



IPART Independent
Pricing and Regulatory
Tribunal | NSW

Review of Essential Water's prices
for water and wastewater services
in Broken Hill

Final Report

November 2022

Water >>

Tribunal Members

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The Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART)

Further information on IPART can be obtained from [IPART's website](#).

Acknowledgment of Country

IPART acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands where we work and live. We pay respect to Elders, past, present and emerging.

We recognise the unique cultural and spiritual relationship and celebrate the contributions of First Nations peoples.

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1 Water and wastewater bills to remain stable, before inflation

We have set prices for water and wastewater services provided by Essential Water to Broken Hill and surrounding communities to apply from 1 January 2023 until 30 June 2026. Under these prices, bills would be unchanged for most residential and business customers, before inflation.

To set these prices, we reviewed Essential Water's pricing proposal, which set out a 13% increase in its costs and an expanded government subsidy which would limit price increases to around 2% per year, before inflation.

Overall, we consider most of Essential Water's pricing proposal is reasonable. We reviewed Essential Water's proposed investments in its water and wastewater infrastructure, ongoing operating costs and its customer and sales forecasts. Our decision is to accept most of what Essential Water has proposed, but also to make some adjustments in areas where we think it is achievable for Essential Water to provide better value for money for customers by reducing its costs. These cost reductions mean that prices would remain stable.

Broken Hill is one of the most arid parts of NSW, so secure and affordable water plays an important role in maintaining greenspaces and managing health risks from exposure to high levels of lead. Since releasing our [Issues Paper](#) in September 2021, we heard from people in Broken Hill who told us they did not support Essential Water's proposed price increases. Some people told us that water quality and security in Broken Hill has noticeably improved since the new WaterNSW Pipeline came into use,¹ but also that Essential Water's infrastructure in Broken Hill is ageing and needs to be upgraded.

The full cost of providing water and wastewater services in Broken Hill is around \$4,100 per customer on average per year, but customers currently contribute around half that cost through their water and wastewater bills. The remaining half is the cost Essential Water incurs from transporting water through the WaterNSW Pipeline, which the NSW Government currently subsidises and is paid for by NSW taxpayers. The NSW Government has confirmed the existing WaterNSW Pipeline subsidy will continue over the upcoming determination period.² Our final decisions on prices mean that typical residential bills in and around Broken Hill would remain in line with bills in other regional areas.

2 Our decisions on prices and bills

Essential Water supplies water to around 9,900 residential customers and around 600 non-residential customers. Its 2 largest customers are mines, which together account for around a third of its customers' total water sales.³

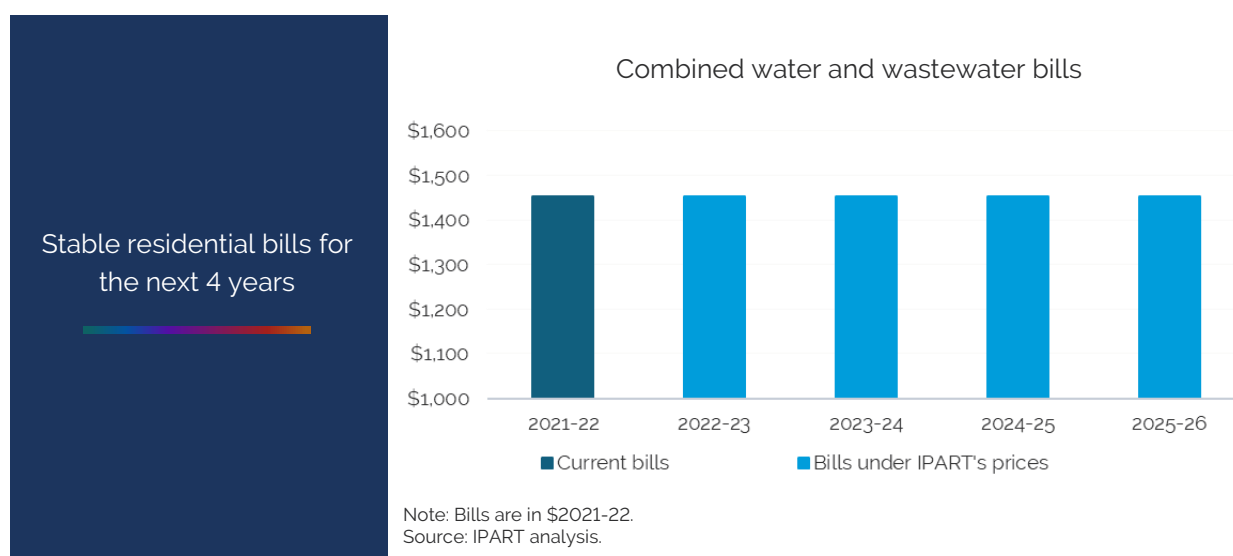
Essential Water provides the following water services:

- **Treated water** – also known as drinking water – to Broken Hill and Menindee.
- **Untreated water** to some locations in Broken Hill and Menindee, and to customers along the Menindee, Stephens Creek and Umberumberka pipelines (the EW Pipelines).
- **Chlorinated water** – which is untreated water that has been disinfected but not filtered – to customers in Silverton and Sunset Strip.

