

# Our People Our Planet Our Community **Our Business**

## Corporate Social Responsibility Strategy 2017-22



**WESTERNPORT**  
WATER.

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Aboriginal cultural awareness training

Westernport Water is committed to the delivery of sustainable water and wastewater services that improve the health and liveability of our community.

## Message from the Managing Director

Every day, Westernport Water employees are contributing to the social and environmental wellbeing of our community. The decisions we make impact the lives of our people and the community we service. The Corporate Social Responsibility Strategy represents our commitment to our customers, our planet and our community. It goes beyond a 'business as usual' approach - it's about adding value and setting a clear direction. Together with our key stakeholders and partners, we will deliver a more sustainable future.



Peter Quigley  
**Managing Director**



Roland Lindell  
**Chairperson**

## About us

Westernport Water provides drinking water, recycled water, and wastewater services wherever economically, environmentally and socially practicable to properties and communities throughout its district.

It is acknowledged that Westernport Water provides services on the traditional lands of the Bunurong and Boon Wurrung Peoples, who played an important role over thousands of years in managing the natural resources around Western Port and on Phillip Island, or Millowl as it is traditionally known. We acknowledge our Traditional Owners as we continue to manage these resources today.

Westernport Water is one of 19 water corporations operating in Victoria and reports to the State Government of Victoria. Westernport Water is responsible for its own management and performance, servicing over 19,300 customers across an area of 300 square kilometres.

# Working together

The wellbeing of our staff and customers, the resilience of our natural environment and the success of local industry relies on the effective management of our water resources.

Working together with staff, customers and the wider community we will deliver a sustainable future, one which is inclusive of our community, minimises our environmental footprint and is efficient in delivering affordable and accessible services.

## **In 2016-17, Westernport Water has developed and delivered a number of initiatives that will contribute to the wellbeing of our community:**

- Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan - Driving a more inclusive workplace that is representative of our community, in which all employees are treated with respect and feel valued and supported.
- Reconciliation Action Plan - Identifying simple and meaningful actions we can take to recognise Aboriginal culture, acknowledge traditional custodians and their elders past and present and understand the rich history of our service area.
- Emissions Reduction Pledge - Identifying initiatives to achieve an eight per cent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from baseline levels by 2025.
- Climate Change Strategy - Providing an evidence-based road map to manage the risks associated with climate change, while mitigating these risks through effective resource management.
- Pricing Submission Engagement Program – Partnering with customers to make long-term decisions on the investment priorities of our business.

## **In 2017-18, we will continue on this path with the delivery of the following:**

- Customer Service Strategy – To identify clear actions to improve the accessibility and quality of customer service in line with the needs and expectations of our customers.
- Integrated Water Management Plan - To partner with key stakeholders and the community to deliver greater value through the effective management of the water life cycle.
- Recreational Benefits from our Land and Assets - To develop options to promote and support community wellbeing through greater utilisation of our land and assets.
- Recycled Water Strategy - To provide a clear action plan to grow wastewater reuse for the benefit of the environment, non-residential customers and the community.
- Organisational Development Strategy - To establish a clear pathway to ensure we attract, retain, motivate, inspire, and build the capability of our people.

At Westernport Water, we take our privileged position as water managers very seriously and recognise the positive contributions we can make to our people, our community and our planet.



## Future initiatives

The Corporate Social Responsibility Strategy presents Westernport Water's commitment to our people, our planet and our community. The Strategy also outlines our progress in each of these areas to date and establishes clear targets to drive performance over the next five years, including specific actions in each area.

Westernport Water has worked closely with customers, community and business representatives over a six month period to explore their values, concerns, preferences and priorities for their local water authority. Findings from the engagement have informed the Corporate Social Responsibility Strategy and will guide our future priorities and investment.

The Corporation also undertakes annual staff engagement surveys to better understand the wellbeing of our people and identify opportunities to provide a more satisfying workplace.

