



Water utility customer satisfaction survey results

18 August 2023

1 What is the customer satisfaction survey?

IPART conducts a customer satisfaction survey (Survey) 4 times a year to understand how satisfied customers are with their water providers. In NSW, these water providers include Sydney Water, Hunter Water and Central Coast Council (NSW water utilities).

Since we started the Survey in 2019, Sydney Water and Hunter Water's performance has largely remained stable. Central Coast Council's performance has remained relatively stable over the past year. There has been a decrease in performance since we first started the Survey but recently, we have begun to observe a small increase in performance.

We have published the results of the Survey until May 2023 in section 2 of this fact sheet. We have compared the results to those for water utilities in Victoria that are similar in function and customer base. The Essential Services Commission (ESC) surveys the Victorian water utilities' customers, using the same survey, and publishes the results on its [website](#).

2 How did the NSW water utilities perform?

We have set out the customer satisfaction results for the NSW water utilities in Figures 1 and 2.

- i** We ask customers 4 questions in the Survey:
- How would you rate your water/wastewater provider on delivering value for money?
 - How would you rate your trust for your water/wastewater provider?
 - How would you rate your water/wastewater provider's reputation in the community?
 - How would you rate your satisfaction with your water/wastewater provider as a service provider overall?

Each graph in Figures 1 and 2 corresponds to the customer satisfaction results for each of the 4 questions that we asked the customers.

We have compared Sydney Water's results with the results of Greater Western Water (City West Water),^a South East Water and Yarra Valley Water in Victoria. Between them, the 3 Victorian water utilities supply water to the Melbourne region. Similarly, we have compared Hunter Water and Central Coast Council's results with each other's and with Barwon Water's results (in Victoria).

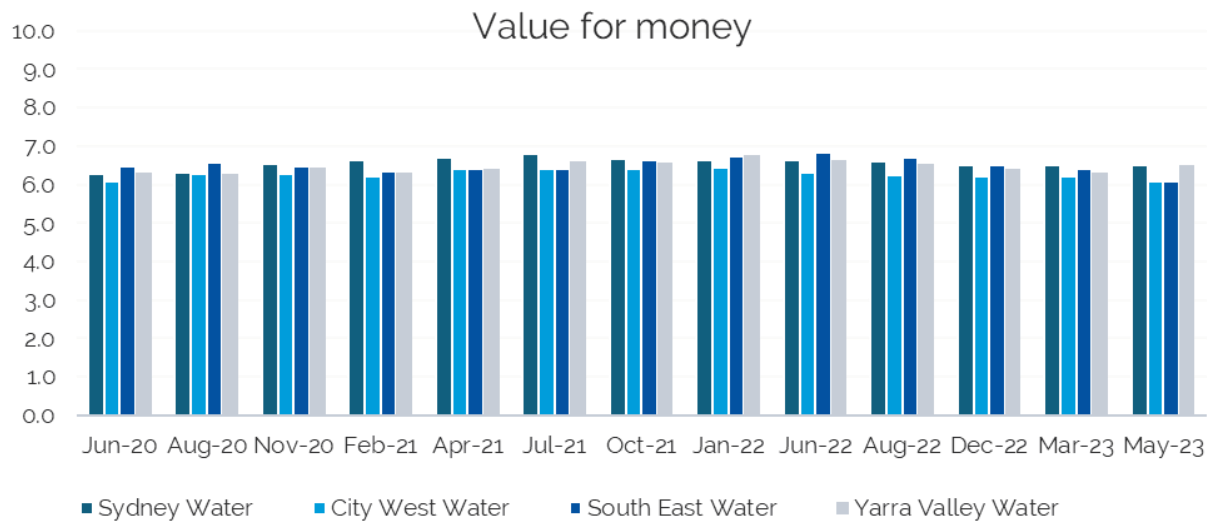
The graphs include the rolling annual averages of the customer satisfaction results collected 4 times over the previous year. For example, the May 2023 results are averages of the Survey results collected in August and December 2022 and March and May 2023.