It also provides wastewater services to customers in Broken Hill, where it operates 2 wastewater treatment plants. The sections below summarise our decisions on prices for these water and wastewater services.

2.1 Water and wastewater bills would remain stable, before inflation

Under our decisions, water and wastewater bills for most residential and business customers would remain stable, before inflation. This means bills would increase each year by inflation only.



Each year, we adjust Essential Water's prices for inflation. Table 2.1 and Table 2.2 show our decisions on water and wastewater prices to apply from 1 January 2023, including inflation of 5.1%. Prices will continue to be adjusted in line with inflation each year to 30 June 2026, as future inflation information becomes available.

Table 2.1 Our decisions on Essential Water's water prices (including inflation)

	Current \$2021-22	New \$2022-23
Usage prices (\$/kL)		
Treated	1.88	1.98
Untreated	1.65	1.73
Untreated (EW Pipeline customers)	1.06	1.20
Chlorinated	1.40	1.54
Service prices (\$/year)		
Residential	342.89	360.38
Non – residential meter		
• 20mm connection	342.89	360.38
• 150mm connection	19,288	20,271
Mines (\$'000s)		
• Perilya	2,408	2,531
• CBH	581	611

Source: IPART analysis.

Table 2.2 Our decisions on Essential Water's wastewater prices (including inflation)

	Current \$2021-22	New \$2022-23
Usage price (\$/kL)		
Non-residential	1.34	1.41
Service price (\$/year)		
Residential	546.37	574.23
Non – residential		
• 20mm connection	608.24	639.26
• 150mm connection	34,214	35,958

Source: IPART analysis

Taking inflation into account, a typical household would pay an annual water and wastewater bill of \$1,527 in 2022-23. This is about \$40 lower than the bill under Essential Water's proposed prices.

2.1.1 New prices will commence on 1 January 2023

As previously announced on our website, we have delayed the commencement of new prices until 1 January 2023.^a The prices we present in this report will apply from 1 January 2023 to 30 June 2026, which is a 3.5 year period.

Our view is that both utilities and customers should be no better or worse off as a result of the 6-month delay. Therefore, in setting prices for this review, we have factored in an adjustment for foregone inflation in the period from 1 July 2022 to 31 December 2022. For details please see Chapter 5 of our [Final Technical Report](#).

2.2 Affordability is a key concern for Essential Water customers

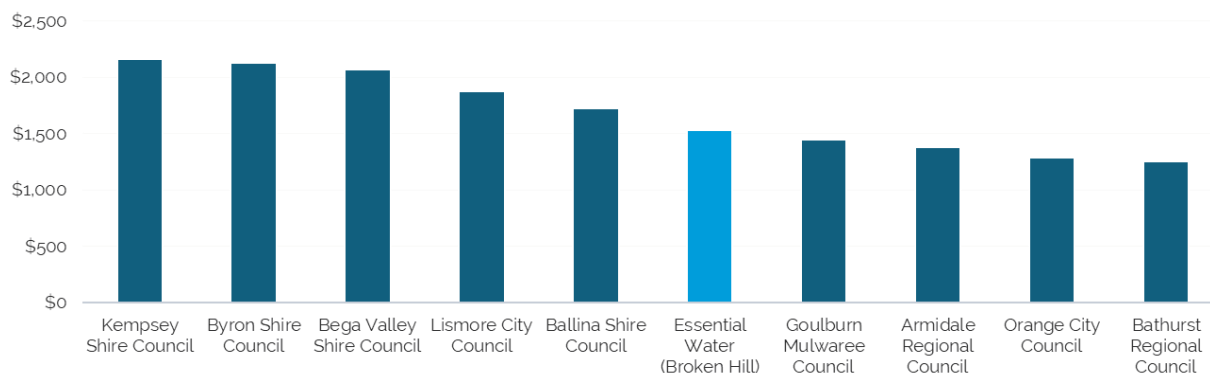
Stakeholders supported our decision to keep most of Essential Water's prices stable.⁴ However, some were concerned about the affordability of those prices if we adjusted them for inflation each year, especially the impact this could have on those experiencing socio-economic disadvantage.⁵ Broken Hill City Council proposed we consider capping the inflation increase to 3.5% per year.⁶

While we do not agree with proposals to cap the annual inflation adjustment to prices, we acknowledge the current environment of high inflation is putting pressure on household budgets. However, we need to balance this with Essential Water being able to recover its costs so it can continue to provide critical water and wastewater services in Broken Hill.