The Corporate Social Responsibility Strategy summarises commitments from a number of different plans, which should be reviewed further for more detail. These include:



Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan



Reconciliation Action Plan



Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Strategy

**If you'd like to read any of the above plans, please view them at:**  
<http://www.westernportwater.com.au/about/corporate-strategies>

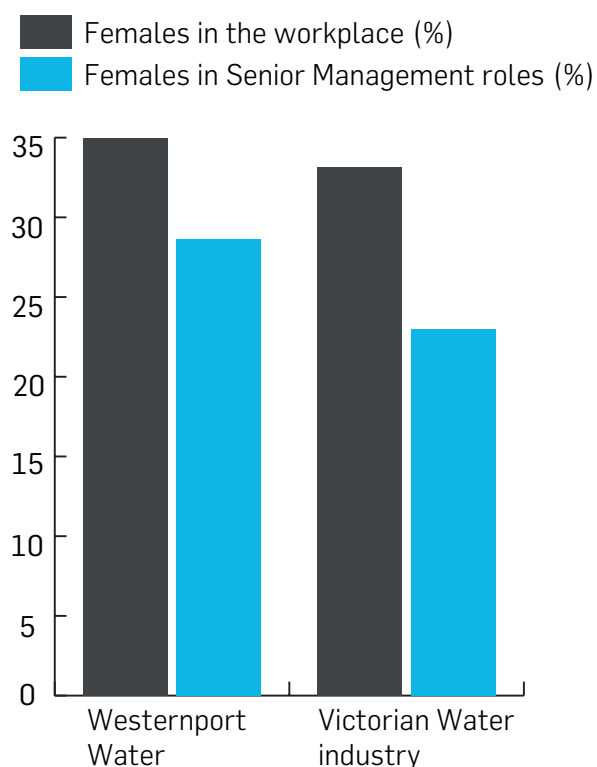
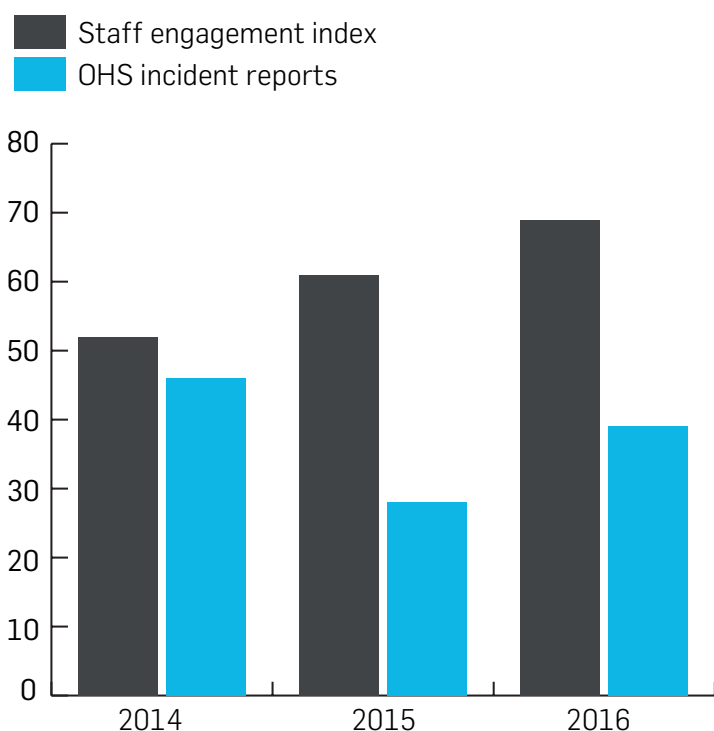
Water for recreation - Phillip Island Golf Club



# Our People

## Why it matters

At Westernport Water, we recognise the benefits of a diverse, inclusive and healthy workforce. We also know that workplace safety and wellbeing, strong employee engagement, and clear accountabilities for professional and collaborative behaviour are critical foundations for a high-performance culture. Ultimately, our customers benefit if every single employee is empowered to realise their potential to deliver quality services to the community.



