

Urban Waterway Strategy/Drought Preparedness Plan Customer Panel

Thursday 13 August 2026

6.30pm-8.30pm

2 Boys Home Rd Newhaven/On-line

Lachlan Hally

Kate McKenzie



WESTERNPORT
WATER



Acknowledgement

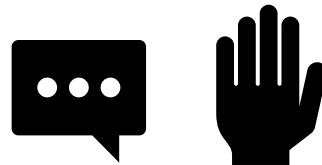
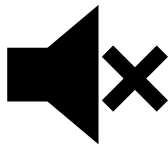


Tips for working online



Cameras on,
unless you have
connectivity issues

Default to mute



Raise your hand or use
the chat to ask questions



Virtual presence and
patience. Be curious. Be
kind. Be respectful



Have your phone close by
as we'll be using Menti
Meter

Today's agenda

Purpose / What's an
Urban Water Strategy?

Background/water
supply system

Water quality customer
Satisfaction

Customer feedback on
water security and levels
of service

Break – 5 Minutes

Water sources available
and the implication of

the options

Drought response and
historic use

How your feedback will
be used

Next steps and time
frames



What is an Urban Water Strategy?

- The Urban Water Strategy (UWS) 2027 outlines how Westernport Water will manage water and wastewater supply and demand over the next 50 years.
- Provides long-term direction for secure, sustainable, and affordable water services for the community.
- Includes an update of the Drought Preparedness Plan, which outlines how WPW will manage drought and water restrictions.

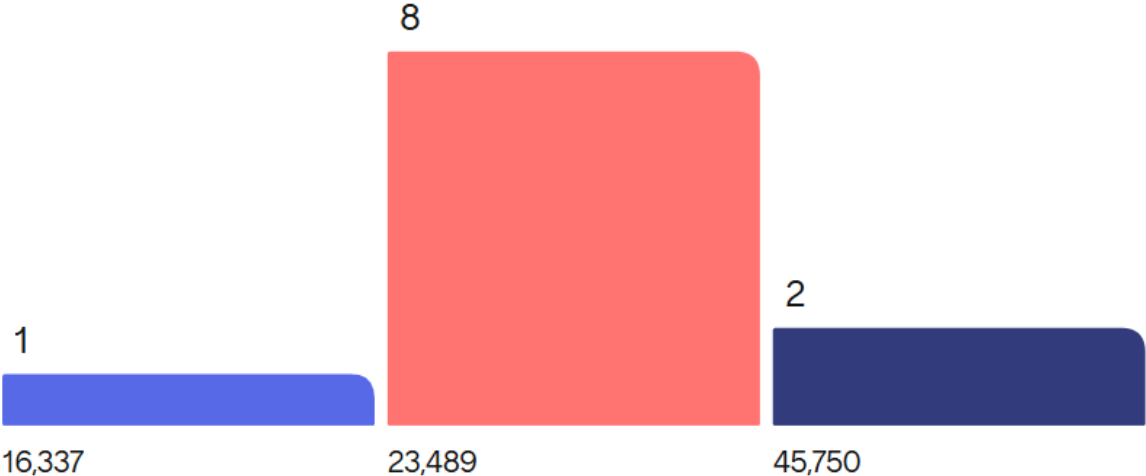


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How much do
you know
about
Westernport
Water?



How many customers does Westernport Water have?



Mentimeter

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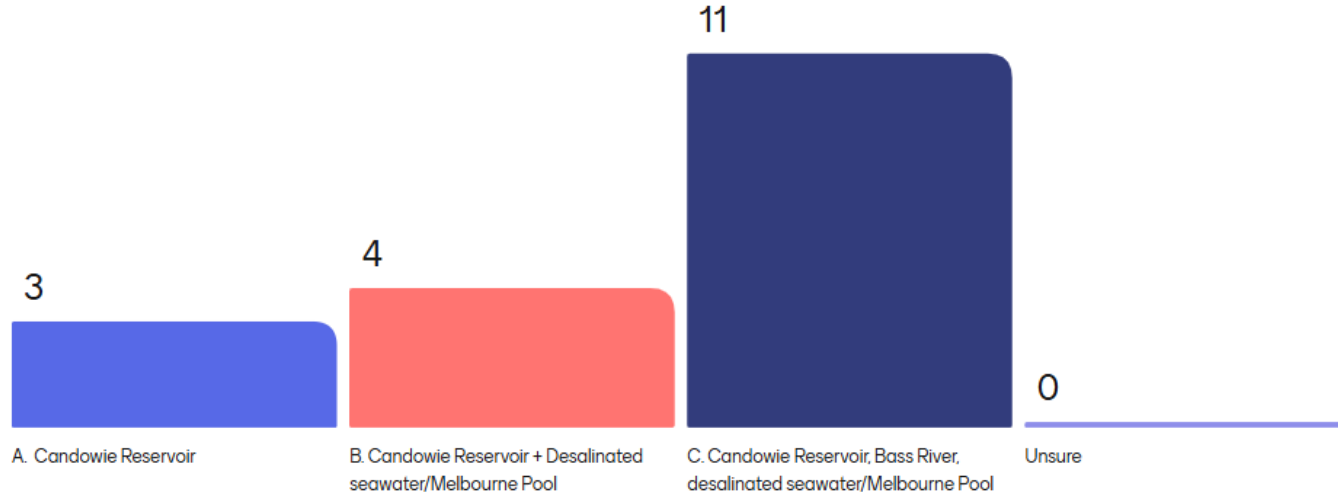
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Where does Westernport Water's water come from?



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Where does your water come from?

