



# TASWATER COMMUNITY ADVISORY PANEL

## RECALL DAY

What was said report

February 2025

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# INTRODUCTION

## OVERVIEW

Every four years, TasWater submits a plan to the Tasmanian Economic Regulator detailing the services it will provide and the associated customer costs. The next submission is due on 1 July 2025, and TasWater aims to ensure it aligns with customer and community values and expectations.



TasWater conducted extensive community engagement, including the Community Advisory Panel deliberative engagement. The Water Future Community Advisory Panel was assembled in September 2024. Panellists were independently recruited by MosaicLab, in partnership with newDemocracy Foundation, in order to match the demographic profile of Tasmanian.

The Community Advisory Panel was guided by the following remit:

*TasWater is at a critical juncture - we have unique assets, our climate is changing, and customer expectations are growing. We need to prepare for an uncertain future and find the balance of price and service that is fair for all Tasmanians, shaping the future of water services in our state. How do we prepare for tomorrow while being fair to customers today?*

Panel members came together for 6 sessions, commencing on 1 October 2024 with a meet and greet session, and followed by five full-day sessions, concluding on 22 November 2024.

The panel collectively wrote and agreed by super-majority on 7 recommendations:

1. Protect and improve the environment and water security
2. Education and incentives for water conservation
3. Increase awareness of the TasWater Assist Program
4. Upgrade of metering
5. Remodel the pricing structure
6. Proactive infrastructure management and maintenance
7. Supply water and sewage services to unserved communities

In addition, 3 minority reports were written by 3 or more panel members following the vote on the recommendations.

The purpose of the online Recall Day was to share with the community panel how their recommendations have been reflected in the draft Price and Services Plan (PSP5) submission, and to see how comfortable panel members were with the way their recommendations have been incorporated. The panel also provided feedback based on the Water Security Policy.

This report outlines the process of the Recall Day and summarises 'what was said' by the community panel.

## SESSION PURPOSE

The purpose of the Recall Day was to:

- ♦ To reconnect as a panel and reflect on the work they have completed to date.
- ♦ To inform panel members about what **TasWater** is proposing to do in line with the panel's recommendations.
- ♦ To understand panel members' feedback about how the recommendations have been incorporated into the draft submission.
- ♦ To capture overall reflections on how **TasWater** has done incorporating the panel/community feedback into their draft water pricing submission.

## PARTICIPANTS

Of the 41 Community Advisory Panel members who participated in the original 6 panel sessions, 32 attended the Recall Day.

Seven TasWater staff members attended key sessions throughout the day, as presenters, subject matter experts and observers:

- 0 Hayden Moore - Head of Commercial and Pricing
- 0 Samuel Paske - Head of Brand and Insights
- 0 Callan Paske - Head of Communications and Engagement
- 0 Matt Jordan - Head of Infrastructure Investment Planning, TasWater
- 0 Matt Derbyshire - General Manager Sustainable Infrastructure Services
- 0 Stephen Purvis - Senior Planning Engineer
- 0 Ahmad Khateib - Development Assessment Engineer

Two independent US based researchers attended parts of the session to observe the Recall Day process:

- 0 Aviv Avadya - CEO, AI & Democracy Foundation
- 0 Jim Chen - Post-Doctoral Researcher, University of Washington



# RECALL DAY AGENDA

The session was held online, via Zoom on Saturday 22 February 2025.



TIME	AGENDA
10:00AM	Welcome, reconnecting and getting started
10:15AM	TasWater's Response to the Panel's recommendations – an overview of the draft PSP5 submission – presented by Hayden Moore - Head of Commercial and Pricing
10:45AM	Small group discussions to gather feedback and initial reactions
11:30AM	<i>Break</i>
11:45AM	Plenary discussion – sharing insights and feedback on TasWater's response
12:30PM	<i>Lunch</i>
1:30PM	TasWater's Draft Water Security Strategy – an overview presented by Matt Jordan - Head of Infrastructure Investment Planning
1:45PM	Small group discussions about Minimum Critical Supply Volume
2:45PM	<i>Break</i>
3:00PM	Final advice from the Panel about Minimum Critical Supply Volume
3:45PM	Reflections and closing remarks
4:00PM	<i>Close</i>



# OUTPUTS



## QUESTIONS ABOUT TASWATER'S RESPONSE

TasWater's Head of Commercial and Pricing, Hayden Moore, presented an overview of how TasWater has incorporated the 7 recommendations contained within the Panel Report.

