



Media Release

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## TASMANIAN WATER AND SEWERAGE STATE OF THE INDUSTRY REPORT 2012-13

Tasmania's independent Economic Regulator today released the outcomes of its annual review of the State's urban water and sewerage industry for 2012-13.

Mr Glenn Appleyard, Chairman of the Tasmanian Economic Regulator, said the Report provides "a detailed review of the performance of the industry and provides consumers with an insight into the industry's ongoing capability."

The 2012-13 Report is the sixth in the series and covers the last year of operation of the three regional corporations prior to their amalgamation into TasWater from 1 July 2013.

In 2012-13 the water corporations were focused on addressing compliance issues and improving customer service.

Customer service provided by the corporations during 2012-13 improved in a number of areas including call centre performance and complaints resolution. Typically customers experienced less than 30 minutes of water outages throughout the year and the corporations responded quickly to sewerage service interruptions.

Mr Appleyard said that "It was pleasing to see a halving of the percentage of Tasmanians receiving poor quality drinking water in 2012-13 compared to 2011-12". However, Tasmania still lags behind the rest of Australia.

The Report identifies that, whilst there was an increase in the detection of water contamination from, for example, heavy metals, and an increase in the number of dams in higher hazard categories, this largely reflects the identification of pre-existing issues through improvements in compliance monitoring and risk assessment processes.

In 2012-13 price reforms started to move customers towards the real cost of providing water and sewerage services, with users paying charging for water applied across the State. However, further changes are still required to achieve equitable water and sewerage pricing in Tasmania.

Tasmania's wastewater treatment plants continued to perform poorly in terms of the compliance of treated wastewater discharged into the environment. Mr Appleyard said that "Delays to major infrastructure upgrades and maintenance works has limited any progress towards compliance improvements, with disappointing performance evident in this area".

Mr Appleyard noted that "whilst there was only a slight increase in the number of customers on hardship programs, their debt levels average two years' worth of water and sewerage charges."

The future sustainability of the industry and improvements in compliance will largely depend on TasWater's ability to successfully operate and manage the State's water and sewerage infrastructure within the confines of available funds and resources.

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Copies of the State of the Industry Report  
are available at:

[www.economicregulator.tas.gov.au](http://www.economicregulator.tas.gov.au)

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