Local water supplied to our community begins its journey at Tennent Creek, which flows into Candowie Reservoir before being treated at our Treatment Plant.

Water security isn't reliant on a single source. To help ensure reliable supplies now and into the future, we can also access water from the Bass River when flow conditions are met this is pumped into Candowie Reservoir to be treated alongside our primary source.



Where else does it come from?

- Beyond our local catchment, WPW can also draw on water from our South-Central Pool Entitlement, also known as the Melbourne Pool.
- This supply comes from either the Desalination Plant (when in operation) or Cardinia Reservoir and is delivered straight into our water network providing an additional layer of supply security independent of local rainfall.

The background of the slide is a photograph of water, likely a reservoir or pool, with sunlight reflecting off the surface, creating a shimmering effect. A semi-transparent blue rectangular box is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing white text.

Having access to a mix of local and climate-independent water sources helps us maintain a safe, reliable water supply while planning for future growth and a changing climate.

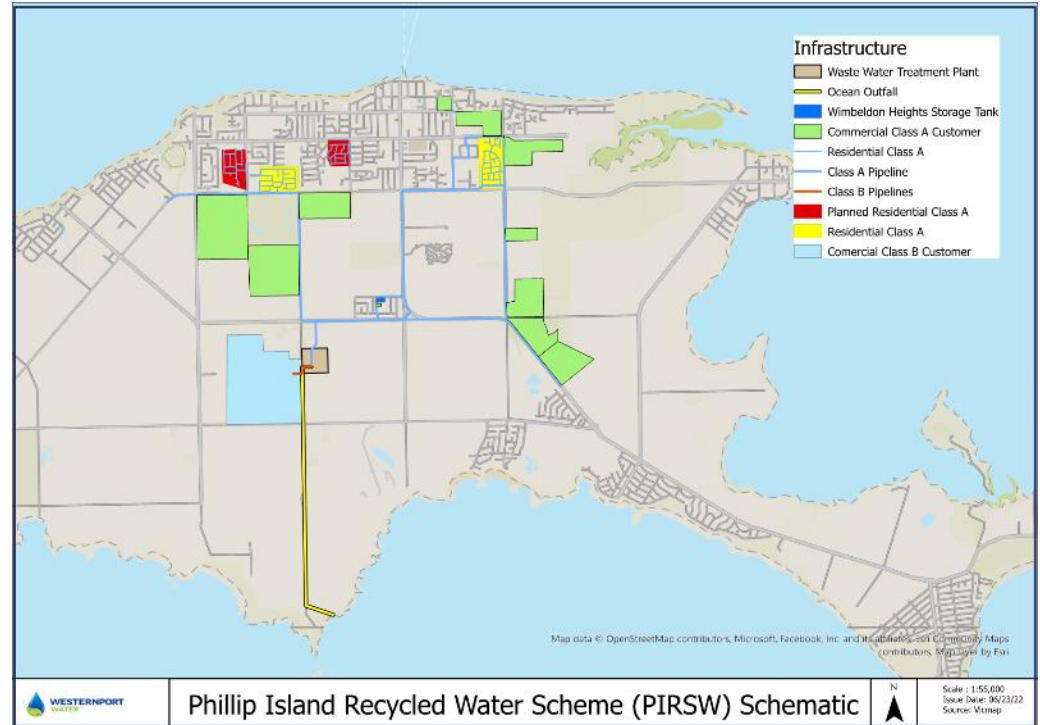
Water supply system



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Recycled water service area

Reducing demand on drinking water & supporting public open spaces, agriculture, industry etc.





**What do you
think of your
drinking water...**

Let's find out on the
next slide...



Tap water satisfaction

How satisfied are you with the quality of tap water?



