated to form Greater Western Water. This report relates to the outcomes committed to customers in Greater Western Water that was previously serviced by City West Water. We have a separate report for customers in Greater Western Water that were previously serviced by Western Water.

### Summary table

Outcome	18-19	19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24
1. Services to my home and business are safe, reliable and efficiently managed	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow
2. Customer service is accessible and my enquiries are resolved promptly	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow
3. Billing and payment options are efficient and convenient	Green	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Red
4. Customers in hardship are supported	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow
5. The whole of the water cycle is managed in an environmentally sustainable way	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
6. CWW is a valued partner in servicing a growing Melbourne	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow
<b>Overall</b>	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow

## **Business comments**

The 2023-24 financial year marked our third full year as Greater Western Water, bringing together the previously serviced areas of City West Water and Western Water.

We are proud to serve 1.47 million community members who live in our service area. We welcomed 15,918 new customers to our area in 2023-24 – bringing our total customer base to 631,537. Over the last year, we have delivered 123,569ML of water, received over 255,300 calls, laid out 389km of mains and our crews attended and repaired over 4,576 faults across our network.

### **Our operating environment**

Our operating environment and the actions we take influence the unique indicators that make up the Greater Western Water's (previously City West Water) six outcome commitments made in our 2018 price submission.

This year, we have focused on transitioning our processes and systems while maintaining our outcome commitments, service offerings and service standards. Our service area stretches 3,700 square kilometres, from Melbourne's CBD and inner and north-west suburbs to Bacchus Marsh and the Macedon Ranges. The region continued to be impacted by high population growth and rising costs of living throughout the year.

The 2023-24 period marks our sixth and final year reporting on outcome measures set in City West Water's 2018 and Western Water's 2020 price submissions. We have worked with our community to understand what is important to them and incorporated this into our first price submission as Greater Western Water. Going forward, we will report on our aligned Greater Western Water 2024 price submission commitments.

In May 2024, we implemented a new billing system to enhance our data processing and customer service capabilities. During the transition period from May to June 2024, some data had to be estimated based on actual figures from the months preceding the system launch (July 2023 to April 2024). This approach was necessary to ensure continuity and accuracy in our billing operations while the new billing system was being fully integrated and calibrated. Throughout this report, we have clearly indicated which data has been estimated to ensure transparency in our reporting.

### **Customer outcomes**

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Our six outcome commitments for customers in the previous City West Water area reflect the roles that water and sewerage services play in the lives of our customers and our growing community. Of these six outcome commitments, we classify one as green, four as amber, and one as red by RAG status (red, amber, green).

Twenty-one of our individual indicators were green, three amber and 16 red – a slight reduction on our 2022-23 customer outcomes performance. This was primarily driven by external factors, including cost of living pressures, which increased the amount of customer complaints and applications for support while decreasing customer satisfaction, and a pause on active promotion of our online offerings as we implement our new billing system.

In the region previously serviced by Western Water, we have five outcome commitments for customers covering similar themes that is covered by the Greater Western Water (Western Water) outcomes submission.

We have assigned an 'amber' status for overall performance across our outcomes on balance.

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**Outcome 1: Services to my home and business are safe, reliable and efficiently managed**

Output	Unit		16-17	17-18	18-19	19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24
a Drinking Water Quality – Customer satisfaction score on water quality via CWW Customer Satisfaction Surveys (score of 7 out of 10 or higher)	Percentage	Target	–		91.0%	91.0%	91.0%	91.0%	91.0%	91.0%
		Actual	92.0%	93.0%	91.5%	92.0%	94.7%	93%	89%	84%
b Drinking Water Quality – Number of water quality complaints per 1000 customers	Count/ thousand customers	Target	–		0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7
		Actual	1.0	0.7	1.17	1.53	2.11	1.79	2.09	2.84*
c Number of Safe Drinking Water Act non-compliances (water sampling and audit)	Number	Target	–		0	0	0	0	0	0
		Actual	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
d Water and recycled water service reliability – Unplanned water supply interruptions restored within 5 hours	Percentage	Target	–		97.0%	97.0%	97.0%	97.0%	97.0%	97.0%
		Actual	95.2%	97.0%	97.9%	97.0%	97.3%	96.5%	93.3%	91.6%
e Water and recycled water service reliability – Average time taken (from notification) to restore unplanned water supply interruption	Minutes	Target	–		120.0	120.0	120.0	120.0	120.0	120.0
		Actual	175.4	119.6	112.7	114.5	112.8	120.8	142.5	144.4
f Water and recycled water service reliability - Planned water supply interruptions restored within 5 hours	Percentage	Target	–		99.0%	99.0%	99.0%	99.0%	99.0%	99.0%
		Actual	97.0%	96.7%	98.6%	95.9%	98.1%	98.5%	97.1%	94.4%
g	Count	Target	–		0	0	0	0	0	0