## Our progress

**Over the last three years, Westernport Water has delivered a number of people-centred initiatives that have contributed to significant improvements to employee engagement:**

- Launched 'Making Waves Be The Change' Organisational Behaviour Change Program
- Invested to improve the tools of trade our people rely on to better service our customers
- Implemented an Organisational Improvement Plan, focusing on culture, leadership, change management, systems and processes
- Developed Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan to reduce the barriers to a diverse workforce, identify opportunities to increase workforce diversity, and embed an actively inclusive culture into the way we work
- Delivered unconscious bias training to senior management team
- Reviewed and updated position descriptions for every role in the Corporation to provide clear purpose and responsibilities for every staff member.



Surfing teams challenge

## Our commitment

### Westernport Water commits to the following targets by 2020:

- Staff engagement scores will fall within the first quartile of the Victorian water sector
- 50 per cent of senior managers will be female
- 25 per cent of our workforce will work under flexible arrangements
- 7 per cent of our workforce will identify as belonging to LGBTI communities
- 20 per cent of our workforce will have an identified disability
- 2.5 per cent of our workforce will identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
- 20 per cent of our workforce will speak a language other than English at home

### This will be achieved by delivering the following actions and initiatives:

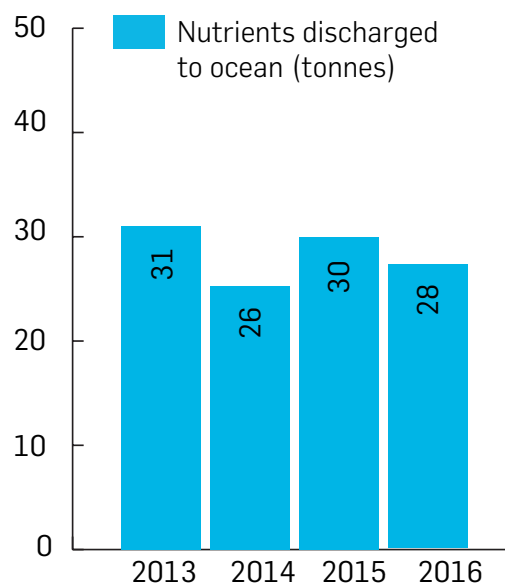
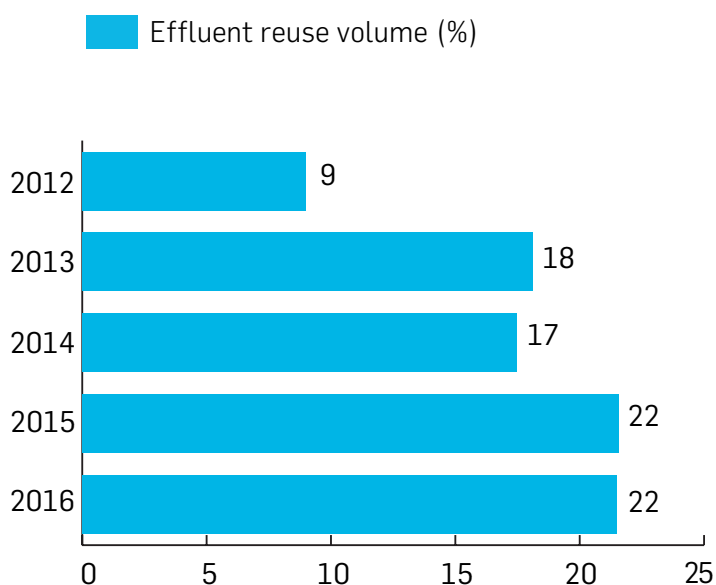
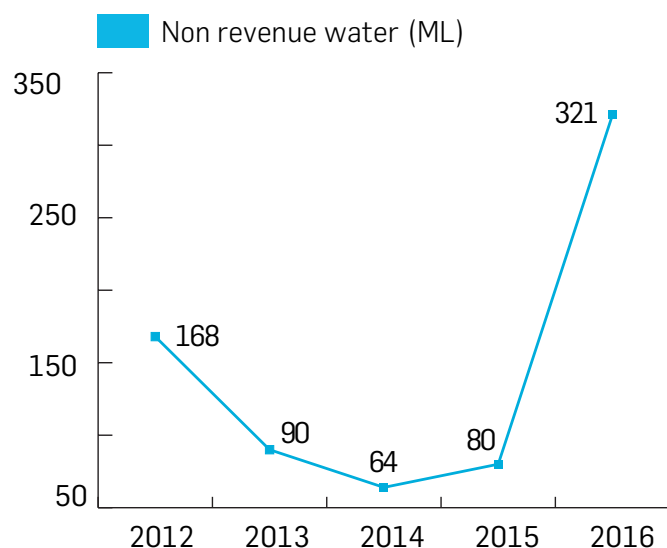
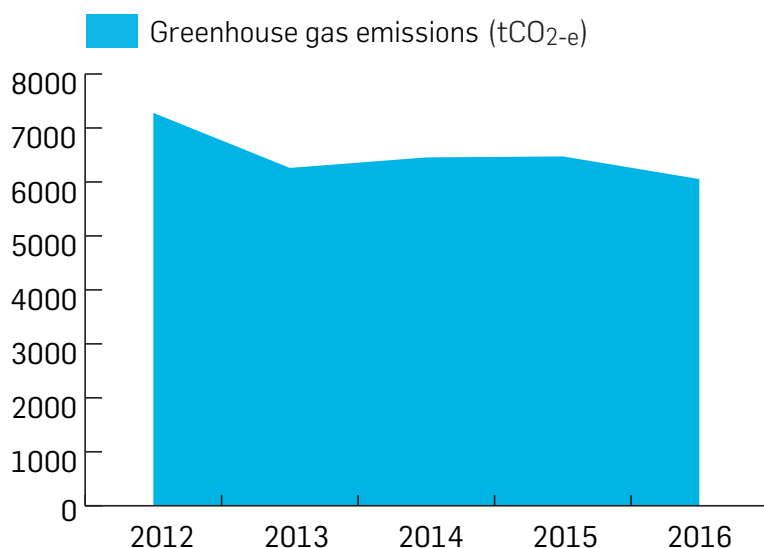
- Develop and maintain an annual health and wellbeing program focussing on workplace safety and the physical and emotional wellbeing of staff
- Improve the accessibility of our workplace for people with disabilities