Most unsatisfied

Most satisfied

Mentimeter

WW

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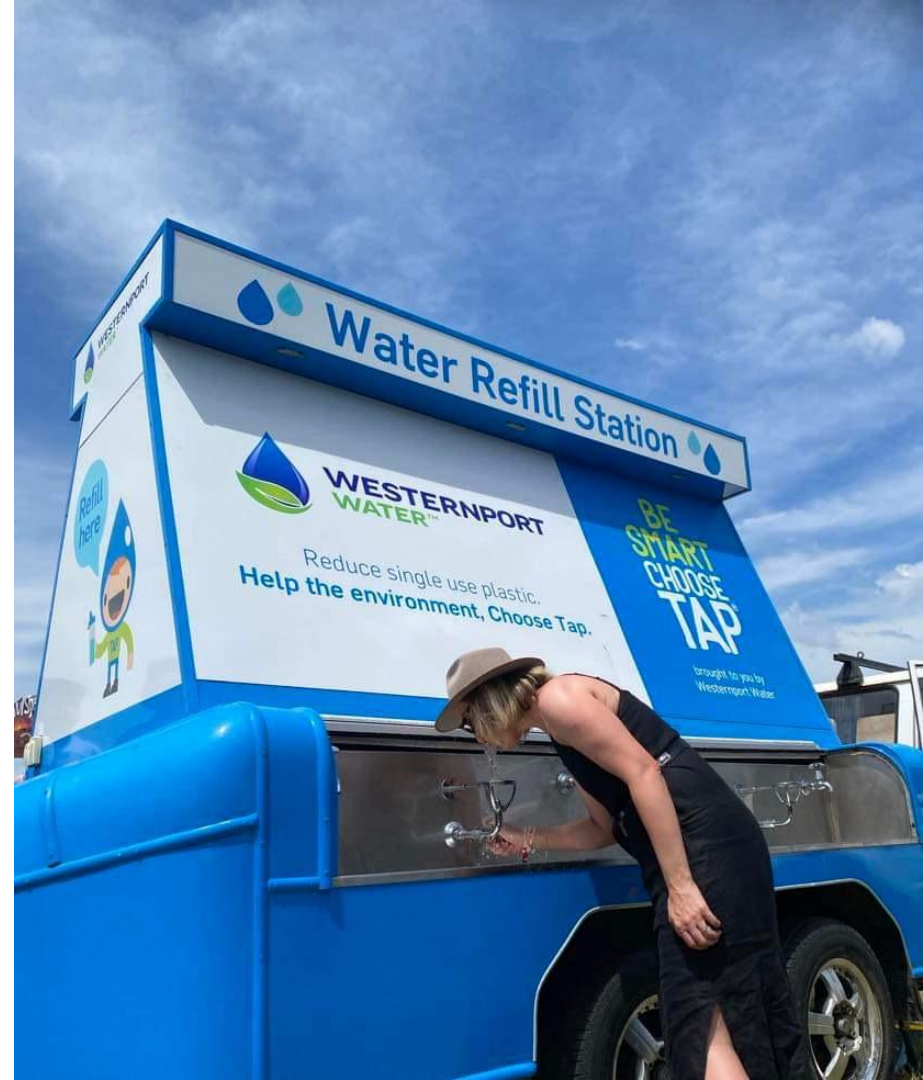
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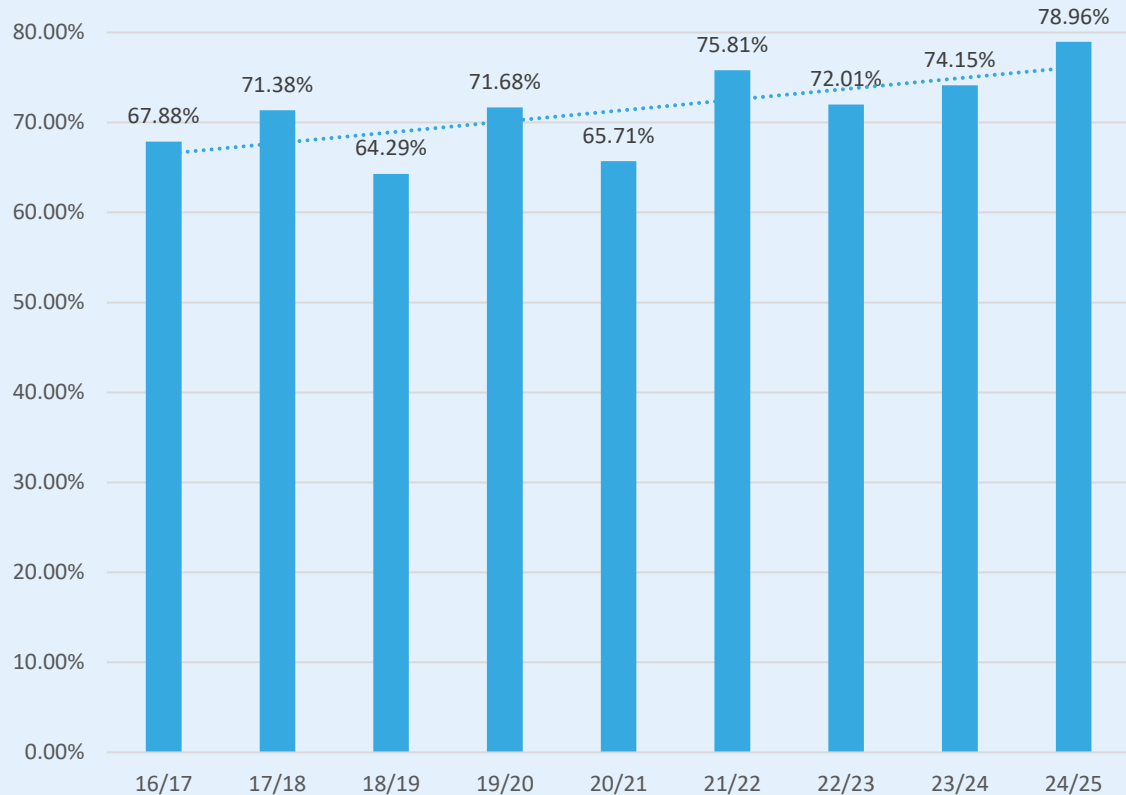
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How satisfied are customers with the quality of drinking water, and what are the historical trends ?

Let's find out...



