



# TASWATER COMMUNITY ADVISORY PANEL

## RECALL SESSIONS

What was said report

May 2025



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# INTRODUCTION

## OVERVIEW

TasWater has been working towards submitting a plan to the Tasmanian Economic Regulator detailing the services it will provide and the associated customer costs by 1 July 2025.

TasWater conducted extensive community engagement, including the Water Future Community Advisory panel deliberative engagement which ran from October 2024 to February 2025.

TasWater is recalling the panel now because the current decision differs from previous discussions. They have a clear idea of the investment needed for PSP5 and understand the necessary work to secure Tasmania's water and sewerage future.

The key issue is how to fairly and responsibly recover the investment cost from customers, either by applying larger price increases now to reduce future debt and costs, or by spreading the cost over time to ease the immediate burden but shift more impact to the future. TasWater needs help to clarify what fairness looks like given the tension between short-term affordability and long-term sustainability.

The Recall Sessions considered the question:

**The investment needed is clear, the real choice is how customers pay for it. Do we want to face bigger price rises now to avoid impacting future customers, or smaller rises now, but continued increases over a longer period of time.**

TasWater shared 3 price path options to gain insights from the panel on the community feedback on different scenarios.

## PARTICIPANTS

Of the 41 panel members who participated in the original Community Advisory panel, 33 attended one or both of the recall sessions.

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

- ♦ **George Theo** – Chief Executive Officer
- ♦ **Kevin Young** – Chairman of the Board TasWater
- ♦ **Matt Balfe** – General Manager Customer and Community
- ♦ **Hayden Moore** – Head of Commercial and Pricing
- ♦ **Liz Hafner** – Acting Head of Communications and Engagement
- ♦ **Samuel Paske** – Head of Brand and Insights
- ♦ **Dale Radford** – Senior Commercial and Pricing Analyst



## RECALL SESSION AGENDAS

The sessions were held online, via Zoom on Thursday 8 May and Tuesday 13 May 2025.

### 8 MAY 2025



TIME	AGENDA
6:00PM	Welcome, reconnecting and getting started
6:15PM	Learning about the challenge – an overview of the draft PSP5 submission – presented by Hayden Moore - Head of Commercial and Pricing  What is being proposed? What is still hard? What is the panel here to answer?
6:30PM	Small group discussions to gather questions to further understand the challenge and Q&A with Tas Water
7:10PM	What are the options? – Hear about the options TasWater is weighing up – presented by Hayden Moore - Head of Commercial and Pricing, and hear from George Theo – Chief Executive Officer, about why this choice is hard.
7:20PM	Small group discussions to further understand the options and Q&A with Tas Water
7:50PM	Final reflections on the panels work together
8:00PM	<b>Close</b>

### 13 MAY 2025



TIME	AGENDA
6:00PM	Welcome, reconnecting and getting started
6:15PM	Recap on the challenge and options – presented by Hayden Moore - Head of Commercial and Pricing  What are the options? What do TasWater need the panels help to understand.
6:35PM	Small group discussion to weigh up the options and capture pros and cons on each
7:35PM	<b>Break</b>
7:55PM	Individual Feedback on the options
7:30PM	Advice on messaging to the broader Tasmanian community
7:50PM	Words of encouragement to TasWater going forward
7:55PM	Thank you and next steps
8:00PM	<b>Close</b>

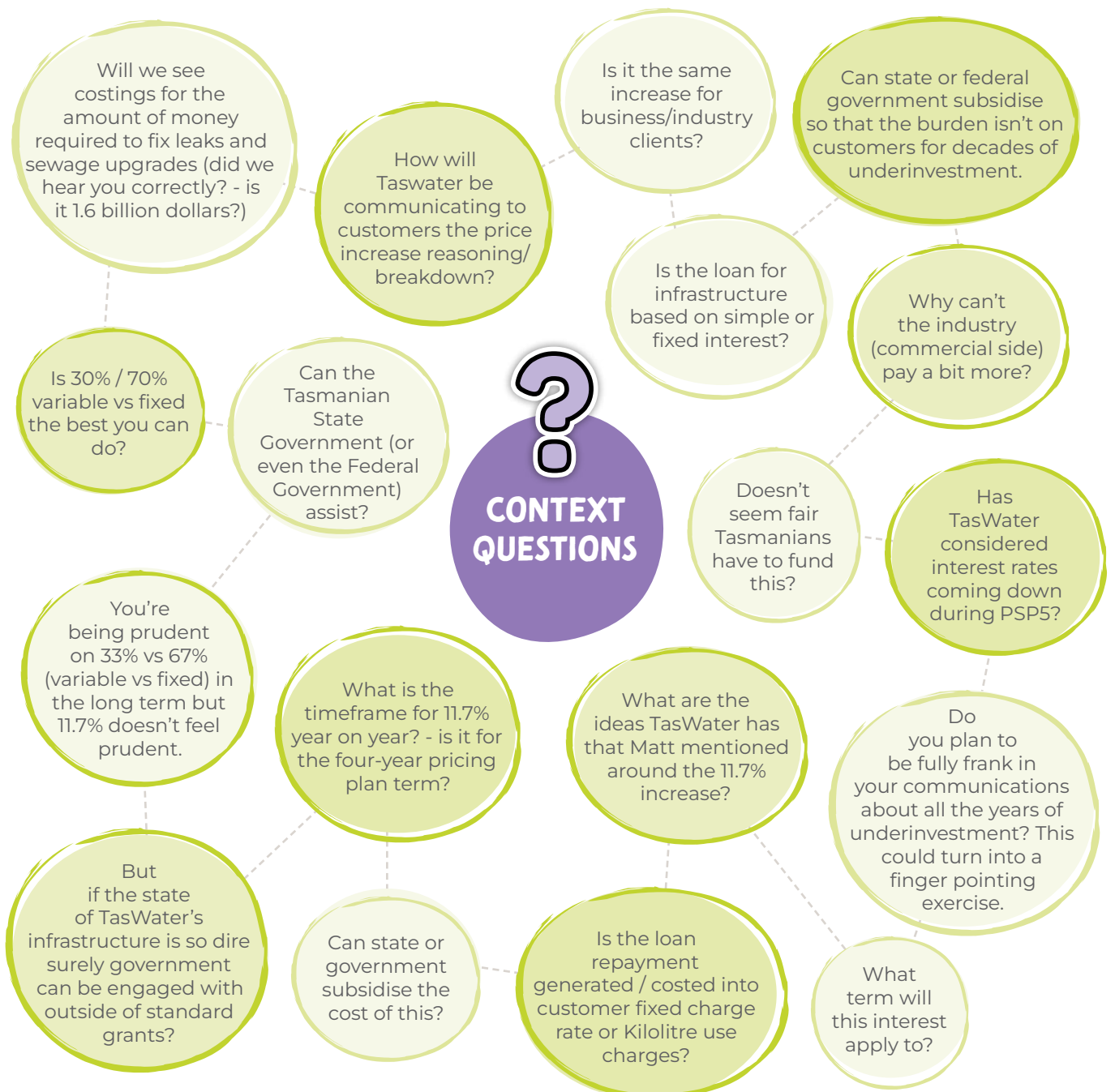
# OUTPUTS

## SESSION 1 - 8 MAY 2025

### QUESTIONS ABOUT TASWATER'S CHALLENGE

TasWater's Head of Commercial and Pricing, Hayden Moore, presented an overview of how TasWater has progressed draft Price and Services Plan (PSP5) submission and the current challenge they are facing.