In small groups, participants were asked to discuss TasWater's response and capture anything they needed to clarify. Their questions are captured below:



# FEEDBACK ON THE TASWATER'S RESPONSE

Participants were asked to reflect on TasWater's draft submission and work in small groups to consider things they are comforted by, any areas of concern and things that they are still wondering about. The group's comments are listed below:

## COMFORTED BY



Accepted all our recommendations - tells us they were relevant/appropriate and realistic to achieve.

Comforted by honesty and openness of TasWater.

TasWater have already started some initiatives!

TasWater is research-driven in science for the best outcome.

TasWater transparency.

TasWater's listening and reacting, where they can.

TasWater's readiness to change their behaviour in response to the panel and research.

The reassurance we will be kept up to date outside of this as it progresses.

The success measures outlined to measure progress (suitable KPIs).

There will be option to stay in touch with TasWater to hear how things are progressing.

They are hiring Tasmanians where ever possible (i.e. using a Tasmanian illustrator).

They've done a great job to pinpoint where time and resources can go.

This last session and the opportunity to ask questions on the spot.

This whole process has been very comfortable - high quality communication from both Mosaic and TasWater.

We are comforted by TasWater's commitment and demonstration to us that they are taking our recommendations seriously and have started implementing measures to meet these recommendations.

We are comforted by the fact that TasWater would like to keep us informed about their progress.

## CONCERNED BY



Concerned about political influences with regard to the variable pricing structure.

ensure that there is a transition in implementation of increased variable bill component over several years to avoid bill shock for vulnerable customers

Not highlighted what spending priorities have been dropped to meet our recommended spending

Slight concern around the sewage variability pricing not happening. People using less water not getting lower sewage usage benefits

TasWater won't go far enough with the increase to the variable portion of our bills

That Tassie has the lowest water literacy rate in the country.

The councils and Tas Government will not be as progressive as TasWater or willing to work with them to achieve the recommendations and improvements.

The lack of education in regard to septic tank effluent discharge and maintenance and the overflow from those tanks into water catchment areas.

Until final Taswater recommendation is provided we can foretell any concerns.

## WONDERING ABOUT



As an education and training method, why not have forced water restriction on particular days/times etc?

Have councils agreed to lower their dividends?

Have TasWater considered water levels reports in news media like ABC nightly news with the weather?

How will TasWater continue to ensure their water education and messaging is

reaching different demographics? i.e. we discussed that Gen Z are accessing

ad-free TV/YouTube and Spotify therefore aren't necessarily accessing free to air

television or radio.

How/if the variable pricing impacts businesses? are they being made to/encourages conserve water in similar ways to residential customers? Have they been given warning about changes? What communication has occurred to businesses?

It's great to hear about the big sewerage developments but there are many small areas where sewerage needs extending to connect existing premises? Can this become a focus also?

The issue of septic tank overflow into water catchment areas. Or additionally how many of the outdated treatment plants are also leaking into the state's water systems.

The need for education in regard to septic tank effluent discharge and maintenance.

The possibility of panel members becoming part of the digital meter pilot.

Was it difficult to accept all the recommendations, what challenges did TasWater have doing this?

What data is being input to the modelling to assist in the results outcomes?

What the final variable % of our bills will be (understand it's still being modelled)?

Whether in 12 months to 2 years' time, they might revisit this and see how well it is going, once they have had some time to implement a few things. This group or a group similar brought in to review what has been recommended this time around - review, assess, what's working/what's not etc.

Why did they have this meeting now, before our recommendations have been costed? And what is the impact of these recommendation's?

Wondering about potential staggering of % change to water usage to avoid bill shock.