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Output	Unit		16-17	17-18	18-19	19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24
Water and recycled water service reliability – Customers experiencing more than five (i.e. 6+) unplanned water service interruptions in a year		<b>Actual</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0*</b>
h Water and recycled water service reliability – Customers experiencing more than three (i.e. 4+) unplanned water service interruptions in a year	Count	Target	–		126	86	86	86	86	86
		<b>Actual</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>246</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>358</b>	<b>202</b>	<b>223*</b>
i Water and recycled water service reliability – Number of low supply pressure events	Count	Target	–		0	0	0	0	0	0
		<b>Actual</b>	<b>New</b>	<b>New</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
j Sewerage service reliability – Customers experiencing more than three (i.e. 4+) unplanned sewerage service interruptions in a year	Count	Target	–	18	10	6	6	6	6	6
		<b>Actual</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1*</b>
k Sewerage service reliability – Interruptions to sewerage services restored within 5 hours	Percentage	Target	–		98.0%	98.0%	98.0%	98.0%	98.0%	98.0%
		<b>Actual</b>	<b>96.6%</b>	<b>97.2%</b>	<b>99.7%</b>	<b>99.6%</b>	<b>99.4%</b>	<b>98.9%</b>	<b>99.3%</b>	<b>98.8%</b>
l Sewerage service reliability – Average time (from notification) to rectify blockage/spill (main and HCB)	Minutes	Target	–		124	124	124	124	124	124
		<b>Actual</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>151.9</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>126</b>
m Sewerage service reliability – Sewer spills contained within 5 hours of notification	Percentage	Target	–		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		<b>Actual</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>99.5%</b>

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Output	Unit		16-17	17-18	18-19	19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24
n Sewerage service reliability – Sewer spills within a house, that are a result of a failure in our pipes	Count	Target	–		13	13	13	13	13	13
		Actual	23	10	8	5	11	10	13	9
o Sewerage service reliability – Sewer spills within a house, that are a result of a failure in our pipes, not contained within 1 hour of notification	Percentage	Target	–	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
		Actual		0	0	0	0	0	0	0

\* Data for May-24 to Jun-24 was estimated based on actual figures from preceding months due to limited access to data reports from our new billing system during the implementation phase.

Note: As Greater Western Water, our annual customer satisfaction survey on water quality no longer differentiates customers previously serviced by City West Water or Western Water customers. As a result, the findings represent a whole of Greater Western Water level of satisfaction. Greater Western Water is still committed in honouring its commitments to its customers from both its City West Water and Western Water price submissions.

Overall outcome 1 performance for the regulatory period so far: 

**Business comment**

We hold ourselves accountable when it comes to providing essential water and sewerage services – this is our core business.

In 2023-24, we saw mixed results with most indicators rated green (seven out of 15), three indicators rated amber and five rated red.

**Drinking water quality**

At all times throughout 2023-24, Greater Western Water’s water quality across its entire service area was compliant with the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines. Aesthetic-related complaints in our area previously serviced by City West Water increased in 2023-24 compared to 2022-23, with

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the majority relating to colour rather than taste and odour. This can be attributed to the water supply from Melbourne Water's Greenvale Reservoir that varies in colour depending on the catchment source.<sup>1</sup>

The Greenvale Reservoir water supply can also cause naturally occurring sediments to settle across our network. Two major water main bursts in 2024 disturbed these sediments and resulted in a significant number of calls from impacted customers after the repairs had been completed. These events combined with an ongoing increased trend in water complaints across all retailers saw a higher level of complaints than our target.