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



## QUESTIONS ON THE 3 PRICE PATH OPTIONS

Participants heard from Hayden Moore, Head of Commercial and Pricing, about 3 price path options TasWater is considering as ways to recover the cost of investment from customers over time.

Participants had small group conversations where they developed questions about the Base Case, Option 1 and Option 2, and any general questions they wanted to ask to better understand the decision TasWater is weighing up.

### BASE CASE

#### "PAY NOW – EASE LATER"



Are you taking out the loan for the full amount all at once? Will you be spending it all at once or over the 5 years? That will affect your repayments. Therefore is an initial 11.7% increase above or below your repayments?

Can external national or international situations increase these percentage amounts? Question across all 3 options

Can you explain the link between increase and the % change i.e., confirm fixed go up 11.7 and usage go up 11.7% also at same time?

Do the simple numbers show this is the least impactful for consumers at the end of PSP6?

How is the rest of government infrastructure managed (including GBEs)?

Does this 11.7% increase solve all the issues Tas Water has that we were brought together to discuss? What other funding is needed in the future to solve all Tas Water's problems? Or does this resolve ALL leakages, brakes, environmental impact issues?

Is the 11.7% increase an "average" increase? (That is, will some households experience GREATER than 11.7% increase)

Is there a budget/plan of commitment to long term communication through these changes and implementation etc?

Is there money in the budget for long term commitment to communication?

When you say an increase of 11.7% - is that to be applied per Kilolitre (variable charge rate) or to the Fixed charge rate OR divided between the two charge rates?

### OPTION 1

#### "BALANCE TODAY AND TOMORROW"



If 11.7% increase equates to approximately a \$120/year increase to household bills each year, what does a 9.4% increase equate to?

In considering both Options with Option 2 PSP6 would the natural increase in consumer numbers during PSP6 and these additional fixed charges not project towards recovering the invested funds during PSP6?

Is Taswater still fronting the dividends of the now failing infrastructure that they acquired and now need to fix/repair?

What happens if the interest rate you pay on the loan increases?

### OPTION 2

#### "AFFORDABLE NOW – FUTURE RECOVERY"



Is there any risk that costs won't be recovered in PSP6 and increases would need to be rolled over into PSP7?

What \$ figure/year for the average household bill does an 8.8% increase equate to?

Will you guarantee that there won't be any one-off levies?



## GENERAL CLARITY QUESTIONS

At what point of water usage (with the 30/70 pricing structure) would my bill be the same as it is now?

Can we please have these presented in graphs, including the impacts of the variable change?

Could we see some modelling on specific bill scenarios over the next 8 years across all 3 options please? e.g. single person household no garden, single person household with garden, family of 4, etc. So that we can see the impact on specific household demographics

Does the percentage increase apply to both fixed and variable rates?

I know this has been covered before but just want to reconfirm – it's not possible to do a mix is there? You can't do two years at X rate and then increase the rate for the last two years?

If we choose lower now and the risk is for the future, how large is the actual risk because surely the government will have to step in if economic disaster.

Is TasWater still fronting the dividends of the now failing infrastructure that they acquired and now need to fix/repair?

Is this a once off nearly 12%? Or every year? For how long?

On a 100k loan, 4.5% repayment over 70 years, ends up being 329k in total repayments. Is there a better value way of funding the infra spending than a loan which ends up tripling the end cost? Long term cost cutting and saving by TasWater to self-fund?

So, the same balance needs to be recovered but its more about how long it takes to recover it than how much is being paid. Was population growth and housing struggles factored?

You said that delaying increases now may result in a loss of trust in the future when prices spike, have you considered that a spike in prices now (especially in this climate) will result in a loss of trust? Is it a case of scandal now versus scandal later?



## SESSION 2 - 13 MAY 2025

### THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND

After a short reconnecting conversation, participants engaged in small group discussions and were asked to capture the things they wanted to keep in mind going into the conversation about different price path options.



## WEIGHING UP THE OPTIONS

After a recap from Hayden Moore, Head of Commercial and Pricing, on three pricing pathways TasWater is considering, participants worked in small groups to discuss and capture the pros and cons of each option.

The panel's work on the pros and cons are displayed below along with an AI summary of these comments:



### BASE CASE – “PAY NOW – EASE LATER”



#### PROS

Short term pain gain for long term gain?

Customer will be more likely to preserve water to mitigate the cost and pressure of this price increase allowing a more secure water future.

Take the hit now, individuals' financial situations are known, who knows what situation a family will be in, in 5-10 years' time

May drive people to become more water conscious - decrease water usage.

2.5%, not much difference.

Price at the end of PSP6 \$2034 has the lowest price.

Paying up front rips the Band-Aid off.

#### AI SUMMARY



- 1. Encourage Water Conservation**  
Higher prices may drive people to use less water and adopt more conscious, efficient habits.
- 2. Favour Certainty and Action Now**  
Better to “rip the band aid off” with upfront changes than defer decisions into an uncertain future.
- 3. Lower Long-Term Cost**  
Choosing the right option now can lead to the lowest overall household cost by 2034.
- 4. Minimal Difference Between Options**  
Small price variations (e.g. 2.5%) suggest limited benefit in delaying or spreading increases.
- 5. Support a Secure Water Future**  
Price signals and conservation together can lead to more stable and sustainable water systems.
- 6. Balance Short-Term Pain with Long-Term Gain**  
Immediate impact may be tough, but could set up better outcomes for households and systems alike

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**CONS**

Concern overpaying now and then paying again later!

Quarterly billing means it will take 12 months for people to really understand what this increase will mean to their bills

People won't like higher bills without at least seeing improvements to the network and infrastructure.

Difficulty communicating this to the broader community.

Will people jeopardies their health and sacrifice personal hygiene as a result of bill increases beyond their ability to afford

Price rises still might happen despite 0% increase as suggested.

More people might need to access TasWater assist.

Bill shock

A large impact on businesses e.g. breweries, restaurants etc that will have to be passed on to customers.