We have reviewed Essential Water's costs and identified savings. Through this process we are able to limit most price increases to inflation only, while ensuring Essential Water has sufficient revenue to cover its necessary costs. When compared with similar utilities, this means typical bills in Broken Hill would still be in the middle range of what households pay in other regional areas. Further, typical residential bills would continue to represent about 2.5% of the median household income in Broken Hill.

^a In February 2022, we decided to delay the introduction of new prices from 1 July 2022 to 1 January 2023 due to the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Figure 2.1 Typical household water and wastewater bills in regional NSW areas (including inflation, \$2022-23)



Source: IPART analysis.

We recognise that prices increasing for inflation could have substantial impacts on some customers, including pensioners. We are conscious the pensioner rebate available to Essential Water customers has not increased for many years. This is set in legislation at a capped amount and is significantly lower than the rebate available to pensioners served by Sydney Water and Hunter Water.



We recommend the NSW Government review the appropriateness of pensioner concessions for water and wastewater bills across the state.

2.3 We considered feedback from the community on service quality

In making our decision on prices, we considered what people told us about the quality of services they receive from Essential Water. Some people said the WaterNSW Pipeline has improved water quality and security for the Broken Hill region. For example:

- Broken Hill City Council and Silverton Village Committee Inc noted that water quality has improved due to the Broken Hill pipeline connection to the Murray River.⁷
- An individual noted that water security has improved since the construction of the WaterNSW Pipeline.⁸

However, Silverton Village Committee Inc and the individual, who receive services outside Broken Hill, expressed dissatisfaction with their water quality due to their local infrastructure.

We recognise that providing services to customers in remote areas can be costly and challenging. We encourage Essential Water to engage with its customers on these service quality issues to understand and respond to these concerns.

2.4 Our prices factor in the existing WaterNSW Pipeline subsidy

When we set prices for Essential Water in 2019, the NSW Government committed to subsidising Essential Water's prices for 4 years, so prices would not increase as a result of the WaterNSW Pipeline. It has since confirmed this subsidy will continue for the next 4 years,⁹ and our prices factor in this commitment.



Each year, it costs Essential Water around \$4,100 per customer to provide water and wastewater services (this is an average across all residential and non-residential customers). However, Essential Water's customers contribute an average of \$2,200 to these costs through their water and wastewater bills. The rest is paid by the NSW Government through a subsidy to cover the cost of the WaterNSW Pipeline.

Stakeholders welcomed the NSW Government's commitment, but some were concerned it did not extend beyond the next 4 years.¹⁰ We acknowledge the concerns stakeholders have about the continuation of the WaterNSW Pipeline subsidy.

We encourage Essential Water to address this issue at the next price review under our new regulatory framework. This new framework aims to ensure Essential Water consults with its customers and develops long-term plans to deliver on the outcomes its customers value.

Submissions indicate securing the future of the subsidy would be a key outcome for Essential Water's customers. We recommend Essential Water work with NSW Government agencies and explore options to provide customers with greater long-term certainty about the status of the WaterNSW Pipeline subsidy and to reflect this in its next pricing proposal.

2.5 Some usage prices would increase by more than inflation

For some customers, bills will increase by more than inflation. There are 3 groups of customers who receive an untreated or chlorinated water service from Essential Water. It supplies:

- Untreated water to a small number of customers along the Menindee, Stephens Creek and Umberumberka pipelines (i.e. EW Pipeline customers).
- Untreated water to other customers, such as Broken Hill City Council and the mines.
- Chlorinated water to customers in Silverton and Sunset Strip.

EW Pipeline customers currently do not pay the same water usage price as other untreated water customers in Broken Hill. This is because, historically, they were incidental customers located along pipelines that transported water into Broken Hill. They received a lower price to reflect the fact that they were not driving costs of supplying water to Broken Hill to the same extent as other untreated water customers in Broken Hill. Since the WaterNSW Pipeline came into operation, this situation has changed. EW Pipeline customers are now indistinguishable from other untreated water customers in Broken Hill as they are all connected to the same water supply network.

For this reason, we have made a decision to continue to transition the untreated water usage price for EW Pipeline customers, so eventually there will be a single untreated water usage price for all of Essential Water's untreated water customers. We are also continuing to transition the chlorinated water usage price to this single untreated water usage price. We made the same decision in the last review because it better reflects the cost of supplying chlorinated water to customers.