- Increase organisational knowledge and awareness around diversity
- Review existing policies and procedures to ensure diversity and inclusion is supported through business practise
- Undertake annual People Matter survey to monitor staff engagement, health and wellbeing
- Expand and deliver unconscious bias training to all staff
- Establish Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander traineeship program.



# Our Planet

## Why it matters

At Westernport Water, we understand that the sustainability of our community relies on a resilient and healthy natural environment. Therefore, it is important that we minimise our environmental impact by reducing our greenhouse gas emissions, nutrient discharge and non-revenue water loss, while investing to restore and improve the health of our catchment. These priorities will also allow us to mitigate the effects of climate change and absorb the impacts of a growing customer-base, which shares our commitment to a green future – 92 per cent of our customers support investment in environmental or sustainability-focused initiatives.



## Our progress

Westernport Water has worked hard to increase effluent reuse through a number of different approaches, including: increasing recycled water irrigation at our wastewater treatment plants, growing the number of residential and commercial customers, and sustaining community reserves across Phillip Island. Consequently, effluent reuse has increased by 13 per cent over five years, while the level of nutrients discharged to the ocean has fallen by 10 per cent over four years.



**In the last five years, Westernport Water has also achieved an 11 per cent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by:**

- Optimising asset performance and commissioning new, more efficient plant
- Reducing energy consumption at key sites
- Investing in renewable energy
- Improving raw water quality and thereby reducing water treatment requirements.