No guarantee that there won't be an increase in PSP6 anyway.

This option is too steep!

Added impact to the already high cost of living. More potentially in TasWater's hardship program.

High bill, big impact.

Larger households going to be more negatively impacted.

High-cost increase is not viable for many groups in our community.

**AI SUMMARY**



**1. Unaffordability for Vulnerable Groups**

A steep cost increase may be unmanageable for low-income households, large families, and vulnerable community members.

**2. Risk of Bill Shock and Misunderstanding**

Sudden changes and quarterly billing may delay awareness and cause financial distress.

**3. Doubt Over Promised Stability**

There's concern that even with a "0% increase," future hikes could still occur (e.g. in PSP6).

**4. Wider Economic Impacts**

Higher prices will strain small businesses, increase consumer costs, and pressure public hardship programs.

**5. Health and Wellbeing Concerns**

Some fear higher costs may lead to reduced hygiene or personal care due to unaffordable bills.

**6. Communication and Trust Barriers**

It may be difficult to explain and justify these changes without visible service improvements or clear messaging



# OPTION 1- "BALANCE TODAY AND TOMORROW"



## PROS

Sits in the middle.

Happy medium

Middle ground - Less of an impact on bills, still getting revenue for investments.

Agree with most others in the general idea that this is the mid-range option.

Slightly lower increase for most.

Less deferred costs while still giving consumers a lower rate.

Less impact for families struggling financially now, than the Base case.

This is the more moderate of all 3 options.

More palatable option for customers to digest when communicating bill increases.

Less of an impact on bills.

A bit better for customers than the base - in regards to their cost of living.

## AI SUMMARY



### 1. Moderate and Balanced Option

This is widely seen as the "middle ground" choice—neither too steep nor too soft.

### 2. More Palatable for Communication

Easier to explain and justify to customers compared to other options.

### 3. Lower Immediate Impact

Delivers less financial pressure in the short term, especially for families struggling now.

### 4. Reduced Deferred Costs

Balances the need for lower rates with avoiding high future catch-up costs.

### 5. Revenue Still Maintained

Allows continued investment while softening the impact on households.



## CONS

Household may not know what financial situation they'll be in 5 years' time. They may need the extra money then and not now.

Even though we are trying to balance what we pay today and pay off tomorrow, we cannot predict what pressures will arise in the future to add to costs and force more sacrifices from people down the line.

It's possible that future events could mean that prices could end up having to go up more and PS6 will need to be

higher than 11.7 because a lesser amount was accepted now.

Extending it into PS6.

Still bill shock

The difference between repayment amounts for option 1 and option 2 are minimal making option 2 better.

End up paying more at the end of the FY34 period compared to Option 1 and 2.

Minimum difference in payment. Option 1 and 2 are similarly high.

## AI SUMMARY



### 1. Future Uncertainty

Households may face unpredictable financial pressures in coming years, making delayed costs riskier.

### 2. Deferred Pain Could Backfire

Spreading out or delaying increases now might lead to steeper hikes and sacrifices later (e.g. in PSP6).

### 3. Minimal Difference Between Options

The cost differences between Option 1 and 2 are small, so justification for higher pain is weak.

### 4. Bill Shock Still a Concern

Even with small differences or staged increases, the perception of a big jump can still cause distress.

### 5. Higher Total Costs Later

Paying less now may result in a higher total bill by the end of the pricing period.



## OPTION 2 – “AFFORDABLE NOW – FUTURE RECOVERY”



### PROS

Most affordable option for right now. Less people potentially ending up in TasWater’s hardship program.

Best option for those in financial difficulty now.

Most palatable option for consumers.

Most affordable plan, “safer bet”.

Best out of the options provided for cost of living.

Best case scenario for those who are struggling with cost-of-living pressure.

Not much of a \$\$ difference between option 1.

Because the price increase is spread out future wage increases are more likely to cover it long term and ease the pressure.

### AI SUMMARY



#### 1. Most Affordable in the Short Term

This option is seen as the most manageable now, especially for people under cost-of-living stress.

#### 2. Better for Financially Vulnerable Households

Favoured for those struggling or likely to enter hardship programs.

#### 3. Easier for Consumers to Accept

Framed as the most palatable and least confronting choice for the general public.

#### 4. Low Price Variation Across Options

Minimal dollar difference reduces the justification for choosing a higher-impact path.

#### 5. Long-Term Pressure Relief Potential

Spreading the increase may align better with future wage growth and ease financial strain.



### CONS

Could be the worst option for people not quite pensioners yet, but they will be by PS6.

Paying more at the end of FY34 compared to base option.

Not the best option for an aging population.

Still a lot of money, impacts customers.

Could drag out longer and longer.

The con is: it is still a significant increase for customers to pay and over time the cost is greater due to interest.

The hurt will continue longer with the possibility of increase from future impacts.

Extending it into PS6.

### AI SUMMARY



#### 1. Longer-Term Pain and Uncertainty

Extending price changes into the future may prolong financial pressure and introduce new risks.

#### 2. Greater Overall Cost

Spreading costs out may result in paying more by FY34 compared to base option.

#### 3. Not Ideal for Older Populations

This option may disproportionately affect people nearing retirement by PSP6.

#### 4. Still a Significant Impact

Even delayed increases involve substantial costs that many will still find difficult to manage.

#### 5. Prolonged Consumer Burden

Dragging payments over time could create ongoing discomfort without a clear benefit.

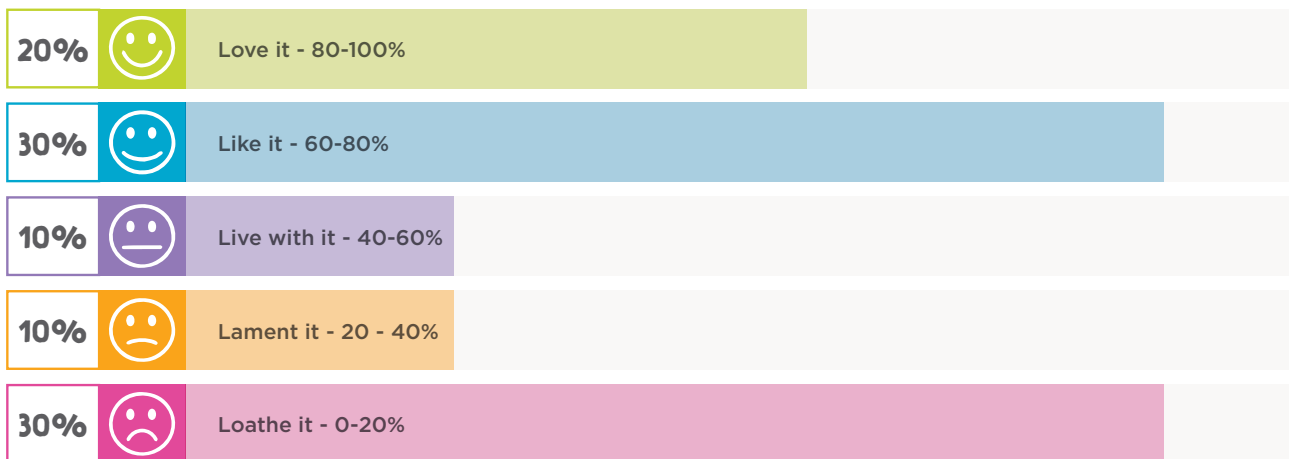
## LEVELS OF COMFORT WITH THE PRICE PATH OPTIONS

Participants were asked to individually assess each of the options and provide a ranking of 'Love it', 'Like it', 'Live with it', 'Lament it' or 'Loath it'.