Although customer complaints remain higher than our target, results from our monthly customer satisfaction survey show that Greater Western Water customers are generally satisfied with the level of water quality received in their homes, with 82 per cent of the customers we have interacted with during the past 12 months scoring our water quality seven out of ten or higher.

We expect to continue to deliver high quality and reliable services to all our community in 2024-25.

### **Water network reliability**

We have not achieved our target for the number of customers experiencing more than three unplanned water service interruptions. Specifically, 223\* customers experienced four unplanned water service interruptions over the past 12 months. A few factors contributed to this. We experienced very hot and dry weather conditions this year, particularly in February and March, which tend to increase water main failure rates. Additionally, GWW modified its water main renewal process to include a more detailed analysis of project constructability (to reduce unforeseen costs overruns during the construction phase of projects), which has impacted the delivery times of complex projects and resulted in more repeat failures.

The percentage of planned water supply interruptions restored within five hours was below target in 2023-24. This was related to an increase in the number of developer-initiated planned water isolations, many of which have resulted in considerable outage durations. Moreover, a significant number

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<sup>1</sup> Melbourne Water's bulk water supply is from protected water catchments where different levels of treatment are used depending on the source of the water from protected water catchments.

\* Data for May-24 to Jun-24 was estimated based on actual figures from preceding months due to limited access to data reports from our new billing system during the implementation phase.

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of these cases involved developers scheduling multiple gas and water connections at the same time without appropriate resourcing and support, leading to extended outages.

We continue to monitor and prioritise customers who experience a high number of unplanned interruptions. Customers who experience three unplanned interruptions are identified, monitored to determine whether conditions will deteriorate, and managed so that further interruptions are planned rather than unplanned. If the unplanned water interruption is due to failures of other water assets, we include the area in a planned leak detection survey until the end of the year. This process has proven to be successful in reducing the number of extreme unplanned water supply interruptions in our service area and no customer experienced more than five unplanned water service interruptions in the last 12 months.

The average time taken to restore unplanned water supply interruptions has increased marginally since 2022-23 and remains above target due to the number of complex bursts that took more than five hours to repair. Large and complex bursts take longer to repair and require immediate shut down of supply to the affected asset for public safety. Complex bursts can also include repairs next to other authorities' assets (including electricity and/or gas mains), where water is usually turned off earlier to prevent damage to these assets.

Our guaranteed service level scheme provides these customers with a payment in recognition of the lower level of service they received during the year.

### **Sewerage service reliability**

We have met our target for the number of customers experiencing more than three unplanned sewerage service interruptions within a year every year since 2018-19.

In 2023-24, our sewer spill and blockage rectification times were slightly higher than target and the percentage of sewer spills contained within five hours of notification dropped marginally below the target of 100 per cent for the first time in this regulatory period. This was largely due to poor access to affected assets, with crews being unable to access maintenance holes to clear blockages when arriving onsite and having to locate other maintenance holes to undertake works from. Most (99.5 per cent) interruptions to sewerage services were restored within five hours.

### **Overall self-rating**

Weighing the above reasons, we consider our performance for Outcome 1 as 'amber'. While we largely met our targets for sewerage service reliability, we fell short of some of our targets for water service reliability.



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**Outcome 2: Customer service is accessible, and my enquiries are resolved promptly**


Output	Unit		16-17	17-18	18-19	19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24
a Calls resolved on first contact	Percentage	Target	–		75.0%	80.0%	85.0%	90.0%	90.0%	90.0%
		Actual	New	New	97.2%	96.9%	96.1%	96.1%	96.6%	96.1%*
b Customer correspondence (emails) responded to within one business day	Percentage	Target	–		95.0%	95.0%	95.0%	95.0%	95.0%	95.0%
		Actual	New	New	77.8%	99.6%	98.7%	100.0%	100%	100%
c Customer correspondence (emails and mail) responded to within 10 business days	Percentage	Target	–		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		Actual	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100.0%	100%	100%
d Residential customer satisfaction with response to an enquiry via CWW survey (score of 7 out of 10 or higher)	Percentage	Target	–		85.0%	85.0%	85.0%	85.0%	85.0%	85.0%
		Actual	88.0%	87%	84%	90.0%	90%	91%	82%	79%
e Non-residential customer satisfaction with response to an enquiry via CWW survey (score of 7 out of 10 or higher)	Percentage	Target	–		85.0%	85.0%	85.0%	85.0%	85.0%	85.0%
		Actual	78.0%	73%	89%	77%	83%	69%	74%	51%
f Residential customer satisfaction with response to complaint via CWW survey (score of 7 out of 10 or higher)	Percentage	Target	–		50.0%	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%
		Actual	45.0%	56%	36%	53%	60%	57%	34%	35%