2.1 Sydney Water's results

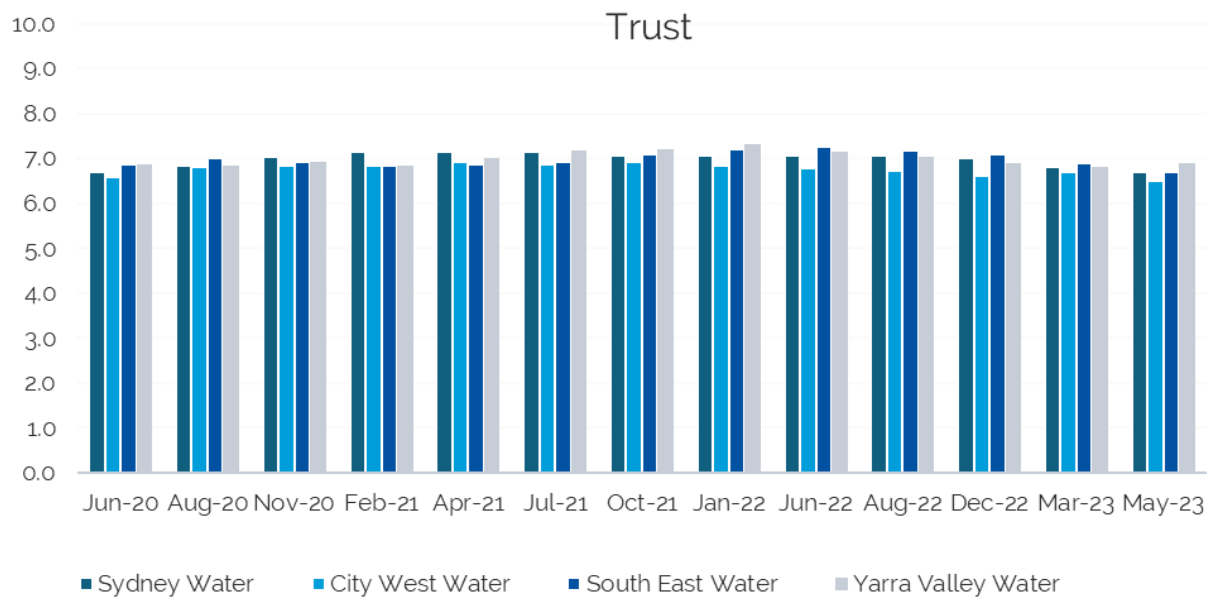
- i** Sydney Water's results have remained stable over the past year
- Sydney Water's performance is on par with similar utilities in Victoria.

^a On 1 July 2021, Greater Western Water was formed by the amalgamation of Western Water and City West Water. The ESC continues to separately survey the customers of the previous Western Water and City West Water. We have compared Sydney Water's results with those of the previous City West Water.

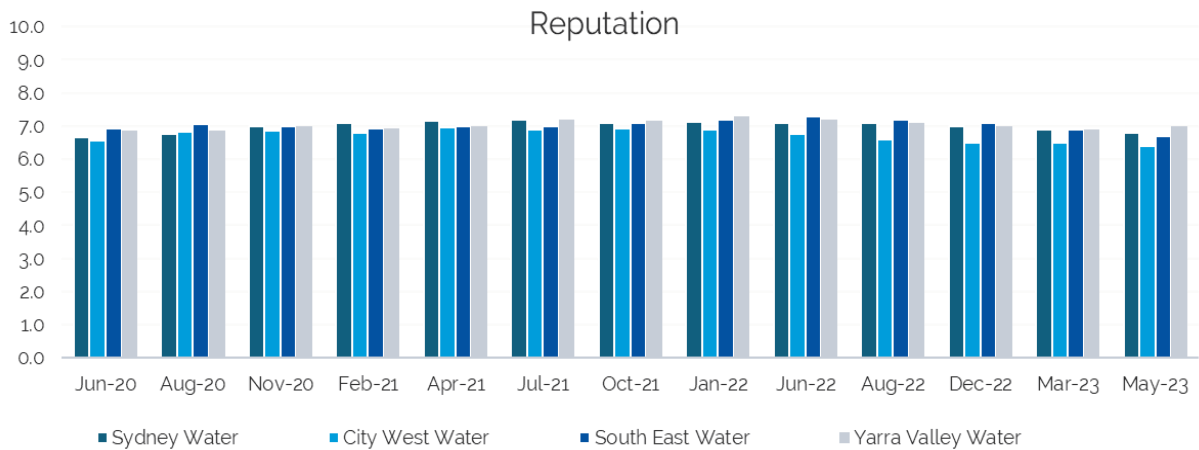
Figure 1 Customer satisfaction results for Sydney Water and City West Water, South East Water and Yarra Valley Water (Vic) scored from 0-10