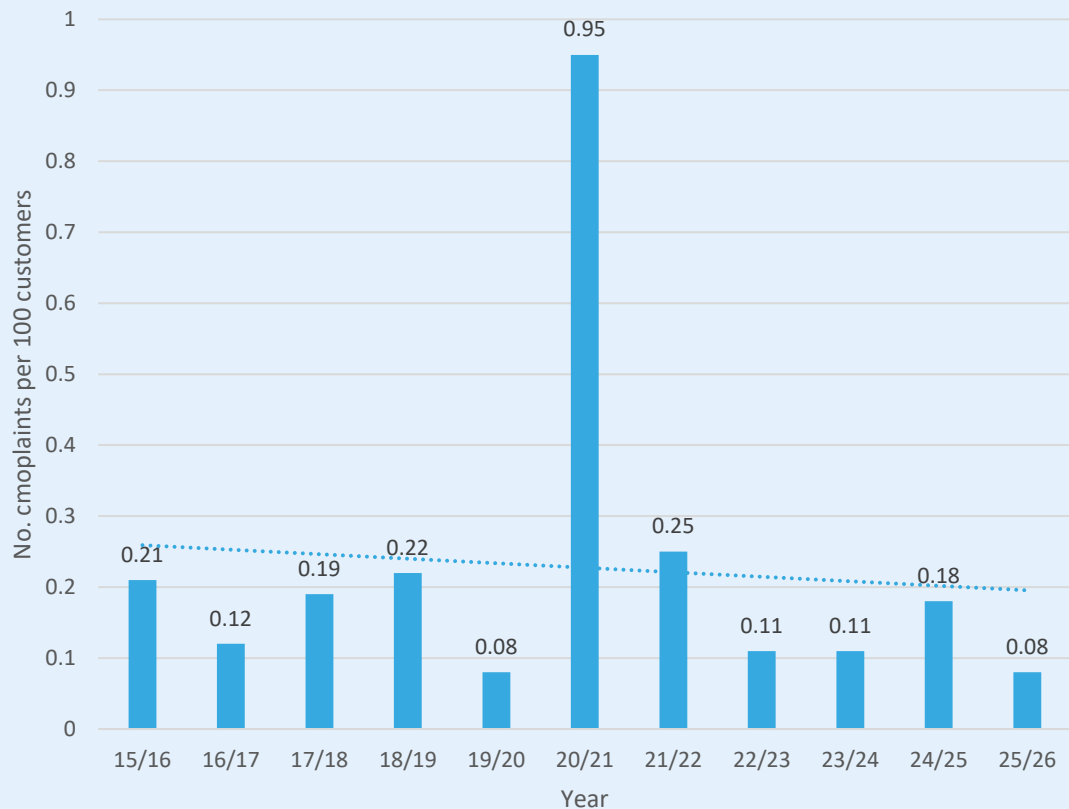


Customers (%) satisfied with drinking water

Customer satisfaction with the taste and quality of drinking water is measured as part of an annual Customer Satisfaction Survey.

The trend is improved customer satisfaction with drinking water over time.



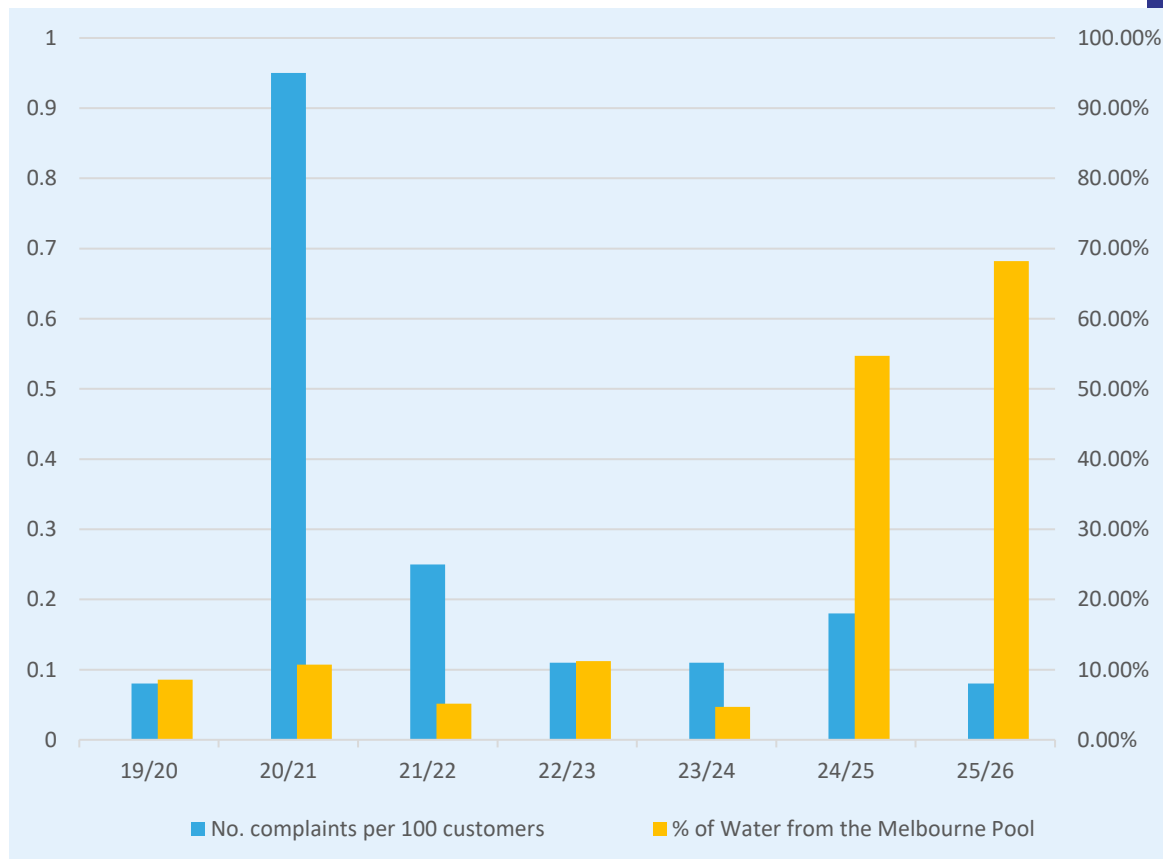


Number of water quality complaints per 100 customers

Direct complaints made by customers to Westernport Water via phone or in writing.



Number of water quality complaints per 100 customers



Direct complaints made by customers to Westernport Water via phone or in writing.

This has been overlaid with our usage of water from the Melbourne Pool.