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Output	Unit		16-17	17-18	18-19	19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24
g Non-residential customer satisfaction with response to a complaint via CWW survey (score of 7 out of 10 or higher)	Percentage	Target	–		50.0%	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%
		Actual	40.0%	24%	67%	33%	50%	44%	25%	41%
h Complaints investigated by the Energy and Water Ombudsman of Victoria	Count/ thousand customers	Target	–		0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10
		Actual	0.09	0.06	0.05	0.04	0.04	0.03	0.04	0.05

\* Data for May-24 to Jun-24 was estimated based on actual figures from preceding months due to limited access to data reports from our new billing system during the implementation phase.

Note: As Greater Western Water, our annual customer satisfaction survey on satisfaction on enquiries or complaints no longer differentiates customers previously serviced by City West Water or Western Water customers. As a result, the findings represent a whole of Greater Western Water level of satisfaction. Greater Western Water is still committed in honouring its commitments to its customers from both its City West Water and Western Water price submissions.

Overall outcome 2 performance for the regulatory period so far: 

### Business comment

We always strive to provide exceptional customer service and be accessible and easy to deal with. As we change the way we work as a business, we are looking for ways to better meet our customers' needs. Of our eight outcome measures, four were green and four were red.

While we successfully delivered against our outcomes for customer correspondence, we have noted a drop in satisfaction in our responses to enquiries from residential and non-residential customers. We are working to improve these measures through changes to our customer assist programs and the implementation of our new and easier-to-use billing system.

### Residential and non-residential customer satisfaction survey results

We are committed to responding to our customers' needs.

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Over 2023-24, we have seen a steady increase in the number of complaints relating to bills and payments, and customer satisfaction in our response to enquiries and complaints has been lower than target. Data from the annual customer satisfaction survey indicated that customers' concerns about being able to pay utility bills has increased, which is consistent with ongoing cost of living pressures being felt across the economy.

Many of the complaints over the last year related to the financial pressures being placed on households and small businesses. To support customers experiencing payment difficulties, we have extended our hardship support to cover both residential and small non-residential customers. Payment difficulty support applications are also assessed and reviewed on a case-by-case basis so that each customer receives the assistance option that is most appropriate to their individual circumstance.

Staff attrition has also exacerbated poorer customer satisfaction to our responses due to slower response times. We launched our new billing system in May and note that satisfaction results were also impacted by service issues we faced in the early stage of the implementation of the new billing system.

### **Overall self-rating:**

While we have continued to perform strongly against our resolution and response measures, the customer satisfaction results impacted our overall rating for 2023-24.

For the above reasons, our overall 2023-24 performance for Outcome 2 is 'amber'.


**Outcome 3: Billing and payment options are efficient and convenient**

Output	Unit		16-17	17-18	18-19	19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24
a Payment issue complaints	Count/ thousand customers	Target	–		1.20	1.20	1.20	1.20	1.20	1.20
		Actual	0.92	1.29	0.97	1.18	1.20	1.45	1.87	1.66
b Estimated meter reads used for billing (of total reads)	Percentage	Target	–		≤3%	≤2%	≤2%	≤2%	≤2%	≤2%
		Actual	4.5%	2.1%	2.05%	1.85%	10.7%	9.6%	3.2%	2.63%*
c Customers with registered online accounts (of all accounts)	Percentage	Target	–		0.0%	10.0%	20.0%	25.0%	30.0%	30.0%
		Actual	New	New	N/A	3.6%	14.0%	21.0% <sup>1</sup>	28.8% <sup>2</sup>	N/A

\* Data for 2023-24 represents actual figures from preceding months (specifically July 2023 to April 2024) due to limited access to data reports from our new billing system during the implementation phase.

