

105,000 regional water customers to benefit from water pricing review

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Water

Over 100,000 regional water customers will see closer monitoring of their water businesses by the state's economic regulator over the next two years as new pricing decisions are developed. The process will encourage better performance and development of water services in rural areas.

The release of pricing guidance papers for Western Water, South Gippsland Water and Goulburn Murray Water (which supports the nation's largest irrigation network) outline the information the three businesses must supply for the regulator to make a decision on prices to apply in their service area from 1 July 2020.

Businesses are required to submit their pricing proposals to the commission in November next year.

Price monitoring and regulation director Marcus Crudden says the shorter-than-average pricing review cycle is based on a need to monitor these businesses due to unprecedented growth and other challenges.

'We're working with South Gippsland Water to ensure their pricing process aligns more closely to the majority of Victorian water businesses.

'While the focus with Western Water is to ensure they're equipped to address unprecedented growth in their service area of Sunbury, Melton, Bacchus Marsh, the Macedon Ranges and surrounds,' he said.

The commission will release its draft pricing decisions for these businesses in March 2020.

Earlier in 2018, the commission completed price decisions for the majority of the state's water businesses [using a new framework](#) designed to get better value for customers.

Mr Crudden says the key principles of the new framework will continue to apply.

'We expect all three businesses to meet the high standard required under the framework,' he said.

Key information on the three water businesses

Goulburn Murray Water is Australia's largest rural water corporation, serving around 25,000 customers across a region stretching over 68,000 square kilometres from the Great Dividing Range to the River Murray, and Corryong in the east down river to Nyah.

Western Water has just over 60,000 customers. It covers 3,000 square kilometres taking in Sunbury, Melton, Bacchus Marsh, the Macedon Ranges and surrounds.

One of the state's smallest water businesses, South Gippsland Water has around 20,000 customers located across 4,000 square kilometres and including Foster, Fish Creek, Waratah Bay, Leongatha, Port Franklin, Port Albert, Cape Paterson and Wilsons Promontory.

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