Westernport Water has also worked in partnership with Bass Coast Landcare and private landowners to protect and enhance native vegetation in the Candowie Catchment and along Bass River, which ultimately improves local water quality, erosion and biodiversity.

## Our commitment

**Westernport Water commits to the following targets:**

- Increase effluent reuse by an additional 9ML per annum by 2023\*
- 250 kg reduction in nutrients discharged to the ocean by 2023\*
- 8 per cent reduction in baseline greenhouse gas emissions (6,062 tCO<sub>2</sub>-e) by 2025
- Achievement of net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050

\*Subject to further consideration in 2017-18 (Recycled Water Strategy).

**This will be achieved by delivering the following actions and initiatives:**

- Install additional solar panels at Newhaven, Cowes Wastewater Treatment Plant, Ian Bartlett Water Purification Plant and selected pump stations
- Develop and implement a Recycled Water Strategy seeking to maximise wastewater reuse in public spaces, reduce peak high nutrient loads entering the marine environment, and grow our recycled water customer base
- Design and implement an Integrated Water Management Plan to deliver greener environments and healthier waterways through partnerships with local council and community groups
- Maintain community-based partnerships to revegetate and control pests, plant and animals at key Westernport Water sites and catchment
- Implement the Climate Change Strategy.

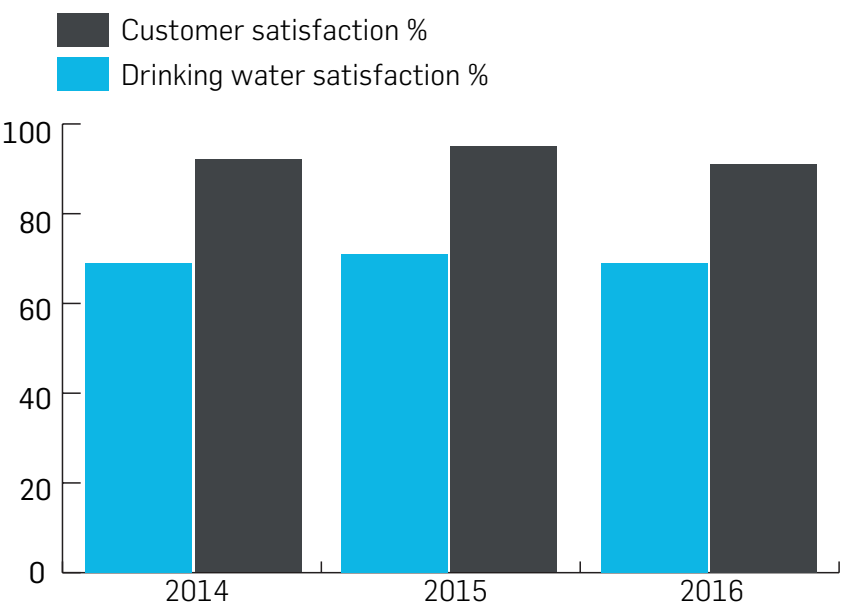




# Our Community

## Why it matters

At Westernport Water, we recognise the significance of our social responsibility – as an essential service provider, as a large local employer and as a natural resource manager. That is why we are committed to partnering with all members of the community to identify their needs and continue to meet expectation in the short and long term – 82 per cent of our customers believe that it is important that Westernport Water makes a meaningful contribution to the community.



## Our progress

Westernport Water has a proud history of customer engagement. The first Customer Advisory Group was formed more than 15 years ago and group of community members continue to meet regularly to provide comment on the quality and direction of our services. Furthermore, annual customer surveys have been undertaken since 2004, allowing our broader customer base to declare their satisfaction levels in key areas, driving future changes to meet changing expectations.



**In 2016-17, Westernport Water undertook a significant engagement program for the 2018 Pricing Submission, which has set a new benchmark for how we engage in the future. It included:**

- 400 telephone surveys
- 430 face to face surveys at Cowes, San Remo, Grantville, Kilcunda and Coronet Bay
- 173 online surveys (via a new online engagement portal branded 'Let's Talk')
- Four, three hour community workshops in Cowes, Newhaven and San Remo with 64 attendees.