# MINIMUM CRITICAL SUPPLY VOLUME – QUESTIONS FOR CLARITY

Participants worked in small groups to discuss what they had learned about the draft Water Security Strategy and consider any questions that they needed to ask TasWater to better understand the proposed minimum critical supply volume. The Panel's questions are listed below:

There is no incentive as yet to install water saving equipment e.g. high star rating toilets, shower heads, water tanks, how would this be considered if it come to restrictions as some households may use more water due to the equipment they have, and cannot afford to upgrade/replace.

How is accountability policed for fair and equitable usage? Stick and carrot? Possible variable water cost for excess during restriction times.

How can we better educate people in the "good" times to conserve water (which will then help us in the "bad" times)?

What's the different impact of 50, 75 or 100? Pro's and Con's?

Are there health impacts on different levels? People will prioritise certain things (like showering) over others.

Would there be penalties and legislation introduced for domestic and commercial users to ensure no water is wasted or used needlessly?

Would Taswater consider giving customers the facility to exchange their shower heads for more water efficient shower heads?

Would there be incentives for domestic and commercial users that meet lower usage targets?

We'll need information about what we are sacrificing in nature if we use that much water - have we established what minimum healthy flow rates are for our rivers and lakes/estuaries?

How would you classify each customer? On my property we have a large household and three separate businesses operating. What would you classify my meter as or would you have to install four different supply systems?

What carrots and sticks could be made to enforce compliance?

What strategies are in place to assist household water harvest from roof? Incentives? education? Retrofit and new builds?

Has TasWater taken into account potential loss/ impact on established residential garden and businesses (such as Woolmers Estate)?

Will TasWater strictly enforce the levels? i.e. does your water cut off?

Are they taking into account the social impact of water restrictions?

Is the 100 litres usage taken into account shower heads, taps and tank incentives etc?

How do we measure the value of being able to continue to grow an individual food supply (veggie garden)?

## MINIMUM CRITICAL SUPPLY VOLUME - CONSIDERING 100L, MORE OR LESS

To further understand about critical supply levels, Panel members worked in small groups to examine the case for 100 litres per person per day, along with arguments for higher or lower limits. The TasWater team stepped into the perspective of each scenario, providing insight into how different usage levels may impact the network and what this might mean for customers.

The group's comments and considerations for each scenario are listed below:

MINIMUM CRITICAL SUPPLY VOLUME	CONSIDERATIONS
<p><b>100L</b></p>	<p>A good starting point – psychologically.</p> <p>Current usage at 213 litre per person per day so to halve consumption - education and incentives need to start now.</p> <p>Future proof your house and garden.</p> <p>It would probably be too tricky for all families to suddenly restrict their water so much - we would need to do a staggered approach to restrictions.</p> <p>More palatable for people.</p> <p>Not as "scary" as it seems.</p> <p>Seems like a lot.</p> <p>TasWater need a varied approach to saving water, including being efficient with saving water themselves (and with commercial operations).</p> <p>This is a good point to use an educational tool for schools and community.</p> <p>Too low could have health impacts on the elderly and create societal issues (they choose to water garden rather than shower / fear of getting dobbed in).</p> <p>Water treatment plants will need to supply less water &amp; so less chemicals used.</p> <p>Would work well with digital metering - people could track their use and make decisions on sacrifices - e.g. watering the veggie patch or saving some until tomorrow.</p>
<p><b>Less than 100L</b></p>	<p>A pro might be using less will help sustain the environment that is already under stress.</p> <p>Case study in Cape Town shows 50L is possible and they had 4 million people.</p> <p>Cost issue for homes without water saving devices.</p> <p>Encourage more mindful and efficient water practices.</p>

