

Dear Tas. Economic Regulator/ Tas Water,

I am making this submission as there as been an ongoing dispute between myself and Southern/ Tas Water for some time, regarding Water Service Charges imposed on our 14 Unit, Strata-Titled Property.

- In the beginning, the Body Corporate was given **ambiguous or unclear information** by Southern Water as to what we would be charged, collectively and individually as customers. There were all sorts of confusing calculations and logic that were hard to follow, including 'targets', 'what was charged before' (by HCC) etc etc.
- The Body Corporate **had** to make a decision by a certain date, as Southern Water was implementing metering.
- The Body Corporate elected for **one on-site meter into our 40 mm main and did not take-up the option of sub-metering.**
- At that same meeting we decided to allocate (information for billing purposes to Southern Water) **equal unit entitlements per household.**
- The **Water use charge** for the site **has subsequently been divided equally** between all households, including common areas - which we are all responsible for.
- **However**, I believe that the **Water service charge has not been divided correctly**, and that we **have been and still are well-overcharged** for the service fee:
- To explain: For a 40 mm line and meter onto the site, the annual fee is e.g. \$1223.88 (for 2014/15). **That cost should be divided equally between all unit holders** (as currently agreed by us), which would make it $\$1223.88/14 = \mathbf{\$87.42\ p.a\ per\ household\ p.a.}$. [Note, the equal, or one unit division amongst households can, I believe, be changed by the Body Corporate, and TasWater would then be advised and billing changed accordingly].
- **This is far less than what we are all currently being charged** i.e. \$236.68 p.a. per household.

As an example:

Currently we have **one Aurora connection on-site**, for which the body-corporate is charged **one network fee** and the **total amount of power used on-site**. That meter is read by Aurora. The power used is individually metered at each house, but that is not read by Aurora, it is read by our own internal electricity meter-man. Thus each household pays the one Network Service Fee divided by the number of households i.e. 14, and their individual power use as read by us. It works well, except that we do not get off-peak power, pension discounts etc.

The changes that need to be made are:

- As we have only **one connection of Water on-site**, the **Service fee should be divided by 14** in order for TasWater to individually bill us.
- **All householders on-site need to be reimbursed** for being overcharged since Southern Water took-over from Hobart City Council in 2012?
- **To be fairer to individual households regarding Water use**, and especially those that have implemented water-saving measures or complement their water use with collected rainwater, internally, we could elect to implement individual household and common area sub-metering. These would not need to be read by Southern Water, but by us, as we do for electricity.
- **Sub-meters of approved brand/ standard could be listed for individual purchase.** It would be up to the householder to arrange installation - it would be nothing to do

with TasWater, except insofar as changing individual billing to reflect any sub-metering - that is if TasWater continues to bill households individually. **Any or all households should have sub-metering option available.**

- **TasWater should change their billing** to send, as Aurora, **one bill to the Body Corporate**, who would then send out individual bills to households according to *our own* agreed unit entitlement and any internal sub-metering arrangements.
- **Can the same sort of division of Sewage service charge** can be implemented also ?
- *Note:* part of the idea of living in this Strata-titled arrangement, with smaller than normal households, is to save money on infrastructure costs, especially when we can implement them ourselves. This includes billing arrangements.
- I will continue to fight this until an agreement is come to. As far as TasWater is concerned, we only have one, 40 mm main onto our site. Billing and infrastructure beyond that meter is up to us as landowners and householders.
- **Concessions** for pensioners and validated low-income earners (who require a Centrelink card) should continue to apply.
- **Those people who implement water-saving measures including rainwater use, could be rewarded** - perhaps not only by a reduced Water use measurement and bill, but perhaps by some sort of permanent concession as an offset to the individuals cost of implementation, as this reduces TasWaters long-term infrastructure needs and water use.

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