Water security:

*Achieved through
water savings,
water smarts and
alternative water
sources*

Understanding water security

Levels of Service define the reliability and frequency of water supply restrictions that customers can expect under varying climate and demand conditions. E.g. Probability of requiring restrictions 5 years in 100 years expressed as 95% service level.

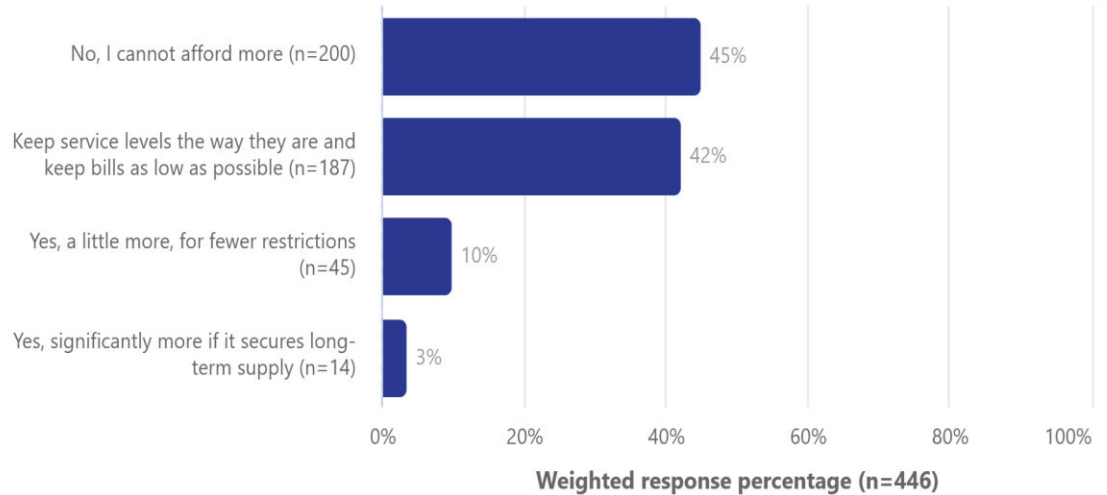


Are customers
willing to pay more
for improved water
security?



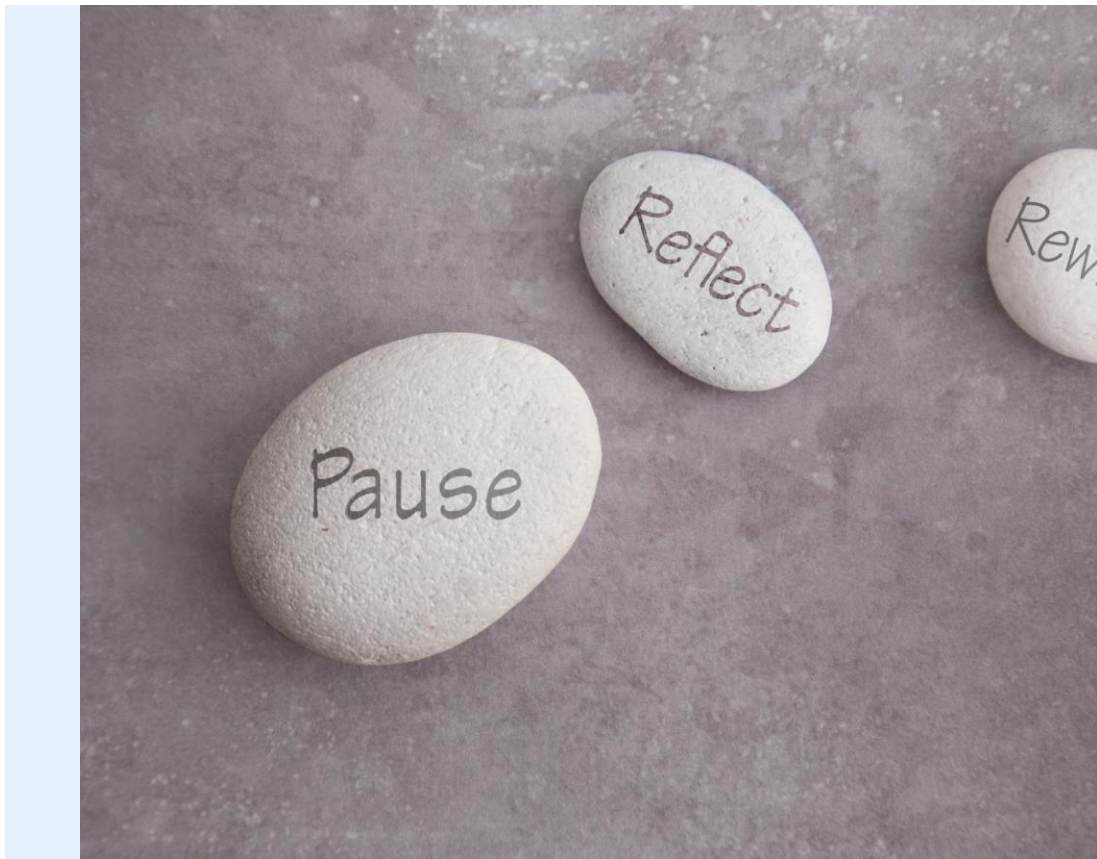
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Would you be willing to pay more on your bill for improved water security (e.g., fewer restrictions, more drought-proofing)?