The following information summarises how each option was assessed by each panel member and the comments that participants gave, as to what would make them more comfortable, followed by an AI summary of these comments.



### HOW COMFORTABLE ARE YOU WITH THE BASE CASE - "PAY NOW - EASE LATER"



### WHAT IF ANYTHING WOULD MAKE YOU MORE COMFORTABLE?

<p><b>Love it</b> 80-100%</p>	Higher increase in the 1st and 2nd year, then no increase at all through remainder PSP5 and 6. No chance for never ending increases.
	Get the pain out of the way now but combine with incentives for saving and harvesting water, provide assurance that the pain will end after 4 years, or at least lessen in PSP6 & I fear the impact on business e.g. hospitality, healthcare, beauty etc.
	Best option for my financial situation. I can afford it now, but I don't know what my financial/employment situation will be in 5 to 10 years' time. Loads of redundancy's happening at work so the future is scary.
	Just do it...Do not worry about politics of it. People on Centrelink etc will always get assistance.
	Ensure the bill assistance program is generously available so anyone struggling with the increased bills can have a payment plan PLUS a superb comms strategy about why we need to do this and the long-term gain for the state.
<p><b>AI summary</b></p>	Financial assistance for customers who will struggle with the increase.
	<i>There is support for a higher initial increase if it comes with a clear end point and assurance that further rises won't follow in PSP6. People want this paired with strong financial assistance, payment plans, and water-saving incentives to help manage the impact, particularly on vulnerable households and businesses. While some can afford the change now, there is anxiety about future financial security and employment. A confident, transparent communication strategy is essential to explain the rationale and long-term benefits for the state.</i>

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If there was certainty that the increase would ease in PSP6. In an idealistic world this could be a sure thing!

Even though there would be more significant increases to bills in the short-term, the long-term impact is lowest (as highlighted in charts depicting average bills at FY34). Communicating rationale to community is crucial. Encourage water conservation.

Some support through TasWater Assist (or State funded) for those who cannot afford this, rebated down to the Option 2 increase.

Nothing is going to make me love any price increase, want to pay for it now while I can rather than in 5 years' time when my financial situation will be grossly different.

Needs to be paired with incentives for saving water, harvesting water, water save devices etc that can reduce consumption hence reduce bills and bill shock PLUS how do you reassure that if we take the big pill for 4 years you will not repeat it in PSP6?

Prefer this as short-term pain

I understand it and can see why it needs to happen. As with anything, I wish it didn't have to happen - but I totally get why it does. Because of 1/4 billing I feel for the customer where it will take them while to visualise the impact of higher bills.

I like how it gets the cost out of the way. I think no one is truly happy with a price increase and any increase is scary but in this case it is necessary and TasWater is offering a lot of information and explanations as to why to soften the blow.

Knowing for sure that the 0% increase is a definite after this PSP, how this will be communicated to the community if this is the chosen option, and knowing what the strategies would be to manage any backlash from media/councils etc.

*While no one welcomes a price increase, many accept it as necessary if it's communicated transparently and offers clear long-term benefits—particularly if bills stabilise after PSP5. There is strong support for treating this as short-term pain to avoid greater costs later, provided it's paired with water-saving incentives and robust support for those in hardship. Ensuring certainty around no further increases in PSP6 is vital to build trust, as is a well-prepared communications strategy to explain the rationale, manage expectations, and mitigate backlash from media and councils.*



**Like it**  
60-80%



**AI summary**



**Live with it**  
40-60%

Possibly clear communication about future costs, so customers aren't surprised later.

"Ease later" would be guaranteed- which it cannot be. And knowing that my income will increase to help combat this- which may not occur.

Whilst a substantial increase of the three options its only 2.5% more than option 2. Grand scale of things that's not much. I not sure how it could be changed to make me more comfortable. My comfortability rises with price increase % decreasing.

*While the price difference between options may be small in percentage terms, comfort with the proposal increases as the price rise decreases. There is scepticism around promises of future easing, particularly given uncertainty around personal income and economic conditions. Clear, honest communication about long-term costs and avoiding unrealistic guarantees is essential to maintain public trust and avoid future surprises.*



**AI summary**

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**Lament it**  
20 - 40%

Seeing massive, sudden changes in the network and improves in things such as sewerage output. Value for money. Responsiveness to network issues. Increasing jobs in the community too.

Nothing would make me more comfortable I'm concerned about future economic influences which are largely unpredictable and could have a major impact on households.

Being in the moderate-low-income tier and receiving no financial support, I am aware that this option would hit hard on top of the current living cost pressure. Hence, I chose "lament it". I don't think TasWater can do much to help (if any) though.



**AI summary**

*While there is recognition that investment could bring visible improvements—like better sewerage output, job creation, and network responsiveness—some feel these benefits don't offset the personal financial burden, especially for low-income households receiving no support. There is deep concern about future economic uncertainty and the cumulative pressure on already stretched budgets. For some, the proposal is reluctantly accepted with little confidence that additional help will be available.*



**Loathe it**  
0-20%

A reduced percentage would be more acceptable. How could TasWater possibly market this as a good idea in the middle of a cost-of-living crisis. Vulnerable people will end us accessing the hardship program, causing long term pain.

Perhaps a sliding scale would move me to "Lament it", e.g. start with 11.7% but then decrease (by at least a percentage point per annum) after that). I think that this is fleecing Tasmanians. Why not ask councils to reinvest their dividends instead?

It is offensive to present Tasmanians with an 11.7% increase during a cost-of-living crisis. People will have breakdowns and will drop hygiene standards. This will impact people in a myriad of ways & only a minority will speak up for assistance.

Are you prepared for the aggravation you will get from higher water users when you add the 30/70 price increase. This will affect a lot of users. Good PR doesn't fix some things.