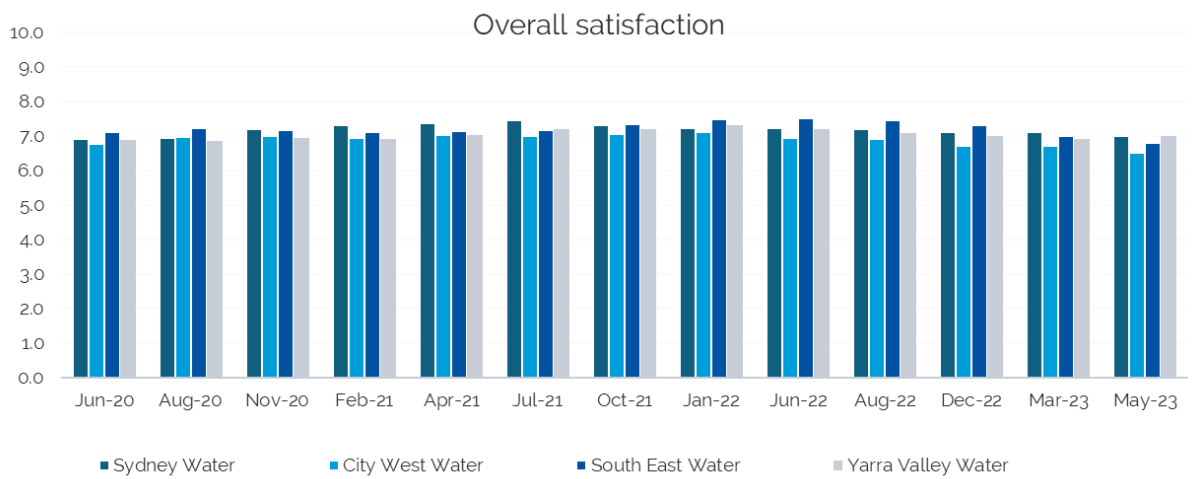
Scale: 0= Highly dissatisfied; 5 = neutral; 10 = Highly satisfied



Scale: 0= Highly dissatisfied; 5 = neutral; 10 = Highly satisfied



Scale: 0= Highly dissatisfied; 5 = neutral; 10 = Highly satisfied



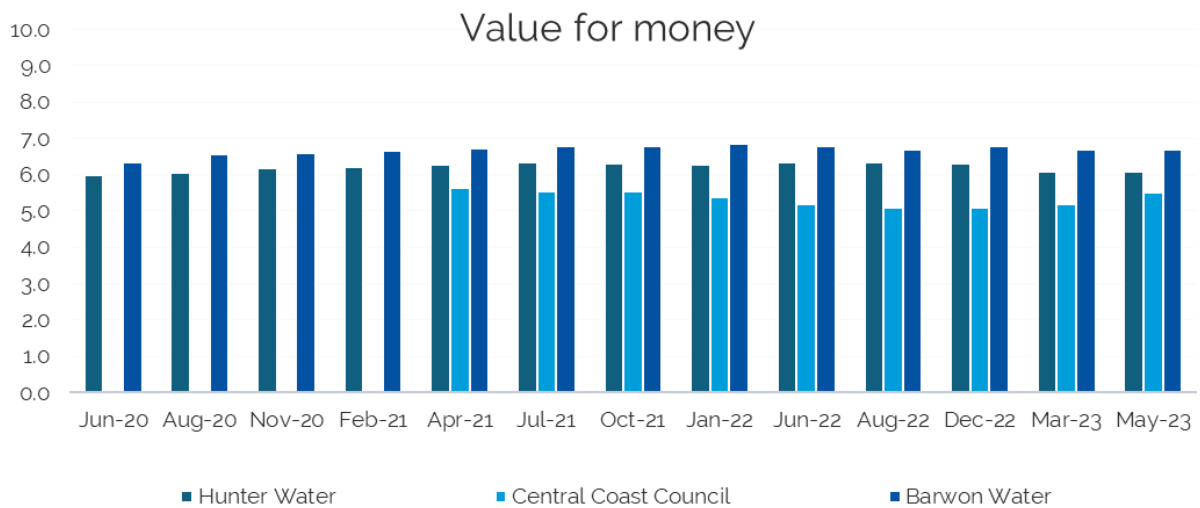
Scale: 0= Highly dissatisfied; 5 = neutral; 10 = Highly satisfied