We consulted with stakeholders on this issue during the 2019 price review. We took their concerns about affordability into account and changed our approach between the Draft and Final Reports. Our final decision was to transition these prices over 10 years, rather than equalise them straight away.^a This gave customers time to adjust their operations and manage their bill impacts.

We are continuing to follow the gradual pricing transition path set down in the 2019 price review. We have recommended the NSW Government continue to subsidise this transition. This means it would not be paid for by other Essential Water customers.

By moving to the standard usage price for untreated water, EW Pipeline customers will face the same incentives around water usage and maintaining greenspaces as Essential Water's other untreated water customers.

Over 4 years, water bills for EW Pipeline customers would increase by around 3.3% a year on average, while chlorinated water customer bills would increase by around 2.4% a year on average (in each case, before inflation).

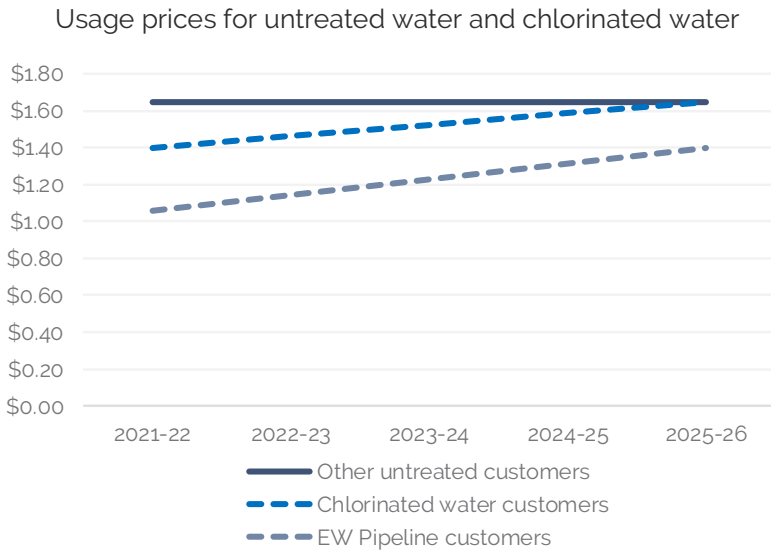
This means that, compared to their current bills, after 4 years the annual bills for:

- EW Pipeline customers would be around \$85 higher.^b
- Chlorinated water customers would be around \$75 higher.^c

^b The water bill estimate is for an EW Pipeline customer with a 20mm meter and 250kL per year water usage.

^c The water bill estimate is for a chlorinated water customer with 300kL per year water usage.

We are gradually harmonising these prices over time



Source: IPART analysis.

2.6 We have largely accepted Essential Water's proposal for the pricing of other services and trade waste

We consider most of Essential Water's proposal for the pricing of other services and trade waste is reasonable and in line with our pricing principles. Therefore, we have decided to accept most of Essential Water's proposal for these services. For details please see Chapter 9 of our [Final Technical Report](#).

3 Broken Hill faces unique challenges around accessing and using water

Water access and use in the Broken Hill region is an important concern for the community. The region relies on water to manage the hot and dry climate, as well as to mitigate elevated lead levels in the environment.

We were told that any increase in water prices could result in people reducing their water use. This would limit the community's ability to use water to actively manage lead exposure (eg, wet wiping of surfaces), cool homes and maintain the greenspaces required to suppress lead dust.¹² People were also concerned that reducing water use could negatively impact on investment in Broken Hill and skilled workers moving to the region.¹³

We recognise that Broken Hill faces unique environmental pressures. Reducing water use may not be in the public interest, given its important role in lead suppression. Therefore, being able to access and use affordable, safe and reliable water has a critical impact on health and wellbeing in the region. It also affects the liveability of Broken Hill and its ability to generate sustainable employment and investment.

In this current price review, we are generally keeping prices stable, which assists with affordability. For the next price review, we plan to introduce our new regulatory framework. This framework is centred around delivering customer value.



We expect Essential Water to consult with its customer about their priorities for water access and use, as well as their preferences around water bills.

Essential Water should ensure its consultation includes residential, non-residential and mining customers. This will help Essential Water to identify how its proposal fits in with their priorities and preferences, so it can promote better outcomes for its customers.

Our pricing decisions are one part of the broader approach required to facilitate water access and use which is in the best interests of customers and the community. We agree with the view from stakeholders that a holistic approach is required.