...continued overleaf

MINIMUM CRITICAL SUPPLY VOLUME	CONSIDERATIONS
<p><b>Less than 100L</b> <i>(continued)</i></p>	<p>Influencing the behaviour of the younger/next generations [drought-hardy gardens], shorter showers, half flush, etc.]</p> <p>People will find work arounds, like showering at the gym/work, won't solve the problem.</p> <p>Preparing households for scenarios in the future where water restrictions need to be implemented at less than 100L.</p> <p>Rainwater tanks are a great way of living on less supply but there is a lack of awareness around keeping tank water safe for drinking - a whole education program needed including flushing of gutters etc.</p> <p>The availability of water can vary depending on factors such as climate, geography, and human activities. This makes our water supply limited, making it essential to manage and conserve this vital resource carefully.</p> <p>The lower the water allowance, the higher the level of resistance to the water restrictions.</p> <p>There is a high risk of social instability with restricting water so drastically.</p> <p>This one might seem very "scary" for the community.</p> <p>Water restrictions can lead to greater household tension/stress. How would larger families cope with this?</p> <p>We should be preparing for this now! Which TasWater is, in terms of educating. Government needs to step up and provide rebates/support for water efficiency measures.</p> <p>What will be the monetary saving by using less than 100L to TW infrastructure?</p>
<p><b>More than 100L</b></p>	<p>A con might be using more will add extra stress to the environment that is already under stress.</p> <p>A pro would be that by building a larger infrastructure system now it would make things even easier when water is plentiful.</p> <p>Increase to allow household food production to improve food security.</p> <p>Mental health - grow own veggies, keeping animals, better hygiene.</p> <p>TasWater need to supply water, not restrict access to water. Our utility providers should not be designing systems that can only cope with limited (water, in this case) supply.</p> <p>What will be the monetary cost for using more than 100L to TW infrastructure?</p>

## ADVICE ON MINIMUM CRITICAL SUPPLY VOLUME

Participants were then asked to consider all they had discussed about the minimum critical supply volumes and try to agree as a group as to which level would be preferred.

The group's statements are listed below:



# REFLECTIONS

At the end of the workshop, participants shared a short reflection about their experience of being on the Community Advisory Panel. Panel members were invited to respond to the prompts Head, Heart, Hands to share one thing they learned, one thing that inspired them and one action they will take as a result of being on the panel, as followings:



## HEAD – One thing I learned...

I learnt a lot, my heart says we all need to contribute to the success of TasWater. I will continue handing on information about TasWater to my community.

Many perspectives and much to consider when looking for solutions to help Tasmanians all over the state.

I was heartened to learn that so many of my fellow Tasmanians care about their environment.

Taswater do a good job. Please don't spend too much on PR exercise.

I learned so much about all the work Taswater does in the background.

I use much less water than others!! and the Environmental regulatory requirements met/ unmet currently by TASWATER.

That we were an amazing group of people that all got together positively with the help of MosaicLab and how much time, planning and effort has gone into this process!

How much TasWater have to think about.

The importance of a comprehensive and balanced approach to water management.

That there is so much behind the scenes being done, not just 'making more money'.

How precious water really is.

I've learnt many things.

Water is finite. Taswater is taking this seriously. It is becoming a bigger concern than ever before.

The difficulties faced in providing clean drinking water and maintaining the infrastructure.

Challenges that TasWater face, impressed by research, Positive input despite the large group.

Water is tooooooooooooooooooo cheap.

TasWater is facing a lot of challenges, but they are doing their best to be honest and include the public in as much as they can.

Diverse range of people all having a positive input.

TasWater has to prioritise, it can't do everything!

There are a diverse range of concerns, families and situations represented in our panel and it was fabulous to hear everyone else's experience of water usage.

Learned about the facts of what TasWater is dealing with in order to bring us reliable high-quality water.

The water challenges faced by others in Tas.

45 people can agree on a number of recommendations for a difficult subject.

Lots of good, specific financial and planning info from TasWater.

That managing our water supply in a way that is fair and equitable for the Tasmanian community as a whole is a complex process.

Change is not easy.



## HEART – One thing that inspired me...

Inspired by passionate TasWater doing a fantastic job with a positive cultural relevant.

I learnt a lot, my heart says we all need to contribute to the success of TasWater. I will continue handing on information about TasWater to my community.

Good to learn that TasWater is so across the issues - so many in Tas institutions with their heads in the sand.

The engagement of the TW team, they really committed to getting us answers and information.

Water is our life line and without readily available water there is no future. Thankful that we have great people looking at ways to ensure that we all have water to live sustainable lives and our children can look forward to a planet with drinkable water.

