

Resilient Sydney

Town Hall House, 456 Kent Street,
Sydney NSW 2000, Australia

Telephone +61 2 9265 9547
RSO@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au



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Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal
PO Box K35
Haymarket Post Shop
Sydney NSW 1240

water@ipart.nsw.gov.au

Dear Tribunal

IPART Draft Report Review of prices for Sydney Water Corporation

Resilient Sydney appreciates the opportunity to respond to IPART's Draft Report on the Sydney Water pricing proposal for the period 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2030.

We need urgent and long-term investment to ensure water security, resilience and sustainability for Greater Sydney. While we acknowledge the draft pricing determination seeks to balance affordability with service delivery, we remain concerned about the risks associated with deferring critical infrastructure investment.

We write to reinforce our position on three key matters:

1. Water Security is essential for Sydney

Sydney's ongoing population growth, climate volatility, and increasing water demand make robust investment in water infrastructure essential. Delaying major capital programs or scaling down investments in core assets to reduce short-term price impacts would impose unacceptable long-term risks on communities, ecosystems, and the economy. We urge IPART to prioritise sustained water security over price suppression. Sydney cannot continue to grow and accommodate additional housing if we do not secure a sustainable and resilient water supply system. Limiting infrastructure development today undermines the city's capacity to meet future demand.

2. Structural under-investment in essential services is not a sustainable affordability strategy

We recognise affordability as a serious concern for households and businesses. However, the responsibility for cushioning vulnerable customers from utility cost increases must be addressed through state or federal government policy, through targeted rebates or concessions. If we do not secure the infrastructure investment required to support Sydney's growth and asset renewal, we will continue to cost-shift to future generations and will not deliver a sustainable, resilient water service to communities.

RESILIENT SYDNEY

A program for Greater Sydney to survive, adapt and thrive in the face of chronic stresses and acute shocks. The Resilient Sydney Office is funded by local government and hosted by the City of Sydney.
www.resilientsydney.com.au

RESILIENT CITIES NETWORK

Resilient Cities Network is a urban resilience network to build safe and equitable cities for all.
www.resilientcitiesnetwork.org

3. Sustained investment is essential

Resilient Sydney supports Sydney Water's position that sustained capital and operational funding is needed to meet future population needs, maintain service reliability, and fulfil environmental commitments.

This includes investment in recycled water networks, stormwater and wastewater reuse, maintenance of ageing infrastructure, and flood mitigation works such as new trunk drains and system upgrades that align with broader resilience and circular economy goals. Pricing must reflect the true cost of these essential services.

We also note the significant emergence of data centres—particularly to support artificial intelligence infrastructure—which could require up to 12.5 GL/year more water than currently anticipated in Sydney Water's plan. This reinforces the importance of forecasting and planning for future non-residential demand growth in a way that does not compromise the availability of water for communities and the environment.

We support the role of desalination as a critical component of Sydney's future water supply infrastructure. In the face of climate uncertainty and extended dry periods, desalination provides a reliable, rainfall-independent source of water that complements broader water recycling and efficiency efforts.

If you have any questions regarding this submission, please contact me on

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Yours sincerely,

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Resilient Sydney