We consider it is a priority for Essential Water, Broken Hill City Council and key government agencies – such as the Department of Planning and Environment and NSW Health – to work together to develop a draft water plan for Broken Hill for consideration by the NSW Government. The plan should identify the optimal level of water usage in Broken Hill to mitigate the health risks posed by lead dust and consider a longer-term approach to the NSW Government subsidy for the WaterNSW pipeline. We encourage Essential Water to be a proactive participant in development of this plan and in consultation with stakeholders and customers.

4 How we determined these prices

In making our decisions on prices, we:

- considered Essential Water's pricing proposal and the community's feedback on the proposal, as well as Essential Water's and the community's comments on our draft decisions
- assessed the reasonable costs of providing safe and reliable water and wastewater services in Broken Hill, so that customers pay no more than necessary
- assessed forecast demand for Essential Water's water and wastewater services.

4.1 Essential Water's costs to deliver services are relatively stable

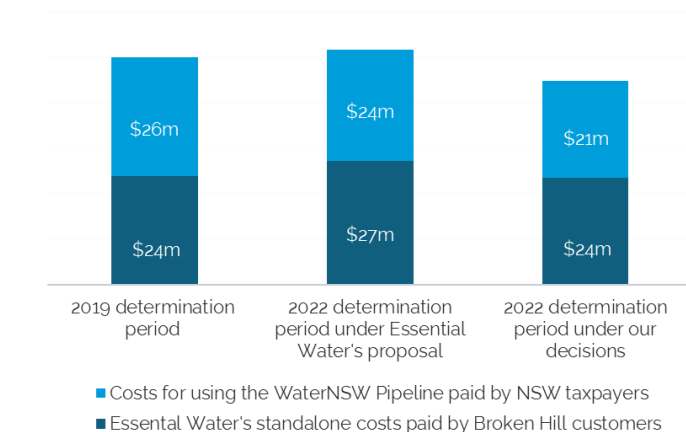
When we set prices for a regulated business like Essential Water, we generally aim to set prices to cover the reasonable costs of providing services to customers. We assessed the costs of providing water and wastewater services in the Broken Hill region and asked expert consultants to provide advice on whether Essential Water's proposed costs are reasonable.

Based on our assessment of Essential Water's costs, our decision is to set the amount of revenue Essential Water needs to provide services at around \$45 million on average per year, over the next 4 years. This is around 13% lower than Essential Water's proposed revenue level.

Excluding the costs of transporting water through the WaterNSW Pipeline, Essential Water proposed that its revenue level should increase from around \$24 million per year to around \$27 million per year. Our decision is that the revenue level would remain stable at around \$24 million per year (similar to the revenue level we set in the 2019 review, when compared on an average yearly basis). This explains why our prices are stable, before inflation.

Essential Water's revenue level (excluding WaterNSW Pipeline costs) is similar to the level we set in 2019

Comparison of average revenue level per year



There are 3 main reasons for the difference between Essential Water’s proposed revenue level and the revenue level we have set:

1. We found some opportunities for Essential Water to lower its operating costs and have set the revenue level to reflect these opportunities.
2. We expect Essential Water to become more productive over time and have applied a continuing efficiency target to both operating and capital costs. This target is based on long term trends in productivity across the whole economy.
3. The rate of return to finance Essential Water’s operations has declined since our last review of prices in 2019.

Our final decision to set the revenue level at around \$24 million per year is marginally higher than our draft decision. This is largely driven by a slight increase in our allowance for operating expenditure associated with Essential Water’s labour requirements. Despite this marginal increase in costs, prices paid by customers in the Broken Hill region remain stable, before inflation.

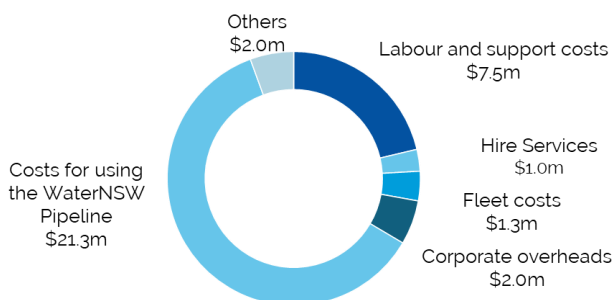
4.1.1 We found opportunities to reduce Essential Water's proposed operating costs

Like most water utilities, operating costs make up around 40% of the costs Essential Water incurs in running its water and wastewater services. Essential Water incurs 2 types of operating costs:

- its own day-to-day costs like staff wages, electricity and contractors, which are recovered through prices that customers pay
- costs to transport water using the WaterNSW Pipeline, which are currently covered by a subsidy from the NSW Government.