**Time for a
5min break**





**Any questions
at this stage?**

**Please raise
your hand and
ask or put them
in the chat**

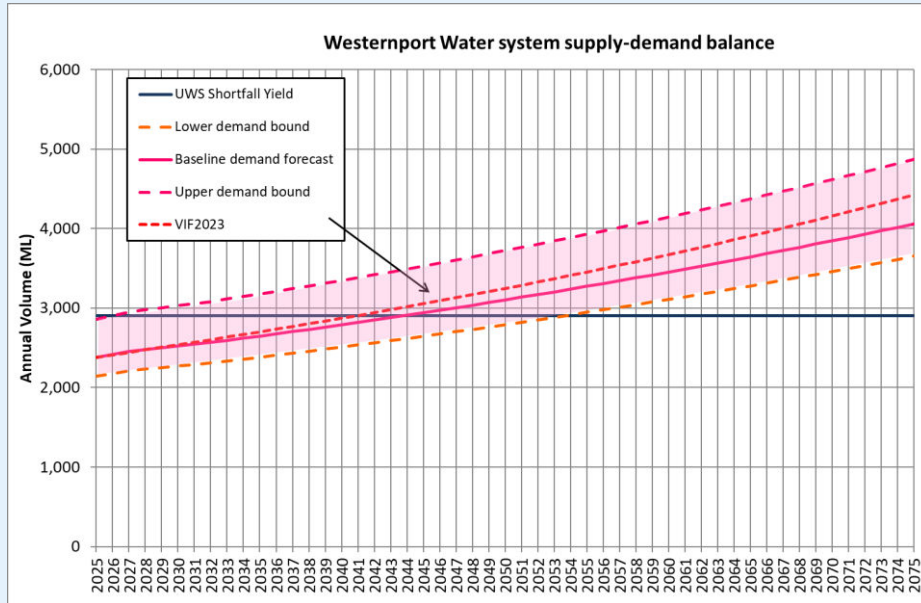


What's likelihood and severity of restrictions and/or higher investment costs?

Let's look at the supply and demand modelling to find out...



Demand / supply modelling & chosen planning scenario



- We modeled how much water we can source from our local supplies
- The modelling includes the impact of climate change.
- The model also includes our customer growth in our service area.



**This is good news
because demand
and supply
modelling
shows...**

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That we have sufficient local supply (Tennent Creek and Bass River) to meet demand until 2043.



We have flexibility. When local supplies run low, we can choose to use restrictions or access more water from the Melbourne Pool.

Therefore, no major water supply augmentation projects will be required in the foreseeable future.



What other changes are there?

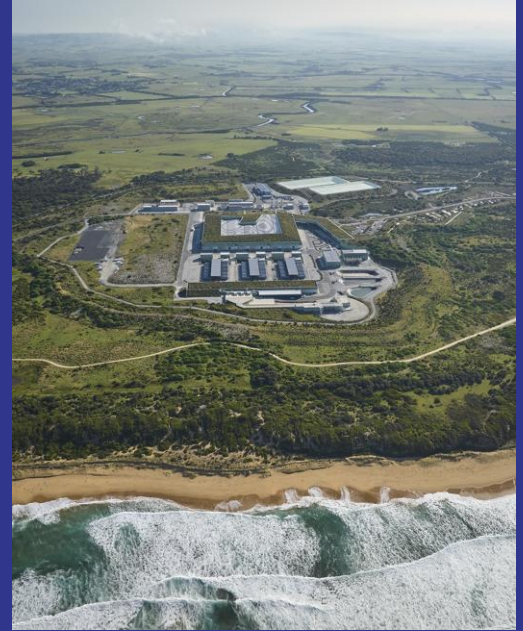
- As of 1 July 2026, Westernport Water (WPW) has access to more water from the Melbourne Pool.
- Westernport Water can access as much water as required.
- The big change is that this water is now approximately three times the previous cost.



This makes the conversation less about water security and more about balancing cost with customer value.

So, what are the options?

Victorian Desalination Plant



Option 1. Maximising local supply – Normal Operation



- Locally sourced water
- Victorian water grid

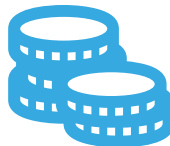
Details

Prioritising local supply and only use the Melbourne Pool sparingly.



Pros

It's the most cost-effective option for customers.



Cons

Our water will continue to have its own taste visitors from Melbourne will notice a difference



Option 2. Use a little more from the Melbourne Pool



- Locally sourced water
- Victorian water grid

Details

- 25% from the Melbourne Pool
- 75% from local supply



Pros

Can utilise Melbourne Pool during winter months when taste can be more of an issue



Cons

- Increase in customer bills
- No change in taste in summer months



Option 3. Do half local supply and half Melbourne Pool



- Locally sourced water
- Victorian water grid

Details

Local supply and increase of Melbourne Pool supply.



Pros

Increase in customer satisfaction with the quality of drinking water.



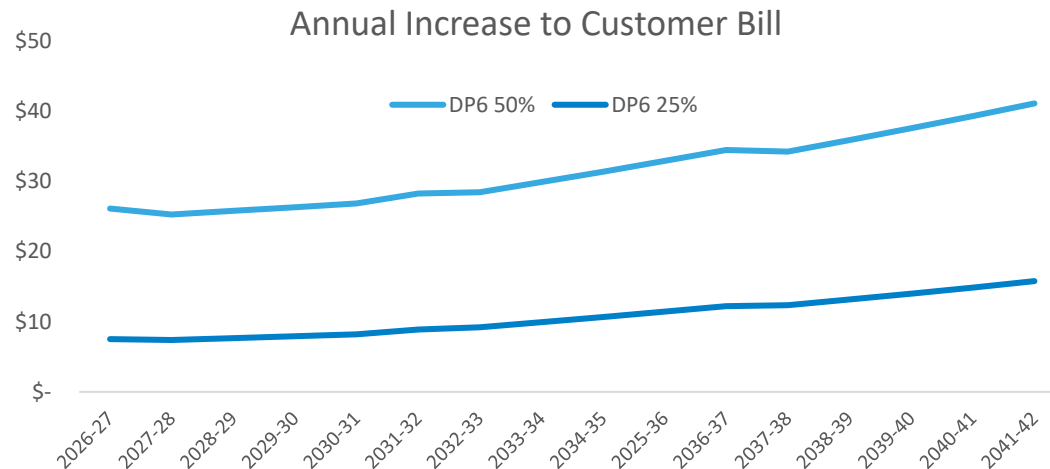
Cons

Increasing use of the Melbourne Pool for reasons of taste would lead to customer bill increase



