

██████████  
██████████  
██████████  
██████████

## **IPART Water Rates Rises – Central Coast Council**

### **Submission**

#### **Background:**

CCC is, has been and will always be a difunctional body of bureaucrats with no vision for the community it serves and represents other than for themselves.

An acting CEO who does not even live in the council boundaries, yet commands an annual salary of \$500 K highlights the problems residents face.

Try getting just one pothole fixed – current practice is to mend them not actually fix them with no accountability, so they become a pothole again within 1 week.

The same with water service and delivery.

#### **Water Rate Hike:**

Residents in CCC area have already faced a rate of 15% annually for next 3 years. That we were promised for a period of 3 years. LIES. The CEO now wants it to be a permanent fixture. Note – inflation rate is approximately 2.5%.

Now CC wants a 34% increase for water rate rise, now noting that IPART is to grant this at 19%.

I repeat – inflation is at 2.5% and wage rises across the nation are stagnant at best, actually rising below the inflation rate.

Common sense should prevail here. How are local residents of CCC going to pay for such massive increases to rates and services?

Council has spent \$200K plus to engage a private company to prepare a good submission to IPART for this water and sewer increase. Why is such a significant amount of money to be used in this way when Council has Executives that can't prepare the same? Once again there's no value for money for the rate payers.

The mismanagement of CCC bureaucracy pertaining to this water rate increase was further highlighted in a IPART public forum on 26 February 2022 where there were 16 (that's right – 16!) of its staff in attendance to stack and intimidate the audience. Ironically only 3 (yes 3!) actually spoke on the subject. What does that suggest? Don't these council employees have other tasks to hand, potholes to fix, write their own submission and save residents \$200 K in the process?

IPART needs to take note of the seriousness of this CCC problem now.

**Analysis:**

IPART is meant to protect customers (residents) from monopoly pricing and gouging. But in this case, it has fallen and succumbed to the ongoing relentless pressure of CCC acting CEO and its bureaucrats' lobbying tactics.

Any increase to water rates is not going to lead any significant and noticeable improvement in water and sewer services. Past increase with no accountability has demonstrated this.

Where will such absorbate increases IPART has granted go? To an ongoing inefficient CCC bureaucracy (they spent \$200 K on getting outside consultants write the water submission in the first place ...).

Morale in CCC is at rock bottom. Just ask any CCC employee you see on the streets, parks and gardens. The incentive to improve performance and productivity is simply not there. Why? When they see the huge waste and over the top annual salary of the top CCC brass, it is no wonder.

A 19% increase to water will not see any improvement to service and delivery. If the 16 CCC employees on the recent Zoom as previous outlined actually did their job, such an increase would not be necessary.

IPART needs to see the whole picture here, not just one piece of the puzzle.

**Conclusion:**

CCC just sees it's residents as a way to rescue its problems and seek outrageous increases from IPART to do so.

Combined rates and water increase will amount to a combined 34% burden for local CCC residents. Say this aloud to yourselves so you can truly understand our sagacity burden.

An objective pricing regulator would clearly understand and see that. Why has IPART failed to do so?

The recent resident survey to analyse responses to these water and sewer increases notes that only 2% of residents will be able to afford them.

So, what about the hardship of others who live in this totalitarian council area going to do. 15% rates rise plus 19% water and sewer increases is a barrage to great to fathom, especially where respective wage rises have stagnated at or below inflation rates.

Big picture please CCC and IPART!

Remember, it was privilege, not poverty that was the cause of the French Revolution and others. CCC can source other areas of revenue. If Rangers did their jobs and booked dog owners taking their animals on beaches illegally would net \$1000s of revenue per day for Council. Just one example.