Our decision is to set prices based on operating costs of around \$35 million on average per year over the 2022 determination period. Under our decisions, Essential Water would spend around \$13.7 million on its day-to-day costs and \$21.3 million for water transportation costs. Water transportation costs make up around 60% of Essential Water’s overall costs (shown below). The NSW Government will subsidise these costs over the next 4 years, which is discussed further in section 2.4.

Operating costs by activity under our decisions



Note: Figures are per year and after the continuing efficiency adjustment. Source: IPART analysis.

We reviewed operating costs to ensure we allow only those costs needed to deliver the water services customers need and expect

Under our decisions, Essential Water's day-to-day costs are around 7% higher than what we used to set prices in our last review in 2019, but 8% lower than Essential Water's proposal. We have set costs lower than Essential Water's proposal based on advice from expert cost consultants (AECOM) who found opportunities for Essential Water to reduce its costs. AECOM reviewed Essential Water's proposal and compared it to the least cost necessary to ensure water and wastewater services in Broken Hill are secure, safe and reliable.

Under our decisions, we have also put in place a continuing efficiency target over the next 4 years. This encourages Essential Water to become more productive over time and reduce its operating costs accordingly.

Our final decision to set the allowance at \$13.7 million per year for day-to-day operating costs is slightly higher than our draft decision. This is mainly because we increased the allowance for labour costs. We have also allowed a small increase in spend associated with customer engagement – see Box 4.1 for more on customer engagement.

Box 4.1 Essential Water expected to increase customer engagement efforts

On Essential Water's request, we have allowed a small increase in operating costs to accommodate more extensive customer engagement. To date, Essential Water's level of customer engagement has been minimal, and comments at the public hearing in Broken Hill attested to this.¹⁴ It is good practice for a business to closely engage with its customers to understand their needs and expectations. We expect Essential Water to step up its level of customer engagement accordingly. This will be critical to ensure Essential Water's priorities and long-term plans align with the needs and expectations of its customers and the broader community.

We are also in the process of making a fundamental shift in our regulatory framework, under which we will expect businesses to demonstrate that customers are at the heart of their regulatory proposals.¹⁵ The quality of customer and community engagement will have direct financial implications for the businesses we regulate. Importantly, the businesses will need to demonstrate that their chosen approach to engagement is fit for purpose and provides value for money.

In addition, we encouraged Essential Water in Chapter 3 to be a key party in developing a long-term plan for the Broken Hill region. We expect Essential Water to engage customers and the community on this matter given potential impact on its future services.

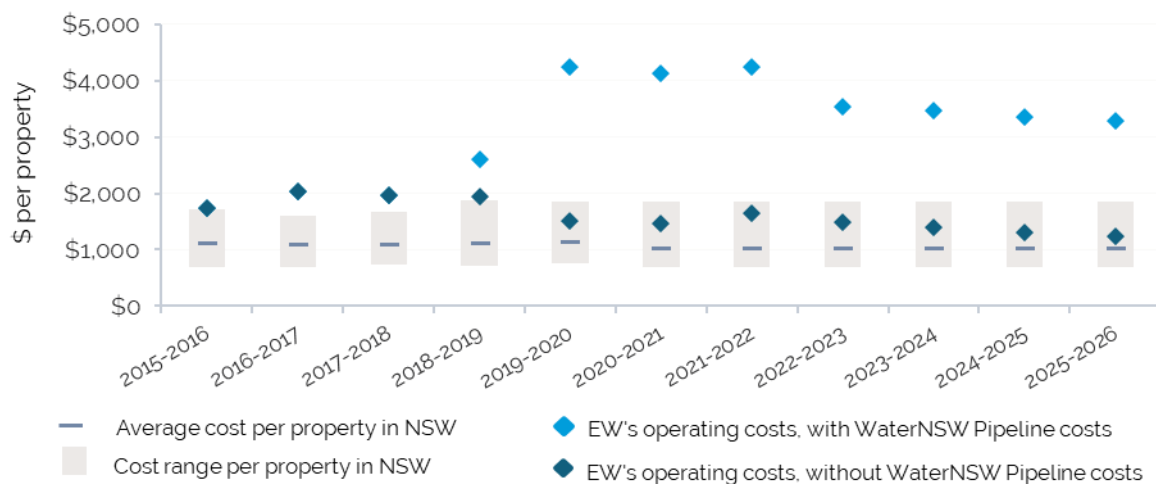
To sense-check our final decision on the operating cost allowance, we compared Essential Water's operating costs under our decisions against other water utilities in NSW. Figure 4.1 compares operating costs on a per property basis across all water utilities in NSW.