<sup>1</sup> Data for 2021-22 represents 10 months' worth of data – specifically July 2021 to April 2022.

<sup>2</sup> Data for 2022-23 is potentially understated as it represents 11 months of data, and 10 months of data for 2021-22.

Overall outcome 3 performance for the regulatory period so far: 

**Business comment**

We strive to deliver on customer expectations that they receive timely and accurate bills.

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Our performance for this outcome has been significantly impacted by increasing cost of living pressures and changes to our billing system. Prior to the implementation of our new billing system in late May, we deliberately slowed down the promotion of online accounts and offerings between July 2023 and May 2024, to ensure we could easily transfer customer data.

### **Payment issue complaints**

Affordability is always front of mind for Greater Western Water. Our 2024 price submission engagement found that affordability was the top priority for many of our customers and we have addressed this concern through our price submission by delivering stable bills.

Payment issue complaints in 2023-24 related to customers experiencing difficulties using our website and customer portals to make payments and changes to credit card payments. Customers are no longer able to make direct debit payments via credit card and Greater Western Water ceased taking credit card payments over the phone to ensure that all financial transactions are safe, secure and meet PCI Data Security Standards.

Customers who previously paid their bills over the phone have been provided with support and can continue to pay via post office payments and BPAY.

### **Customers with registered online accounts (of all accounts)**

MyAccount was introduced to customers in May 2020, following engagement in 2019-20 on understanding customer needs for billing and payments. The online portal gave customers easy access to bill payments and records. Registrations were initially strong but we paused proactive promotion of our MyAccount portal while we developed and rolled out our new billing and accounts system to allow for a smooth changeover of systems.

We have moved existing customers to our new customer portal through implementation of our new billing system. However, given the ongoing changes to our billing system, this data is no longer appropriate to reflect progress against this outcome. To ensure consistency of reporting over time, we have opted to not report this measure for 2023-24. We expect to see steady increases in online account registrations as we promote our new online customer portal.

### **Estimated meter reads used for billing (of total reads)**

Due to the transition to our new billing system, we are unable to determine the exact percentage of meter reads that were estimated between May and June 2024. To ensure transparency, we have opted to report the April 2024 YTD and state that we have not met our target for 2023-24.

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Since the unwinding of pandemic restrictions in the second half of 2021-22, estimated meter readings have reduced in volume and are continuing to trend down, however we remain above pre-pandemic levels. This is due to a lack of access to shops and businesses that are still closed or empty. We have also experienced an increase in meters hidden under bushes in overgrown yards due to increased rainfall, which prevents readers from safely locating and obtaining readings.

### **Overall self-rating:**

While we continue to support our customers with flexible payment options, changes to our payment options have impacted our performance against these measures.


The introduction of our new billing system is expected provide more efficient and convenient payment options to our customers. However given the recent launch of our billing system, we are not able to report on the customer online registrations measure. We consider our overall performance to be 'red' for 2023-24.

### Outcome 4: Customers in hardship are supported

Output	Unit		16-17	17-18	18-19	19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24
a Anticipated customers on instalment plans at the end of reporting period	Count/ thousand customers	Target	–		138	40	40	40	40	40
		Actual	137	143	137	50.6	51.2	34.9	33.5	40.3 <sup>^</sup>
b Anticipated residential customers receiving hardship grants	Count/ thousand customers	Target	–		1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2
		Actual	1.2	1.1	1.4	0.48	1.91	1.45	1.15	1.01*
c Customers taking up Water Assist to improve their water efficiency	Count	Target	–		200	200	200	200	200	200
		Actual	New	New	208	105	88	136	213	114
d Prior to restriction being applied, CWW has undertaken reasonable endeavours to ensure customer is not in hardship	Percentage	Target	–		100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
		Actual	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

\* Data for May-24 to Jun-24 was estimated based on actual figures from preceding months due to limited access to data reports from our new billing system during the implementation phase.

<sup>^</sup> In our new billing system, we are no longer able to differentiate between customers in the Central and Western regions. Hence, we have reported the Greater Western Water figure for customers on instalment plans in 2023-24.

