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Your submission for this review:

I am a customer of Hunter Water and also a member of the Hunter Water Community Panel. Several years ago, I was also a community rep when living in Canberra when ACTEW was considering a change to their cost structure. As such, I believe that I should make known my views on HW's pricing proposal. 1. Yes, I believe that HW has engaged effectively - there were some concerns amongst Panel members that we were being led toward predetermined outcomes but we were all aware of this. 2. I am very comfortable with the outcomes and measures proposed by HW. 3. The key factor for customer affordability in my view is having the right mix of fixed and usage charges. I would prefer a greater emphasis against fixed charges, but also realise that there needs to be a balance. I don't think that HW has quite got that balance right this time around and I will continue to be involved in their consultative processes to get this view across. 4. My personal household budget will comfortably handle the proposed pricing structure. However, I am very aware that others will struggle. 5. I strongly support the manner in which usage charges will cover much of the additional costs. I would personally like to see more costs weighted in this way. 6. The reason for this view is that this will have a more significant effect on water conservation across the catchment. I will certainly be more aware of our household water use and will make savings wherever possible. 7. These measures will include reducing our lawn area by about 60 square metres, planting more hardy natives and later installing a water-efficient irrigation system rather than using a hose for outside use. 8. I believe that HW has balanced its spending priorities appropriately. My only concern is with delays to preventative maintenance - if these are put off too long or too much, rectification will cost more than any savings in putting these off. Questions to the HW water engineers by the Community Panel shows that they are very aware of these risks, but still... I also believe that the desal plant is essential and is a key part of ensuring future water security, along with the range of capital investments to keep the entire infrastructure able to support a growing population. With climate change, it is vital that the infrastructure is robust, scalable and able to meet a very challenging future. 9. I believe that the water standards are appropriate and well balanced. One of the many themes in the Community Panel was equity, and ensuring that those customers facing long-term problems could look forward to significant improvements. 10. I am very supportive of bringing our water infrastructure into the 21st century. Electronic meter reading, (near) real-time water usage data, (near) instant incident identification, etc are crucial advancements - these are now possible with energy and communications services, and water services should not be far behind. In summary, as a consumer and Panel member, I'm very comfortable with the Pricing Proposal put forward by Hunter Water. There are a few tweaks that I'm personally interested in but overall, I believe they have done an excellent job in putting this together. I am particularly pleased that IPART recognises this as an "Advanced" proposal. This reflects well on HW as well as those who have participated in the consultative process.