This base would have to be sold by TasWater to the community on the basis that in 2031/32 the cost per litre and fixed cost rates will drop to indicatively \$XXX.XX /l and \$YYY.YY fixed charge in comparison to the 2025/26 \$XXX.XX and \$YYY.YY.

Information about what is being developed so the customer can see where the money from the price rise is going. Also, is there like a guarantee that the price isn't going to go up after that four years?

I'm worried about people who are already struggling with cost of living. 11.7%p/a increase, year on year for 4 years will be a huge shock for many and will be very hard for TasWater to sell to customers and could undermine its investment plans if reaction .

I feel like TasWater are pushing us away from this option as it is the worst optics for them. I do like it is the lowest price at the end of 2034 but I have no faith they will not find more things to invest in and just increase the price in is PSP6 anyway.

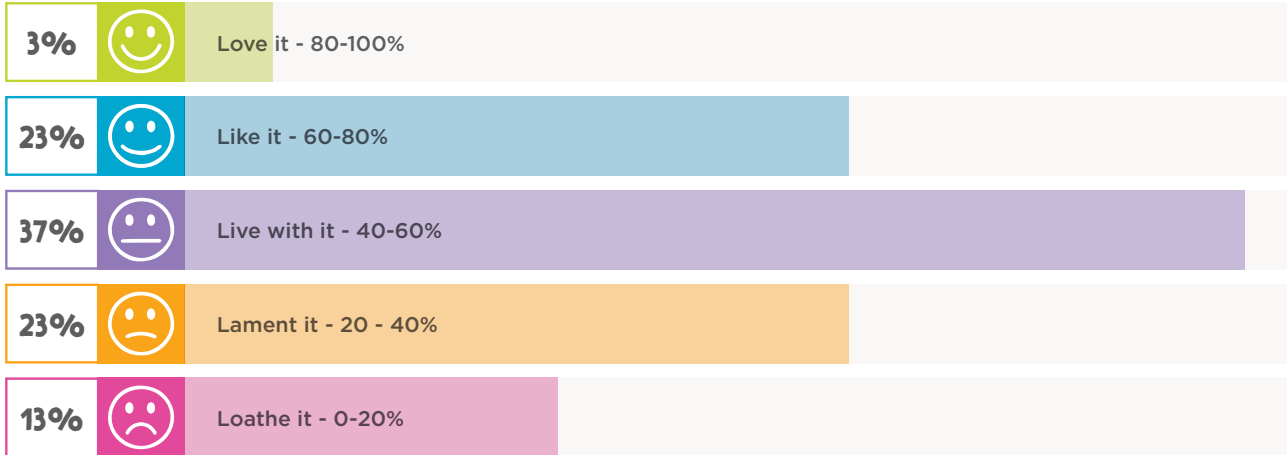
Nothing would make me comfortable with an increase over 10% on an essential household bill in an annual period. Many people are on tight budgets, and this will cause significant emotional stress hearing a 11.7% was happening every year for 4 years.



**AI summary**

*This option is seen as undesirable and poorly timed, with the 11.7% annual increase causing concern about affordability and hardship, particularly for vulnerable households. Many fear emotional stress, reduced hygiene standards, and public backlash. There is a strong call for clearer communication about long-term benefits, safeguards against future rises, and a more gradual approach—such as a sliding scale—to reduce shock and build trust.*

## HOW COMFORTABLE ARE YOU WITH OPTION 1- "BALANCE TODAY AND TOMORROW"



### WHAT IF ANYTHING WOULD MAKE YOU MORE COMFORTABLE?

 <b>Love it</b> 80-100%	I am the most comfortable with this option as it addresses the issues we are facing directly, while still allowing for less of a 'shock' when it comes to water usage and changes in price for the everyday family who already struggle with living costs.
<b>AI summary</b>	NA

 <b>Like it</b> 60-80%	<p>This is a steady increase and it will be expected and not of so much of a "shock" but really not much difference between this and Base.</p> <p>Clear communication to consumers. Some of the mathematical explanations are too complicated. The Marketing team will need to cleverly spin this to ensure people understand the increase, particularly following on from the recent electricity increases.</p> <p>Allows gradual increase in business' adding extra onto their costs (and passing onto customers) instead of possibly creating quick prices increases resulting from Base Case.</p> <p>Incentives to save water, info on what happens in the following 4 years, assurance that this middle option provides enough to complete works without huge debt burden.</p> <p>Reassure what happens in PSP6 Reassure if this level of funding will provide water security and sewerage security without the extra level of contribution from account holders.</p> <p>Shares load with current and new costumers. I small decease in % would make me more comfortable.</p> <p>Some financial assistance to customers who will struggle with the increase.</p>
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**AI summary**

*This option is seen as the most balanced, offering a steady and manageable increase that reduces price shock—particularly for families already under financial strain. There is a call for clearer, simpler communication to help the public understand the rationale, especially in the wake of other rising costs. Business impacts are expected to be more gradual, and people want reassurance about future stability, especially in PSP6. Incentives for water saving, transparency about how funds will be used, and financial assistance for vulnerable customers are all seen as important to gain wider acceptance.*



**Live with it**  
40-60%

A more palatable option for those facing cost of living pressures & easier to communicate to community, however the long-term impact results in the highest average bill by FY34 & uncertainty around additional factors causing additional increase of bills.

Possibly clear communication about future costs, so customers aren't surprised later.

Getting Government funding for the difference. I don't think deferring \$100 million for 4 years is of benefit long term, purely for a slight reduction in the increase. This does no more than disadvantage future customers for current customers benefit.

Nothing would make a difference. A longer period of time for extra payments.

For TasWater to move from the indicative 70/30 to say 60/40 to entice clients to reduce water use. At present there is no real motivation / enticement to lower water use.

More variable percentage as opposed to fixed.

It's the middle ground, it achieves objectives and limits bill shock somewhat. So, I could live it with but the future is unknown so it could mean even higher bills in PS6.

Like said in the summary, the difference between option 1 and 2 is minimal, making it hard to justify for a higher increase early on. I think I would be more comfortable if seeing more forecasting data with different scenarios of future economics.

9.4% in PSP5, dropping to a lower % in PSP6 will help to accommodate the increases but is still higher than many will cope with. TasWater assist will be heavily required by many customers to pay their bills.

I still think the 9.4% increase is too high for first 4 years. I prefer lower across eight years.

Knowing that this is the more balanced option is enough for my comfortability however the difference between this option and the base option is only \$60, it is very minimal but I prefer the rip the Band-Aid off approach.