Before the WaterNSW Pipeline became operational in 2019, Essential Water's operating costs per property was one of the highest in NSW. This is because Essential Water has a relatively large network of water and wastewater infrastructure that services a small customer base in a remote location. Essential Water's customer base includes a small number of large mines that make up around a third of its total water sales.

Since 2019, Essential Water's day-to-day costs have fallen but are still above the average cost per property in NSW. Because Essential Water now sources most of its water from the WaterNSW Pipeline instead of its own infrastructure, its energy and materials costs have decreased. Over the next 4 years, we expect Essential Water's costs to continue to decrease to a level that is closer to the average in NSW experienced over the last 5 years. We consider our decision on operating costs will give Essential Water enough time to lower its costs while managing the challenges of operating a business in a remote location.

If we include the cost of water transportation, we found that cost per property in the Broken Hill region would still be the highest in NSW. The cost of using the WaterNSW Pipeline is subsidised by the NSW Government and not paid for by customers – see section 2.4 for more information on the subsidy. The cost of the WaterNSW Pipeline is also reviewed separately and set by IPART.

Figure 4.1 Analysis of our Essential Water's operating costs against other utilities



Note: Over the 2015-16 to 2021-22 period, we used the data reported by Essential Water in its pricing proposal and compared them with Bureau of Meteorology's 2019-20 national performance report for utilities in NSW. Over the 2022 determination period, we used the results of our decisions and compared them with 5-year averages using the national performance report. In addition, the cost analysis is undertaken on per property basis, which is different to how we set prices or analyse bill impacts. Source: IPART analysis and Bureau of Meteorology's 2019-20 national performance report.

Under our decisions, Essential Water would have time to lower its costs while managing the challenges of operating a business in a remote location in NSW.

4.1.2 We consider most of Essential Water's proposed capital expenditure is reasonable

Capital expenditure is required to buy or build new infrastructure and equipment. Essential Water's proposed capital expenditure over the next 4 years reflect a range of projects to upgrade its ageing infrastructure, including the Wills Street wastewater treatment plant and its water and sewer reticulation network.

We have reviewed Essential Water's proposed capital expenditure to ensure it is adequate to maintain and improve infrastructure as required, but also no higher than necessary. We have largely accepted Essential Water's proposed capital expenditure but have made some reductions to reflect opportunities for Essential Water to be more productive over time. Our final decision is to provide Essential Water an average annual allowance for capital expenditure of around \$19.3 million over 2022 determination period. This is slightly higher than the average annual allowance of around \$19 million over 2019 determination period.^d

Our final decision on capital expenditure is unchanged from our draft decision.

More information on our review of Essential Water's costs is available in our [Final Technical Report](#) and our [consultant's report](#).

4.1.3 Essential Water's financing costs have decreased since our last review

Like many businesses, Essential Water needs to finance its water and wastewater operations so it can continue to provide services. Financing costs (or rate of return) make up around 12% of Essential Water's revenue level. When setting prices, IPART makes an allowance using a standard method to cover these financing costs. Generally, higher financing costs (or rate of return) lead to higher prices.

Essential Water proposed a rate of return of 3.7%, which is slightly lower than the rate of return used to set prices in 2019 (4.0%).¹⁶ Essential Water proposed a change to the way inflation expectations are factored into the calculation of the rate of return. We have decided to maintain our standard method and have set the rate of return at 2.8%. Our final decision is slightly lower than our draft decision of 2.9%, due to more up-to-date market information.

More information on how we set the rate of return, also known as the Weighted Average Cost of Capital, is available in Appendix D of our [Final Technical Report](#).

^d Expressed in \$2021-22.

4.2 We accepted Essential Water's proposed water and wastewater usage forecasts to set prices

To set prices, we divided Essential Water's costs by the amount of water and wastewater services people in Broken Hill are predicted to use over the next 4 years. Our prices are based on Essential Water's forecasts for customer numbers and sales volumes for water and wastewater services, which we consider are reasonable. This decision is consistent with our draft decision.

Essential Water forecasts:

- yearly water use volumes for the 2022 determination period to be around 235 kL per household, which is lower than the estimate used in the last review, and reflects recent trends in water use in the Broken Hill region
- the number of residential and non-residential connections to remain relatively stable.