2.2 Hunter Water's and Central Coast Council's results

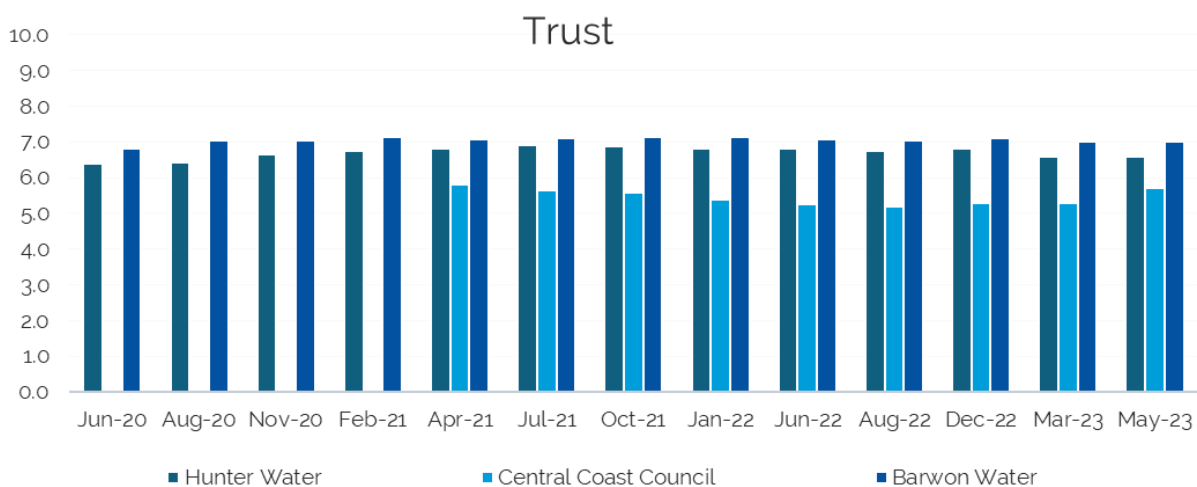
i Hunter Water's and Central Coast Council's results have remained stable over the past year

Hunter Water's performance is nearly on par with Barwon Water's. Central Coast Council has not performed as well as Hunter Water or Barwon Water (in Victoria). However, its performance has remained stable in the last year and has begun to show a small improvement.

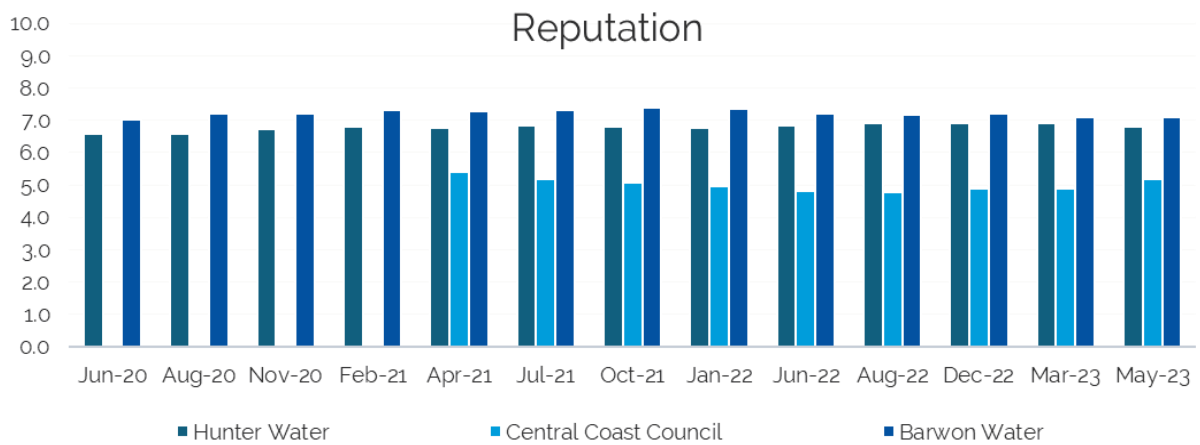
Figure 2 Customer satisfaction results for Hunter Water, Central Coast Council and Barwon Water (Vic) scored from 0-10