Estimated impact to customer bills

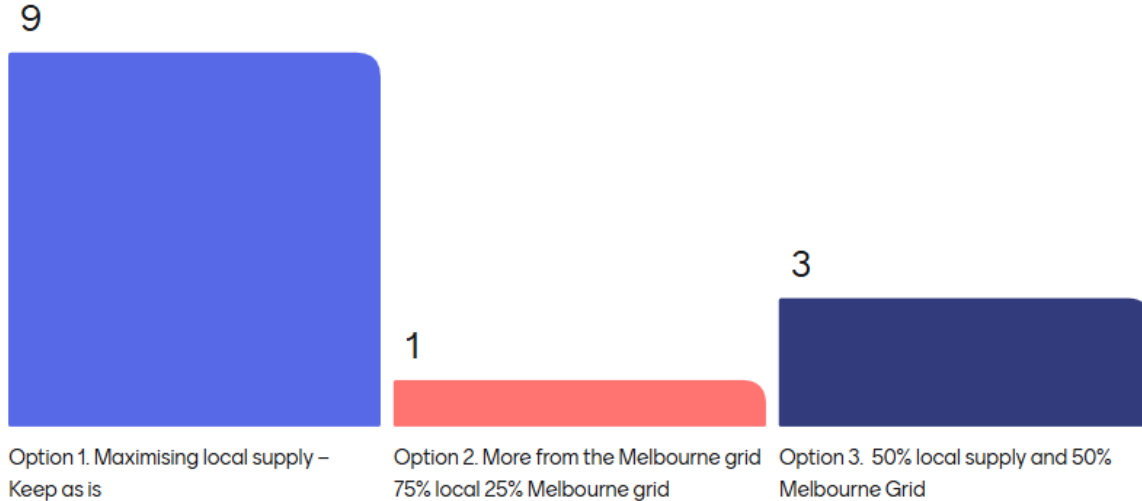
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Year		2026-27	2028-2029	2033-34	2038-39
Increase in Annual Bill	50% Usage Connection	\$25.72	\$27.17	\$32.61	\$38.49
	25% Usage Connection	\$7.46	\$8.37	\$11.32	\$14.47



What do you want the make-up of your water to be?



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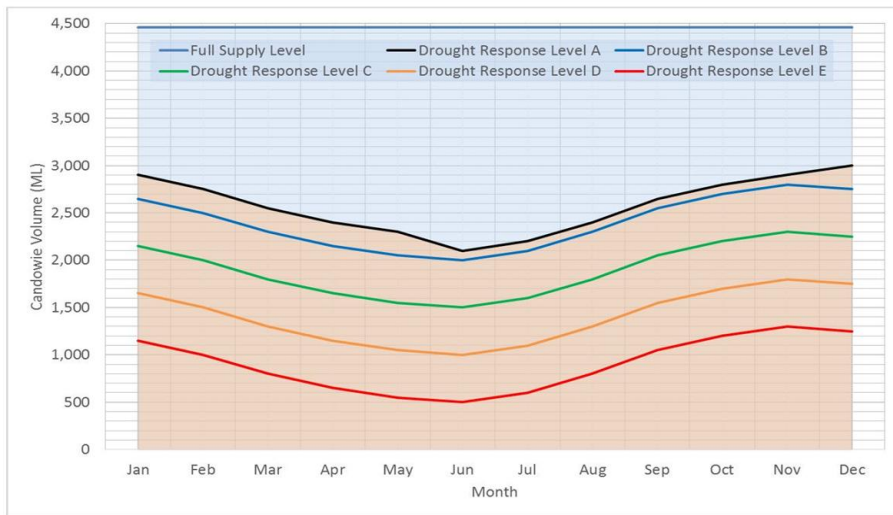
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Drought Preparedness Plan