We received a number of submissions to our Issues Paper and Draft Report on water use. For example:

- Broken Hill City Council, Roy Butler MP and Outback Astronomy^e said the community would use less water in response to price increases.¹⁷ In particular, Broken Hill City Council noted even an increase for inflation could decrease water use.¹⁸
- PIAC said Essential Water should not rely on usage forecasts for price setting. It recommended Essential Water adopt long-term targets for demand similar to the Lower Hunter Water Security Plan and use price signals to encourage efficient water use.¹⁹
- Foundation Broken Hill recommended we forecast growth in the region rather than decline.²⁰ Along with Regional Development Australia Far West, it indicated water use would increase because of new mining activity expected to start in the next few years.²¹

No forecast is likely to be perfect. To reduce the risk that Essential Water will make too much or too little revenue if forecasts turn out to be wrong, we have included a demand volatility adjustment mechanism that helps protect both customers and Essential Water. If the forecast water use volumes we have used to set prices are more than 5% higher or lower than predicted over the next 4 years, we would consider adjusting future prices next time we set prices in 2026. This could mean compensating customers if volumes were higher than forecast (or compensating Essential Water if volumes were lower than forecast).

When we last set prices in 2019, we included this mechanism for the same reason. At the time, we thought people in Broken Hill would use more water once the WaterNSW Pipeline came into use and water restrictions were lifted. In 2019-20 and 2020-21, Essential Water's water sales were around 11% lower than what we predicted.²² Therefore, when setting prices, we have adjusted Essential Water's revenue for the 2022 determination period to account for differences between forecast and actual water sales in the 2019 review period. This allows Essential Water to be financially sustainable, and we would do the same thing again at the next price review.

^e Some usage prices would increase by more than inflation. To manage the bill impacts, we have made the price transition gradual over 10 years. We discuss this further in section 2.5.

5 We consulted extensively with stakeholders

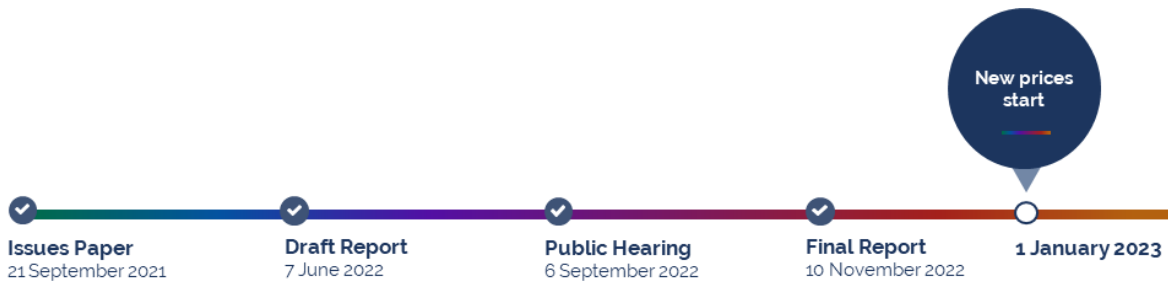
Our review started on 30 June 2021 when Essential Water submitted its pricing proposal to us. We consulted with the community and other stakeholders, including publishing an Issues Paper and a Draft Report to which we sought feedback and submissions. In September 2022, we also held an in-person public hearing at a local venue in Broken Hill and other stakeholders joined the hearing online (see Figure 5.1).

We took all community views into account in making our final decisions. Sometimes we have had to balance conflicting views from stakeholders as well as our requirement to ensure that Essential Water receives sufficient funds to provide the level of service expected by the community.

The pricing proposal from Essential Water, our Issues Paper, Draft Report, Draft Technical Report, stakeholder submissions and the public hearing transcript and video are available on our [website](#).

Our decisions and recommendations are listed and explained in our [Final Technical Report](#).

Figure 5.1 Timetable for this review



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- ¹ Broken Hill City Council, submission to IPART's Issues Paper for 2021 Review of WaterNSW's Murray River to Broken Hill Pipeline prices, October 2021, p 6.
 - ² Department of Planning and Environment, Letter on the Subsidy for the WaterNSW Pipeline, August 2022, p 1.
 - ³ Essential Water, Essential Water Pricing Proposal, June 2021, p 17.
 - ⁴ Broken Hill City Council, submission to IPART's Draft Report for the Review of Essential Water's prices for water and wastewater services in Broken Hill from 1 January 2023, September 2022, p 1; Foundation Broken Hill, submission to IPART's Draft Report for the Review of Essential Water's prices for water and wastewater services in Broken Hill from 1 January 2023, September 2022, p 1
 - ⁵ Broken Hill City Council, submission to IPART's Draft Report for the Review of Essential Water's prices for water and wastewater services in Broken Hill from 1 January 2023, September 2022, p 2; Regional Development Australia Far West, submission to IPART's Draft Report for the Review of Essential Water's prices for water and wastewater services in Broken Hill from 1 January 2023, September 2022, p 1-3; Outback Astronomy, submission to IPART's Draft Report for the Review of Essential Water's prices for water and wastewater services in Broken Hill from 1 January 2023, September 2022, p 2.
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