

Greater Western Water – Outcomes – 2024-2028

In this document, the water business provides a summary report of its actual performance against each of its outcome commitments for the 2024-2025 reporting year, and an update on its performance so far in the current regulatory period. The business has given itself a “traffic light” rating (green = met target, red = not met, yellow = close or largely met) against each measure. The Customer Forum provided a rating against each outcome and overall. The business and the Customer Forum have both provided comments about performance on each outcome.

Summary table

Outcome	24-25	25-26	26-27	27-28	Overall for the period to date
1. Your water is safe, consistent and resilient	Yellow	Grey	Grey	Grey	Yellow
2. When things go wrong, we fix them	Yellow	Grey	Grey	Grey	Yellow
3. We support our diverse communities and customers	Yellow	Grey	Grey	Grey	Yellow
4. We enable growth and help businesses thrive	Yellow	Grey	Grey	Grey	Yellow
5. We heal and care for Country	Green	Grey	Grey	Grey	Green
Overall, for reporting year	Yellow	Grey	Grey	Grey	Yellow

Business comments

Greater Western Water (GWW) is a Victorian Government water corporation. We provide water and recycled water supply, sewerage and trade waste services to more than 598,000 residential customers and more than 55,200 business customers.

GWW operates across 3,700 square kilometres stretching from Melbourne's central business district (CBD) and inner suburbs to Little River in the south, Myrniong in the west and Lancefield in the north.

Our service area covers the local government areas (LGAs) of Brimbank, Hobsons Bay, Maribyrnong, Melton, Moonee Valley, Wyndham and Yarra, and partially covers the LGAs of Hume, Macedon Ranges, Melbourne and Moorabool.

We operate in Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung, Wadawurrung, Taungurung, Djaara, and Bunurong Country.

This is our fourth year operating as GWW and the first of four years reporting on the aligned customer outcomes established through the 2024 price submission.

Our operating environment

This year we continued to deliver safe, reliable water and sewerage services across our service region. Alongside providing essential services, we were focused on fixing our new billing and payments system, which caused significant delays and disruptions to key services our customers rely on.

Some customers experienced delayed bills and others had problems getting the information they needed to sell or connect a property. Delays to bills meant some of our customers' bills covered a longer period and so were higher than normal. When customers tried to contact us to work through these problems our systems struggled to keep up, causing long wait times and an understandable decline in customers' satisfaction with us.

Our customer outcomes and approach

Greater Western Water established our first set of aligned customer outcomes established through the 2024 price submission.

For the first time, while we provided data and a self-assessment against the measures which track each outcome, this year our Customer Forum assessed our performance at the outcome level and overall. This involved them providing commentary against each outcome, as well as selecting the traffic light ratings. This report publishes their honest feedback and assessment, without changes from us, offering an impartial overview of our progress.

This is part of our commitment to transparent and honest engagement with our customers that helps ensure our decisions better reflect our customers' and communities' values.

Our Customer Forum assessed that we largely met (amber rating) our targets for four outcomes, and we fully met (green rating) targets in one outcome area. The Customer Forum's assessment of our performance overall was largely met (amber).

Outcome 1: Your water is safe, consistent and resilient

Output		Unit		23-24	24-25	25-26	26-27	27-28
a	Compliance with water quality standards and regulations (Safe Drinking Water Regulations and Australian Drinking Water Guidelines)	Number of non-compliance incidents	Target	-	0	0	0	0
			Actual	0	0			
b	Customer satisfaction with our water quality from those who contacted GWW in past 12 months via monthly satisfaction survey of customers who have interacted with us (customers rating satisfaction of 7 or higher out of 10).	Percentage	Target	-	>85%	>85%	>85%	>85%
			Actual	82%	78%			
c	Number of customers receiving more than four unplanned water supply interruptions in a year	Number	Target	-	<270	<270	<270	<270
			Actual	149	122			
d	Number of residential customer sewer supply interruptions (excludes interruptions due to faults in customers' pipes). 'Interruptions' relate to any interruption to your service, for example blockages.	Number	Target	-	<3,100	<3,100	<3,100	<3,100
			Actual	3274	3793			

How is Greater Western Water tracking for outcome 1 in the regulatory period so far?