**AI summary**

*This option is seen as the most balanced and easier to communicate, especially for those under cost-of-living pressure, but some question its long-term value given the highest total cost by FY34. Many want clearer communication around future costs and impacts, along with stronger incentives to reduce water use. Several respondents suggest government funding or more flexible payment structures, while others express concern that the difference from the base option is minimal and not worth the trade-off. There is a desire for lower increases over a longer period, better forecasting of future scenarios, and strong reliance on TasWater Assist to help many customers cope.*

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It's putting a burden on people that really have no responsibility, some benefited from lower prices when we should have been paying more.

9.4% is still a large increase. For a lot of people this will still be unaffordable & a tipping point. A slower 8 yr or 12 yr ramp in costs would be more socially responsible with occasional rate-freezes for relief. Government involvement should be major.

See other answers



**Lament it**  
20 - 40%

Again, where is the money from the price rise going? Particular projects or upgrades happening in my community to help the water supply.

Options is too close to options with extended, known long term payments. It is not a... building... of future option. It is a longer-term drain, unless you are a fortune teller.

There is still a certain income point that needs to be met. this prolongs that over 2 PSP periods which whilst the first period would be set does not allow for future unpredicted cost pressures above the current ones. Which will add even more.

Is this the "happy compromise" we are being steered towards as a group? Basic psychology suggests this will be the outcome (although not guaranteed) If this option is presented to the Regulator, then the Regulator may well ask for further compromise.



**AI summary**

*While some view this option as a likely compromise, many believe the 9.4% increase is still too steep and risks being unaffordable for those already under pressure. Concerns were raised about the fairness of burdening current customers, lack of clarity on how the funds will be used locally, and the risk of unpredictable future costs across two PSP periods. Suggestions include a slower, more socially responsible ramp-up over 8–12 years, with occasional rate freezes, and stronger government involvement. There's also scepticism about the long-term sustainability and transparency of the proposed plan.*

9.4% (compounding) per annum is still too much. Perhaps a sliding scale would move me to "Lament it", e.g. start with 9.4% but then decrease (by at least a percentage point per annum) after that).



**Loathe it**  
0-20%

Might be more appealing if the variable portion of our bills could increase to more than 30-33%, plus if there were other incentives for households to save water (rebates for shower heads, garden tanks etc).

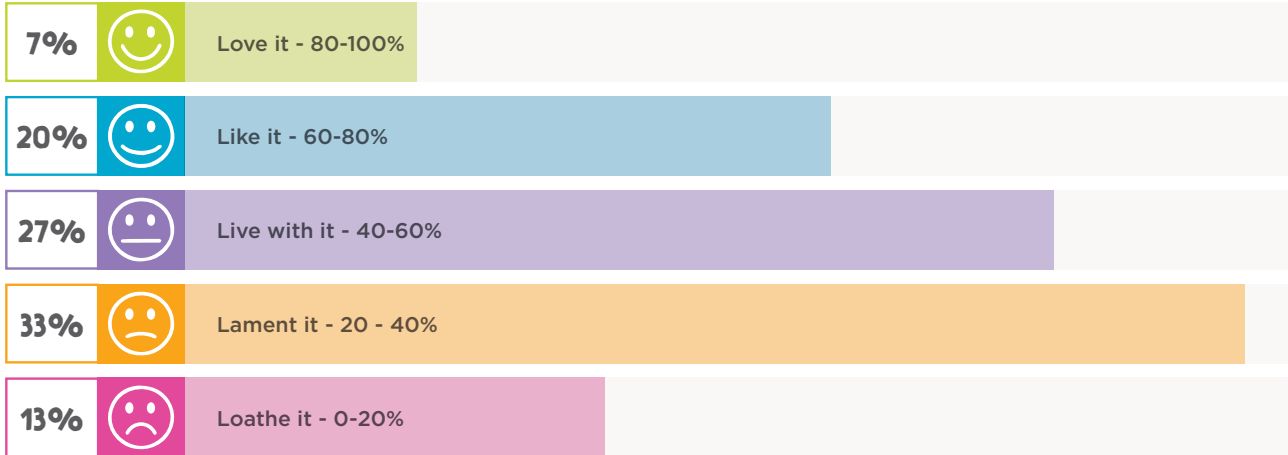
Nothing. Why does this option have the highest average bill at the end of 2034 - based on Hayden's slides. I don't think we should pick it just because it is a middle option, as TasWater would have presented at 10%, 9.7 or a 8.9 etc and balanced out in PSP6.



**AI summary**

*The 9.4% compounding increase is still viewed as too high by some, who suggest a sliding scale that reduces annually would be more acceptable. Others feel the option could be improved by increasing the variable component of the bill and offering stronger household water-saving incentives. There's concern about selecting this option simply because it's seen as the "middle ground," especially since it leads to the highest average bill by 2034—raising doubts about its long-term value.*

## HOW COMFORTABLE ARE YOU WITH OPTION 2 - "AFFORDABLE NOW - FUTURE RECOVERY"



### WHAT IF ANYTHING WOULD MAKE YOU MORE COMFORTABLE?



**Love it**  
80-100%

Lower increase :) there may have been years of neglect, but you can't fix it that quickly you will have a revolt.

Option 2 is purely a large nod to politics of the disenfranchised., who will always attract centreline and other payments, and do not pay, as you go taxes. This tranche of recipients of Govt support will still receive support. Option 2 is just kicking the road.



**AI summary**

*Option 2 may be politically motivated and seen as delaying real solutions. While a lower increase is appealing, trying to fix past neglect too quickly could provoke backlash, and some feel it unfairly shifts the burden onto paying customers.*



**Like it**  
60-80%

Easy on most people, especially those experiencing cost of living crisis. I may not be living in the State in 10 yrs, so why be concerned with prices for then, so slow increase is attractive.

If TasWater were to enunciate at the commencement of a billing period the \$ saving per Kl not used whereas the fixed charge remains constant whether water is used or not.

Nothing to add

This will be the most acceptable option. Many people will still struggle and I recognise this will increase overall costs over the 8 years, however, it is the most socially and morally appropriate. TasWater Assist will be necessary to support customers.

I think having two different percentages across the eight years will be confusing for most people. Why not make it 7.8% across the eight years instead?

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**Like it**  
60-80%

...continued

All options are significant when you apply compounding % increase. Stretching to another price period would further reduce % increase. Same period a higher variable cost % could be applied, acknowledging high user will need to pay.



**AI summary**

*This option is viewed as the most socially and morally acceptable, particularly for those experiencing cost-of-living pressures, even though it increases total costs over eight years. A slower, steady increase is seen as fairer and more manageable, especially for people who may not be in the state long term. Simpler structures—like a flat percentage—may reduce confusion, while communication about usage-based savings and clearer messaging around fixed versus variable charges could improve understanding. Continued support through TasWater Assist is considered essential, and options that acknowledge high-use households without penalising everyone equally are preferred.*



**Live with it**  
40-60%

That customers that a struggling now will have a little financial relief now, but who knows what the future will bring.