Overall outcome 4 performance for the regulatory period so far: 

### Business comment

We recognise the essential nature of the services we provide and the importance of providing options and appropriate assistance to customers who may be having trouble paying their bill and/or are impacted by domestic violence.

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Our ongoing commitment to fostering an environment of inclusivity through regular case management and follow up ensures we are having the right conversations and continuously evaluating our customer support program to be effective and responsive to the evolving needs in the community.

### **Anticipated customers on instalment plans**

The number of customers on instalment plans has increased in 2023-24 compared to 2022-23. Additionally, the compliance percentage has risen and stayed consistently high all year. Clearly communicating to customers the terms and conditions of the agreed payment arrangements including potential consequences of late or missed payments and sending friendly reminders of upcoming payment due dates – are some of the strategies we used to foster and build trust, improve customer engagement, and increase the likelihood of customers paying their instalments on time.

### **Supporting customers experiencing hardship**

We are committed to supporting customers experiencing hardship.

We believe that financial stability can be successfully attained when working together with customers who are experiencing short and long-term financial difficulties. We are committed to ensuring customers are aware that there is support available and they will be assisted and provided with the right information when they reach out to us. We encourage customers to communicate their financial difficulties early, we provide multiple channels (direct phone calls and email) for customers and/or financial counsellors and case worker organisations to access support, and we ensure our staff are adequately trained to manage and handle cases professionally and with appropriate care.

As a business, our customer support program includes a dedicated team and hotline that provides tailored options to residential and small non-residential customers experiencing financial difficulties. Payment difficulty support applications are assessed and reviewed on a case-by-case basis, so that each customer receives the assistance option that is most appropriate to their individual circumstance. The most common forms of support options provided by the customer support program include:

- Flexible and affordable payment plans, which have been customised to each customer's unique circumstances
- Referral to a financial counselling agency or the Thriving Communities partnership 'One stop, One story' app
- Family and domestic violence support including full or partial waivers, securing and restricting access to accounts
- Utilising payment history data and reports to identify and proactively outreach 'at risk' customers to regularly follow up and reassess situations if necessary
- High usage leak adjustments



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- Water Assist Program for general plumbing and maintenance repairs
- Hardship grants
- Utility Relief Grants
- Incentivised payment plans

Our Water Assist Program continues to provide valuable plumbing maintenance support to improve water efficiency and repair leaks which are often the primary cause of high and long-term debt. The decrease in customers taking up Water Assist is not reflective of the demand but rather the limited Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) funding and budget constraints, and the consequential limitations needing to be applied in the selection and referral process in 2023-24.

We saw a decline in the number of customers who received a hardship grant in 2023-24 compared with 2022-23 due to an increase in uptake for the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) Utility Relief Grant scheme, which continues to be the main and most popular source of hardship support.

We will continue to provide support for customers who experience hardship in 2024-25.

### **Overall self-rating:**

Upon weighing our performance, we consider our performance for Outcome 4 to be 'amber'.

**Outcome 5: The whole of the water cycle is managed in an environmentally sustainable way**

Output	Unit		16-17	17-18	18-19	19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24
a Future water resources – Water lost from the network (of total water supplied)	Percentage	Target	–		9.3%	9.3%	9.3%	9.3%	9.3%	9.3%
		Actual	9.3%	11.2%	8.3%	6.7%	7.8%	9.5%	11.5%	11.1%*
b Future water resources – Water storage levels remain (in November) as per the water outlook zones in our Urban Water Strategy	Percentage	Target	–		≥40%	≥40%	≥40%	≥40%	≥40%	≥40%
		Actual	69.7%	63.6%	62.9%	63.8%	75.4%	90.0%	97.9%	95.0%
c Safe treatment & disposal of sewage – Emergency relief structures compliant with requirement to not spill in dry weather	Percentage	Target	–		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		Actual	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
d Safe treatment & disposal of sewage – Compliance with the Environmental Protection Authority's discharge licence requirements - Number of licence non-compliances	Count	Target	–		0	0	0	0	0	0
		Actual	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
e Climate change – Net-zero emissions by 2030: Greenhouse gas reductions (from 12,401 tonnes CO <sub>2</sub> e) – as <b>City West Water</b> – No longer applicable beyond 30 June 2021 (see indicator f)	Percentage	Target	–		0.0%	5.0%	5.0%	60.0%	70.0%	70.0%
		Actual	0.0%	0.0%	N/A	0.0%	5.0%	N/A	N/A	N/A
f Climate change – Net-zero emissions by 2030: Net greenhouse gas emissions - as <b>Greater Western Water</b> from 1 July 2021	Tonnes CO <sub>2</sub> e	Target					47,419	40,598	39,358	39,358
		Actual					44,927	39,435	34,440	33,000