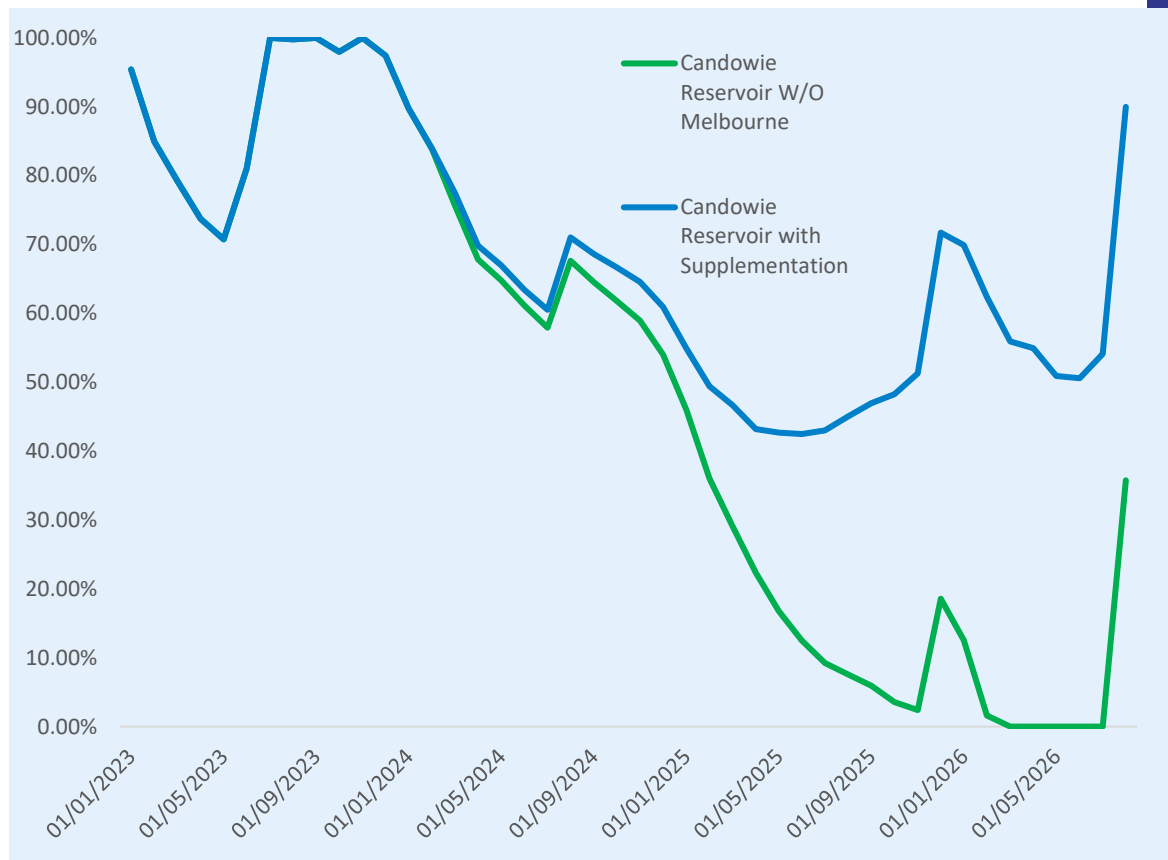


- A DPP is our plan for balancing water supply and demand, including how we respond as conditions get drier from early water-saving messages through to formal restrictions.
- It sets out trigger points, based on storage levels and available supply, that tell us when to move between different stages of response.
- It helps us act early and predictably, so restrictions are only ever a last resort, and customers know what to expect at each stage.
- Restrictions carry implementation costs and impact the community and local tourism economy
- Only Stage 4 restrictions deliver meaningful water savings



Modelling shows that we don't need Melbourne supply, but where would we be if we didn't supplement over the past two years?





Reservoir Level and Supplementation

Over the past two years, WPW has sourced more than 50% of demand from the Melbourne Grid to avoid entering water restrictions.

Since 1 July 2026, the cost associated with this supply has increased.



**But modelling
said we didn't
need any water
from the
Melbourne
Grid?**

- The modelling has WPW using alternative local supplies like the Bass River.
- In 2024–25, WPW was not using the Bass River to supplement supply.
- From August 2025, WPW has been using the Bass River to supplement supply.
- Inflows over 2024 to 2025 have been the lowest on record.

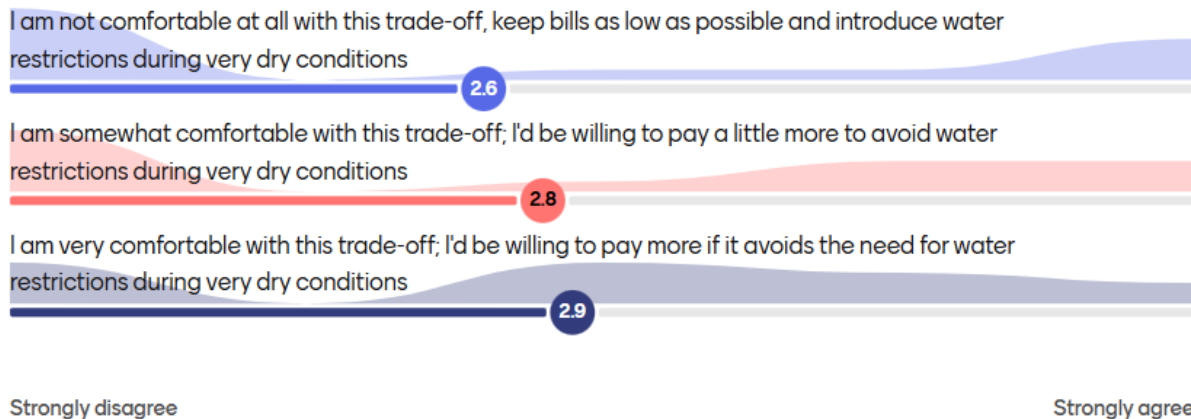


Models are tools but models aren't always right

- Models are tools we use to predict what the weather will be doing.
- Models don't always get extremely dry, (or extremely wet!) conditions right.
- If we needed our Melbourne Pool to supplement supply; there may be a cost on your bill.
- We are not planning for or expecting this to happen, but recent years have shown that weather can be hard to predict.



During very dry conditions, we may draw more water from the Melbourne Pool to avoid restrictions which could increase your bill.



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How your feedback will be used

Next steps and time frames



Thank you for your time.

Urban Water Strategy Customer
Panel Feedback





**WESTERNPORT
WATER**