Assurance that future increases will be minimal.

Possibly clear communication about future costs, so customers aren't surprised later.

I still think that the 7% p.a. (compounding) is sufficient. TasWater does not have the standing in the community to be asking for too much all at once. Take time to educate (e.g. have sewerage treatment plant tours - no one wants raw sewerage in the river).

Water security is vital, so is the sewerage control etc... if this option taken then reassure that essential works will be covered...

A prediction of would prices settle down after these increases or will they keep going up? Water saving promotions and incentives, would they be coming along with these upgrades.

Similar to option 1, I would be more comfortable if seeing more evidence supporting that in the worst scenario, we won't end up with a much higher bill than what currently forecasted (e.g. \$2500 vs \$2300).

I don't believe this option will have enough impact on environmental issues if it means that the changes to be made to infrastructure will take longer to implement or will add to increased infrastructure costs in the future.



**AI summary**

*While this option may offer short-term financial relief for struggling households, there is concern about long-term affordability and whether future increases will truly be contained. Many call for clearer communication, stronger evidence of projected outcomes, and public education—such as infrastructure tours—to build trust. A 7% annual increase is seen by some as a more acceptable ceiling. Reassurance is needed that essential upgrades like water and sewerage infrastructure will still be delivered, and that environmental goals won't be compromised by delays or underfunding.*

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Not significantly different from Option 1 in terms of impact on bills but dragging out price increases for longer. Still a risk of other factors having additional impact on prices causing bills to continue to increase past PSP6.

Like option 1, finding options to increase the revenue of the Base Option. I don't like making future customers pay to benefit customers now. Be brave and go with the best long-term plan.

8.8% is still a large increase. For a lot of people this will still be unaffordable & a tipping point. A slower 8 yr or 12 yr ramp in costs would be more socially responsible with occasional rate-freezes for relief. Government involvement should be major.

Not realistic about preparing for the future and future generations, we have deferred costs too long and this is the catch-up phase but it will need a big PR sell, and support for those who genuinely cannot meet the extra charges.

I worry with this option that key work will be delayed. But comprehend that this does mean a lesser increase but over a longer period.

It's too safe, it limits income for TasWater and the fixed/variable changes put power back into people. So, they can better work on controlling their usage to help manage bill shock.

Nothing. I feel that the issues faced by TasWater & those serviced by it are already snowballing, and by delaying these issues getting addressed, may give short-term ease for those struggling, but impact them & everyone even more long-term.

I think this option is the most fair to Tasmanians now and in the future. It is the closest in line to wage. and allows things to be adjusted in psp6 if needed. Allows time for variable usage behaviour usage to change to minimize bill shocks.

Understanding more about why we would even choose this option as things could just keep dragging out into the future making it hard to achieve goals.



**Lament it**  
20 - 40%



**AI summary**

*This option is seen by some as fairer and more aligned with household wages, offering stability and time to adjust behaviours, but others see it as delaying necessary action, risking higher long-term costs and infrastructure delays. Many feel 8.8% is still too high for vulnerable households, suggesting a slower ramp-up or government support to ease the burden. There's concern about deferring costs to future users, undermining sustainability, and making it harder to meet essential infrastructure goals. While it provides short-term relief, it's viewed by some as too cautious, requiring strong communication and public support to justify its long-term trade-offs.*



**Loathe it**  
0-20%

User pays, reap what you sow, you dug the hole.

Uncomfortable paying more in 5 and 10 years' time. Might be more appealing if the variable rate was higher than 30-33%, plus if there were incentives for households to save water (e.g. rebates for water saving initiatives).

What this saves in costs to consumers over the period is great but i feel with environmental and economic pressures and changes that we cannot truly predict all possible cost changes so more pressure may be added down the line.

Nothing



**AI summary**

*While some support the "user pays" principle, there is concern about future affordability, especially in 5-10 years' time. The option could be more appealing if it included stronger incentives for water-saving behaviours and a higher variable charge component. Although long-term cost savings are acknowledged, uncertainty around environmental and economic pressures raises doubts about whether future bills will remain stable or increase further.*

## DELIVERING THE MESSAGE

Participants were then asked to consider their best advice to TasWater for delivering the message about the need for a price increase to the wider Tasmanian community.

The group's advice is listed below:

“Investing in Our Future: A 10% Adjustment to Safeguard Tasmania’s Water”. With supporting messages around ensuring aging infrastructure and prepare for climate related challenges.

A highly visible water conservation education program.

A transparent business model - open tours, data, publications.

Allow site visits to the public and education opportunities about what TW does (school visits?)

Average Daily Spend Graph

Avoid maths - talk about the future - what does our environment need? What do our kids deserve?

Base the message on honesty - years of kicking the can down the road.

Be clear about the support that is available right from the start. Don't wait until people are desperate.

Be open about state of existing infrastructure and outdated state / no longer fit for purpose and that money will be used to bring infrastructure up to standard and reduce environmental impact (clear that money will be put to good use and not just for profit).

Be proactive in letting people know help is available and de-stigmatise asking for help.

Community pop-up info and education.

Compare to price increases of 600mL bottle of water at the supermarket compared to our 11.7% (small in comparison).

Comparing water prices to what's happening in other States and how we pay less.

Couple it with incentives for saving water.

Don't sugar coat the need and urgency for works and funds.

Education about environment impact from not upgrading infrastructure etc. - particularly around TW not achieving minimum requirements with the regulator.

Emphasise need for upgrades to reduce environmental impact.

Explain and demonstrate how it will benefit generations to come.

Explain the need and also sell the advantages of saving on your bill by reducing your water usage. explain the need to fix and upgrade the infrastructure.

Explaining that the infrastructure is 70 years old and water leakage is too high. Explain it like collecting water from your roof through rusted pipes.

Facts. Audio. Visual. Ads.

Get the public aware of this before it happens. Emails. Mail notifications. Give facts and reasoning and stats.

Honesty, focusing on fixing what's needed, emphasise the control people will have on their bills with the variable increase, addressing we're below industry standards. And that we are going to invest in Tassie's future.

I suggest that you start with a scope of works beginning with (i) necessary infrastructure repair allocation; (ii) planned (a) potable water (necessary expenditure on existing facilities) and (b) black water treatment; (iii) planned infrastructure to maintain potable water availability and quality; (c) future blackwater treatments and (iii) infrastructure extension works to cater for foreseeable demands (a) residential, (b) commercial and (c) industry - all under the heading of Necessary Works. These then underline or provide a genuine need to raise funds across the whole of Tasmania. Then explain the cost per potable water K/litre and fixed charge rate for the coming PSP.