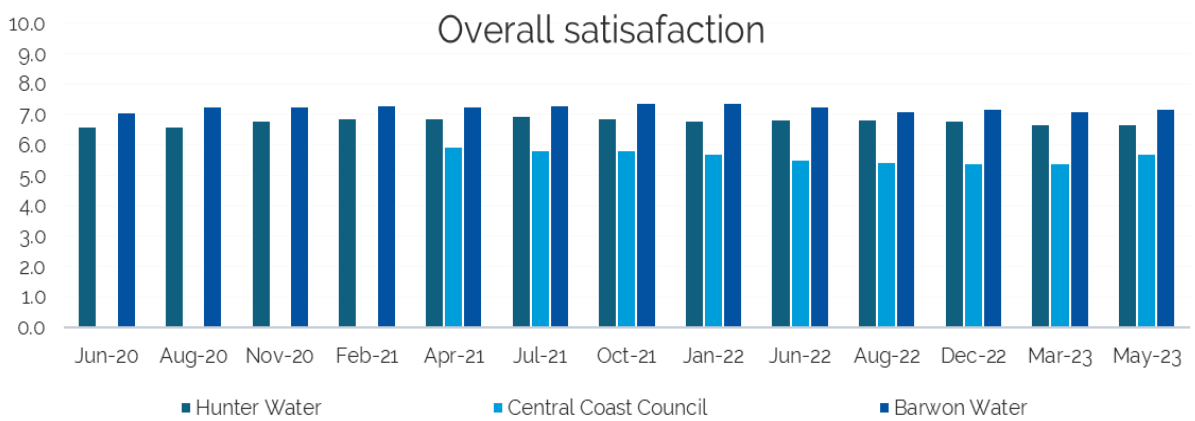
Scale: 0= Highly dissatisfied; 5 = neutral; 10 = Highly satisfied



Scale: 0= Highly dissatisfied; 5 = neutral; 10 = Highly satisfied



Scale: 0= Highly dissatisfied; 5 = neutral; 10 = Highly satisfied



Scale: 0= Highly dissatisfied; 5 = neutral; 10 = Highly satisfied

3 Why are we conducting the Survey?

i Customer satisfaction is an indicator of the effectiveness of the utilities' services. It helps to protect customers' interests, particularly in NSW where the public water utilities largely operate as monopoly suppliers.

4 How do we conduct the Survey?

We have been surveying Sydney Water and Hunter Water customers since 2019. We included Central Coast Council in the Survey in the 2020-21 financial year.

We survey customers for their views on their utility 4 times a year. In each round of the Survey, we aim to survey 100 customers per utility, totalling around 400 customers per utility per year.

Due to the limited availability of comparable water utilities in NSW, we use the same survey as the ESC uses in Victoria, to allow us to compare the NSW water utilities' performance with similar water utilities in Victoria.

In 2023-24, we intend to only survey Central Coast Council's customers. Hunter Water's and Sydney Water's results have remained stable since we began this Survey. Therefore, we do not intend to continue to survey these water utilities' customers in 2023-24.

We will continue to compare Central Coast Council's performance with Baron Water's, in Victoria, and Hunter Water's historical performance as it is reasonable to assume that if we were to continue surveying Hunter Water's customers, Hunter Water would continue to perform as it is has done to date.

5 What next and who to speak to?

We expect to publish the Survey results for Central Coast Council by November 2023.

Please direct any enquiries to Mamata Titus, Principal Analyst, on (02) 9113 7750 or at mamata_titus@ipart.nsw.gov.au.