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g Liveability – Stormwater partnerships in place	Count	Target	–	7	7	8	8	9	9	
		<b>Actual</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>14</b>

\* Data for May-24 to Jun-24 was estimated based on actual figures from preceding months due to limited access to data reports from our new billing system during the implementation phase.

Overall outcome 5 performance for the regulatory period so far:



**Business comment**

In our 2018 price submission, our customers told us they wanted to see us manage our water resources responsibly for the benefit of current and future generations. This includes local measures to save water, such as stormwater harvesting and water education to schools, as well as central system interventions that increase our water supplies, such as ordering water from the Victorian Desalination Project. We manage the sewerage system to avoid spills and to recycle sewage for productive uses in line with our customers’ expectations.

To date, we have co-funded 14 stormwater harvesting programs across our region to promote sustainable water management and reduce our demand on drinking water by capturing, treating and reusing stormwater to irrigate parks and reserves.

Greater Western Water continues to support programs that increase tree canopy cover and open space across our service region through partnerships with government agencies and key collaborations such as Greening the West and Chain of Ponds. In partnership with Greening the West and the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA), we launched the Trees for Schools Program in 2023. Through this program, 29 schools received up to 50 trees to plant onsite, providing an opportunity for sustainability and environmental education, as well as the numerous health, shading, and aesthetic benefits that tree cover provides. In partnership with DEECA’s More Trees for a Cooler Greener West initiative, we received funding to plant 5,000 trees at Surbiton Park in Melton and West Werribee. This supported the delivery of the program’s overall target of 500,000 trees across the west of Melbourne.

**Water lost from network**

We saw a slight increase in water lost from our network over the last three years, mainly due to ageing customer water meters within our water supply network. The replacement of these meters has been delayed and contributed to the shortfall against our target. We are ramping up our meter

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replacement program to address this challenge and are targeting our oldest meters as a priority. We have replaced approximately 5,000 meters in 2023-24 and will continue to replace more backlog meters in 2024-25.

We have also reviewed non-revenue water programs, including leak detection programs, to ensure they fit with our integrated business and investment goals. We are trialling near real-time monitoring technology to target high risk aging pipelines. We continue to develop and improve our asset management plans, plan and construct water main renewals, plan and develop district metered areas (DMAs) and pressure management, trial new leak detection technology, and undertake targeted leak surveys. We are also working with Melbourne Water to ensure measurements at our bulk meter points are accurate.

### Greenhouse gas emissions

Our outcome measures on net greenhouse gas emissions vary between our areas previously serviced by City West Water and Western Water. For the area previously serviced by City West Water, we measure delivery and commitment to net zero emissions by 2030 through the percentage reduction from our baseline tonnes of emissions.

As GWW, these measures are not appropriate in capturing a whole of business view on our net greenhouse gas emissions. However, we remain committed to honouring our current outcomes and measures. With integration we adopted a new consistent measure that represents our net greenhouse gas emissions as Greater Western Water. This consolidated measure is outlined in our 2024 price submission.

Our Statement of Obligations and 2030 Strategy commits to net zero emissions by 2030. For customers in our area previously serviced by City West Water, this is a continuation of our existing commitments. Although our corporate strategy represents a 'step up' on our existing emission reduction targets established in our price submissions, we have maintained the existing commitments for the remainder of the period.

Our targets for our new measure represent the existing emission reduction targets established in our 2018 and 2020 price submissions for customer serviced by City West Water and Western Water respectively. See below for breakdown.

We continue to deliver on our emission target of net zero by 2030.