If I was designing a campaign I would show a child turning on the tap with nothing coming out and asking “mummy why is there no water”? Then I would have her saying “the pipes are broken”. Then go to the facts..

Investment in essential water services

Make the announcement early to educate people (even if it's in general/estimated figures).

Open up the sewerage treatment plants for public tours. I did not know that raw

...continued overleaf

sewerage was going into the river.

Present the case honestly is of vital importance. Maybe incorporates an apology for how long it has taken to fix this infrastructure whilst explaining reasons for repairs being left so long and challenges that TasWater has faced since taking management of our water and sewage supply.

Projected bill cost for next bill based on usage from 12 months ago - help customers visualise how the next bill will be different.

Remind the community how dry Tasmania is (2nd driest in Australia) and how some regional areas have had severe water shortages, need to be more water conscious - visual representations of what people think Tas rivers/lakes look like vs. reality of dry lakes, low water levels.

Rising costs to maintain safe and reliable water services, plus messaging around financial support for those who need it.

Rising costs to maintain water safety and reliable water services, plus financial support for those who need it.

Start projects NOW in many communities so that each community can immediately see where the funds are going.

Talk about having the courage to bite the bullet and finally get the job done.

The real cost of the water based on what they charge e.g. how they lose water, not making a profit and not a for-profit business.

Transparency and honesty and being open about the rationale for the decisions that have been made.



## AI SUMMARY OF THEMES – DELIVERING THE MESSAGE

### 1. Confidence and Courage to Lead

The panel encourages TasWater to stay bold and resolute - leading through any backlash with conviction and clarity for the greater good of Tasmania.

### 2. Community Support and Gratitude

There is heartfelt appreciation for TasWater's openness, responsiveness, and long-term focus. People want the effort to succeed and see the value in the vision.

### 3. Ongoing Community Involvement

Keep the community engaged - before and after decisions are made. Continued consultation, education, and visibility of public input are seen as essential.

### 4. Pride in Tasmania's Leadership Role

There's a strong aspiration for Tasmania to be a national leader in water conservation and infrastructure reform. The panel wants to take pride in this transformation.

### 5. Transparency Builds Trust

Openness about challenges, decisions, and the "why" behind changes builds trust. The clearer the rationale and communication, the more public buy-in there will be.

### 6. Keep Messaging Positive and Inspiring

Uplifting, creative messaging resonates deeply. Phrases like "ride the wave," "stay buoyant," and "no drip" give energy and confidence to the campaign.

### 7. Recognise Public Contributions

There is clear appreciation for TasWater's inclusive approach. The panel feel heard and valued—and want that culture of recognition and feedback to continue.

### 8. Mission for Future Generations

Framing the work as an investment in future Tasmanians and the environment is powerful. People strongly support decisions that safeguard water security for generations to come.



## REFLECTIONS

At the end of the workshop, participants shared a short reflection about their words of encouragement for TasWater as they continue this important work:

Although there will be backlash, you are doing this for the benefit of the Tasmanian community and future generations, and we are grateful.

Be brave. It's for the best.

Be courageous.

Can we be ambassadors for TasWater? :)

Cannot please everyone and be confident with your decision.

Change what you can. Accept what you can't. Moving forward is a lot easier.

Don't let challenges dampen your spirit; just ride the wave and show 'em you're no drip. Stay buoyant, on the home straight.

Get Ian out explaining the need for works! His energy is contagious.

Get it done...Okkkk

Get the community involved. It's about all of us.

Get the community making suggestions on how to save water.

Hayden said something about where Tasmania is with their water compared to the rest of Australia. We want to be leading Australia with water conservation and infrastructure. We need to have some pride in that and get behind the changes we need to make.

I suggest that the TasWater way forward is to give your customers timeframe ownership of TasWater

knowledge in respect to what is happening, what needs to happen and how the fixed charges / per K/litre \$ values are to achieve the critical outcomes.

Just... do it...

Keep consulting with the Tasmanian community (pre and post big decisions).

Look at what you have achieved.

Stay the course. You're safeguarding our future!

Thank you for being so community focused.

Thank you for being so open and sharing your decision-making processes on what is a complex problem.

Thank you for being so open with the panel, be that open with your customers with the upcoming changes. And keep us informed. (as well as your customers)

Thank you for keeping the customer at the heart of everything you do.

Thank you for providing us with your background IP and allowing our input, all the very best for the coming PSP and future.

Thank you for recalling us so that you can hear from the community.

Thanks for looking out for our future.

Thanks Kev...

Very happy that the work will

be done by TasWater to ensure improved water access and sewage treatment not only for Tasmanians today but for future generations and the protection of the environment.

When the public debate gets tough - stay true.

You are on the right track.

You can get more grants, I believe in you.

You have put in the effort to hear from the public and get the community involved. There will be back lash from increasing prices but the majority of Tasmanians enjoy the comfort of water and sewage taken care of. Once they see the effort and changes you are putting in many people will understand. Many people do not understand the challenges you face but as you are more open in what information you disclose they will no longer see water as something that comes out the tap or goes down the drain, it's a lot of resources and effort.

Your 'water is our thing' campaign is fantastic, keep it up!

Your passion comes through.

You're practically making waves with this effort—don't spring a leak now! Paddle through the nonsense and stay current; you're too swell to let anything wash you out. Keep splashing forward.

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## AI SUMMARY OF THEMES – PANEL REFLECTIONS

### 1. Confidence and Courage to Lead

The panel urges TasWater to be bold, stay strong through backlash, and lead with conviction for the greater good.

### 2. Support and Gratitude

There is strong appreciation for TasWater’s transparency, engagement, and long-term vision—people are thankful and want to see the effort succeed.

### 3. Ongoing Community Involvement

People want to stay involved before and after decisions—through consultation, education, and having a voice in what happens next.

### 4. Pride in Tasmania’s Leadership Role

There’s a desire for Tasmania to be seen as a national leader in water conservation and infrastructure improvement—with community pride in that journey.

### 5. Transparency Builds Trust

The more openly you share challenges, timeframes, and financial rationale, the more public understanding and support you’ll earn.

### 6. Keep Messaging Positive and Inspiring

Participants love creative, uplifting communication (“ride the wave,” “no drip,” “keep splashing forward”) and want that energy to continue.

### 7. Recognise Public Contributions

Many comments thank TasWater for listening and incorporating community feedback - emphasising this should remain central to decision-making.

### 8. Mission for Future Generations

There is widespread support for investing in future sustainability, infrastructure, and environmental stewardship - “safeguarding our future.”




# 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 the price path TasWater should propose to the regulator, will be considered as TasWater makes its final amendments. TasWater has promised to update the panel on the outcome of this process and will invite panel members to continue to engage on future topics of 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 Sessions.

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