We all need to save and cherish most important resource. We can't live 3 days without it.

To conserve water! I am going to personal try to do 100L per day!

Great passion within all the TasWater people we have met as well as the community reps on our panel so I am heartened by this for the future changes required.

TasWater's passion, and enthusiasm for thinking creatively and engaging with the community.

The pure effort Tas water has put into gathering information from multiple community groups and demographics.

Group chats went well with excellent communication and commitment. Well done Mosaic.

The motivation and passion of the TasWater team & due to this, the motivation and commitment of the panel.

How community consultation can help build brand loyalty! Well done TasWater.

The commitment and collaborative spirit shown by everyone involved.

Mosaic and TASWATER team.

Good cross section of Tas people, and TasWater professionals.

TasWater are run by a great bunch of people.

TasWater team is really invested in doing good work, it's not just a job to them.

How open and transparent TasWater has been throughout the whole process and has built my trust in them as an organisation.

The openness and information sharing from TasWater.

That TasWater are open to being transparent with their workings on developing a new water strategy.

The passion of the TasWater team.

whole is a complex process.

Change is not easy.

## HANDS – One action I will take next...



Suggest range of pilot schemes for further research that will inform and cost different changes of behaviours for Taswater and the customer.

Encourage people to just be more aware of the challenges TasWater is facing to give them this service that many just expect and demand to be provided without any interruptions or issues while also continuing to encourage our household to reduce their water use.

Continuing to retrofit my home to save water and have water to grow food for longtime resilience in Tasmania

Buy a shower timer!

Thinking about more ways I can save water.

Protect water more, for our community and wildlife. Pick up rubbish when I see it near waterways. Stop buying/washing clothes that might include microplastics.

Need to change my garden watering there's heaps to save.

I have installed a 26,000lt tank and diverted two roofs to harvest water on my suburban block.

And to install a bigger tank.

How to use water and not waste it.

I will look at installing some way of preserving water for worst case restrictions etc future proof to protect garden in particular.

Engage with the community and raise awareness about water conservation.

Rainwater collection and conservation!

To think of ways I can reduce my water usage and then actually reduced my usage.

To look at my bills and learn more about my water usage.

Share more water saving measures with family, friends and co-workers.

To build a garden that requires less water. To utilise tank water more often.

When TasWater said they have the monopoly and don't take that power lightly.

Explore ways that we as a family can conserve water e.g. installation of a water tank and talking with my children about water saving measures e.g. half flushes and shorter showers :)

I'm still planning to get off-grid and rid myself of the capitalist shackles!!! Hahaha.

Look at how I can save more water around my house (next project is a new bigger shed, harvesting the water off that by putting tanks on either at the time of building or afterwards).

Harvest water.

Be more proactive in reducing water usage.

Water tank.

Discuss water usage with family and friends.


Focus on water conservation and personal steps I can take to be more water efficient.

Is to be more active in local government/energy utility decisions and processes.

# NEXT STEPS

TasWater will continue to develop its Price and Service Plan (PSP5) to be submitted to the Tasmanian Economic Regulator by end June 2025. The Panel's feedback and insights on water security will be considered as TasWater makes its final amendments. TasWater has promised to update the Panel on the outcome of this process and invite Panel members to continue to engage with TasWater on future topics on interest.





PLEASE NOTE: This report has been prepared by MosaicLab on behalf of and for the exclusive use of TasWater. The sole purpose of this report is to provide TasWater with materials produced at the Recall Day.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the scope of services set out by the TasWater. In preparing this report, MosaicLab has relied upon the information provided by the participants at the forum. TasWater can choose to share and distribute this report as they see fit. MosaicLab accepts no liability or responsibility whatsoever for or in respect of any use of or reliance upon this report by any third party.

*MosaicLab is a Victorian-based consultancy that specialises in community and stakeholder engagement, facilitation, negotiation, strategic planning and coaching.*



**REPORT PREPARED BY:**  
**mosaicLAB**  
[www.mosaiclab.com.au](http://www.mosaiclab.com.au)