Measure	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
City West Water emissions target (% reduction of CO <sub>2</sub> e from 12,401 tonnes)	0%	5%	5%	60%	70%	70%

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City West Water equivalent target in tonnes of emissions (tonnes of CO2e)	12,401	11,781	11,781	4,960	3,720	3,720
Western Water emissions target (tonnes of CO2e)	35,638	36,223	35,638	35,638	35,638	35,638
Combined Greater Western Water emissions target as per price submission commitments (tonnes of CO2e)	48,039	48,004	47,419	40,598	39,358	39,358

**Overall self-rating:**


On balance, we consider our overall Outcome 5 performance was 'green' for commitments made in our 2018 price submission.

**Outcome 6: We are a valued partner in servicing a growing Melbourne**

Output	Unit			16-17	17-18	18-19	19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24	
a	Standard plumbing applications completed on time (within 10 business days, from 2020-21 five business days)	Percentage	Target	-	≥95%	≥95%	≥95%	≥95%	≥95%	≥95%	≥95%	
		<b>Actual</b>			<b>New</b>	<b>New</b>	<b>73.4%</b>	<b>50.2%</b>	<b>30.9%</b>	<b>99.2%</b>	<b>98.4%</b>	<b>47.2%</b>
b	Pressure and flow information applications processed on time (within 10 business days, from 2020-21 five business days)	Percentage	Target	-	≥95%	≥95%	≥95%	≥95%	≥95%	≥95%	≥95%	
		<b>Actual</b>			<b>New</b>	<b>New</b>	<b>98.6%</b>	<b>99.3%</b>	<b>98.9%</b>	<b>96.3%</b>	<b>98.0%</b>	<b>97.0%</b>
c	Asset information applications processed on time (within 10 business days, from 2020-21 two business days)	Percentage	Target	-	≥95%	≥95%	≥95%	≥95%	≥95%	≥95%	≥95%	
		<b>Actual</b>			<b>New</b>	<b>New</b>	<b>90.6%</b>	<b>74.5%</b>	<b>63.6%</b>	<b>95.2%</b>	<b>86.4%</b>	<b>14.6%</b>
d	Standard new customer contribution applications processed within 45 business days	Percentage	Target	-	≥95%	≥95%	≥95%	≥95%	≥95%	≥95%	≥95%	
		<b>Actual</b>			<b>New</b>	<b>New</b>	<b>79.9%</b>	<b>98.5%</b>	<b>99.0%</b>	<b>98.3%</b>	<b>98.5%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

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e	Standard 20mm new meter supply and assembly installed within 10 business days of CWW consent	Percent Target	-	≥95%	≥95%	≥95%	≥95%	≥95%	≥95%			
		<b>Actual</b>			<b>New</b>	<b>New</b>	<b>95.9%</b>	<b>95.9%</b>	<b>90.7%</b>	<b>73.0%</b>	<b>99.7%</b>	<b>99.5%</b>

Overall outcome 6 performance for the regulatory period so far: 

**Business comment**

One of our key roles is to help our partners deliver new water infrastructure to supply the growing communities across our service area.

Once again, we saw unprecedented rates of urban development and construction activity across our region. Over 10,520 new residential and non-residential customers moved into the area previously serviced by City West Water in 2023-24 and we were able to meet most of our targets. We did this by automating some processes, simplifying internal processes, addressing technology constraints, and training extra staff to provide support during busy periods.

In 2023-24, we reported new customer contribution and pressure and flow applications measures as a Greater Western Water. However, other applications (such as plumbing and asset information requests) are still reported as City West Water.

Ongoing challenges impacted our performance against our targets for processing asset information and plumbing applications. Staffing challenges remain as we continue to recruit, train and cross-skill our people to improve overall processing times. We had various system issues which prevented us from issuing consent and processing payments. Furthermore, we experienced a significant increase in the volume of calls received in 2023-24, which further exacerbated our already strained resources.

We expect high growth to continue in our service area into 2024-25 and we will strive to deliver continued value to our business customers through this time.

**Overall self-rating:**

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While we did not meet our target for asset information and plumbing applications, we have improved or maintained turnaround times during a period of unexpected high growth. On balance, we consider our overall Outcome 6 performance was 'amber'.