Westernport Water has never known more about the interests, concerns, values and priorities of customers. The community is passionate about affordable and accessible services, reliable water and wastewater services, better tasting drinking water and a more sustainable community.

Late in 2017, Westernport Water will submit its price plan to the regulator for review, which will detail how we will meet the priorities and expectations of our customers. Furthermore, on an annual basis, we will report back to customers on our progress.

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Residential customers with instalment plans (per 100 customers)	2.52	1.57	2.04	1.36	2.55
Hardship grants approved (per 100 customers)	0.02	0.03	0.10	0.16	0.03

## Our commitment

**Westernport Water commits to the following targets:**

- Increase customer satisfaction to 95 per cent by 2020
- Increase customer satisfaction with drinking water to 75 per cent by 2022
- Formalise three strategic community partnerships to support sustainability, health and liveability
- Increase flexible payment arrangements (including direct debit) by 20 per cent by 2020
- Increase number of hardship grants to reflect industry average (0.55 per 100 customers) by 2020
- Undertake minimum of 20 community engagement/education initiatives per annum from 2018
- Increase Aboriginal participation through strengthened relationships with Traditional Owners, greater supplier diversity and in-kind development opportunities for Aboriginal people
- Provide \$50,000 per annum in real terms in sponsorship or grants for community-based causes.

**This will be achieved by delivering the following actions and initiatives:**

- Development and delivery of 3-year Customer Service Strategy
- Development and delivery of Annual Community Engagement and Education Plan
- Implementation of the Reconciliation Action Plan
- Development and implementation of customer-centred hardship program from 2018-19
- Maximise recreational benefits for the community from our land and assets
- Deliver Water Quality Continuous Improvement Program.



# Reporting on our progress

A summary of our commitments and targets are detailed below. We will report annually on our commitments in all three areas to our Board, our people and our community.

Our People	Target	When
Staff engagement score	Top 25% (Industry)	2020
Senior Managers - Female	50%	2020
Staff on flexible work arrangements	25%	2020
Workforce representation - LGBTI	7%	2020
Workforce representation - People with a Disability	20%	2020
Workforce representation - Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander	2.5%	2020
Workforce representation - Language other than English spoken at home	20%	2020
Our Planet	Target	When
Effluent reuse	304 ML*	2023
Nutrients discharged to the ocean	27.5t*	2023
Greenhouse gas emissions - CO <sub>2</sub> -e	5,577t	2025
Our Community	Target	When
Customer satisfaction	95%	2020
Drinking water satisfaction	75%	2022
Strategic community partnerships	3	Annual
Flexible payment arrangements	456	2020
Hardship grants (per 100 customers)	0.55	2020
Community engagement / education events	20	Annual
Community-based sponsorship or grant funding	\$50,000^	Annual

\*Subject to further consideration in 2017-18 (Recycled Water Strategy).

^Target to be adjusted each year for inflation.

Pricing Submission workshop - community engagement



# Sustainable Development Goals

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals apply to all countries to 2030 and seek to promote efforts to end all forms of poverty, fight inequalities and tackle climate change, while ensuring that no one is left behind. The goals also seek to build economic growth and address a range of social needs including education, health, social protection, and job opportunities, while tackling climate change and environmental protection.

Westernport Water is committed to promoting and contributing to the Sustainable Development Goals in the long term.

The delivery of affordable, accessible and reliable water and wastewater services is critical to achieving many of the goals identified by the United Nations. Westernport Water will continue to support global initiatives that improve access to safe water, hygiene and sanitation.





Our People, Our Planet, Our Community, Our Business



For more information about  
Westernport Water's  
Corporate Social Responsibility Strategy  
[www.westernportwater.com.au](http://www.westernportwater.com.au)