Business comment

Overall, for Outcome 1 the Customer Forum rated our performance as largely met, representing a mixed performance across measures.

At all times throughout 2024-25, the water quality across our entire service area was compliant with the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines [1a].

However, customer satisfaction with water quality did not meet our target this year [1b].

We met our target for customers receiving more than four unplanned water supply interruptions [1c]. This was in part due to interventions to minimise the impact of multiple unplanned interruptions to customers.

The hotter summer caused drier ground conditions, resulting in ground movement and increased stress on the sewer network. This contributed to an increase in blockages, which meant we did not meet our target for the number of residential sewer interruptions [1d].

Customer Forum statement:

GWW has made good progress, especially with water quality, and most forum members agree with the assessment despite some challenges. However, there are concerns about sewer maintenance, with many recommending more proactive preventative measures. Some forum members felt that customer complaints should be better separated from billing issues, and that improvements could be made in better understanding customer satisfaction, particularly in how problems are measured. Overall, GWW has made an effort but should focus on improving sewer maintenance and refining how they track and address customer concerns.

GWW improvement actions:

We are strengthening the way we listen and respond to customers by including clearer satisfaction measures in our regular customer perception surveys. This will help us hear from a wider range of customers, including those who haven't contacted us directly. It will build a fuller picture of what's working well and where we need to improve to meet expectations. These changes will support more meaningful conversations with our customers and communities.

While we would typically expect a reduction in interruptions in our sewerage network during the cooler, wetter months, current forecasts suggest dry conditions may continue. Considering this, we are shifting to more frequent analysis of sewer network performance, creating a heatmap to understand where interruptions happen and why. This information will help us prioritise resources and activities, such as CCTV and clean programs, and consider different approaches if trends continue or escalate.

Outcome 2: When things go wrong, we fix them

Output		Unit		23-24	24-25	25-26	26-27	27-28
a	Average time to fix a burst or leak in our main or trunk infrastructure (priority 1), so there is no longer a risk to the quality of the water supply, service, or to infrastructure	Minutes	Target	-	<465	<465	<465	<465
			Actual	460	476			
b	Average time from notification to fix all reported sewer blockages/spills, so there is no longer risk of damage to infrastructure or service levels	Minutes	Target	-	<117	<117	<117	<117
			Actual	126	121			
c	Percentage of unplanned water supply interruptions restored within five hours	Percentage	Target	-	>95 %	>95 %	>95 %	>95 %
			Actual	89%	92%			
d	Overall customer satisfaction of those who contact GWW in past 12 months via monthly satisfaction survey for customers who have interacted with us (customers rating satisfaction of 7 or higher out of 10)	Percentage	Target	-	>80 %	>80 %	>80 %	>80 %
			Actual	74%	50%			

How is Greater Western Water tracking for outcome 2 in the regulatory period so far?

Business comment

Overall, for Outcome 2 the Customer Forum rated our performance as largely met, representing a mixed performance across the measures.

We slightly missed our targets for time to fix water and sewer faults[2a][2b]. This was mainly due to an increase in the number of faults, which placed extra pressure on available resources and extended response times in some areas.

The same pressures contributed to below target results for the percentage of unplanned water supply interruptions fixed within five hours [2c].

Understandably, ongoing challenges with our billing and payments system had a direct impact on customers' overall satisfaction with us, with results falling well below target [2d]. Challenges included delayed bills and trouble getting property information, as well as extended wait times as we struggled to meet high call volumes.

Customer Forum statement:

GWW has almost met the reasonable targets with respect to average time to fix a burst main and the average time to fix a sewer blockage, with improvements to be made by employing and training more local GWW employees. Unplanned interruptions are also very close to the target of under 5 hours for rectification. The problem area is a woeful overall customer satisfaction, the majority of which is linked to the issues with the billing system which should remain a key area of focus till satisfaction improves.

GWW improvement actions:

We are expanding our in-house maintenance teams, opening new depots and establishing a dedicated engineering function. This will improve response times, efficiency and service reliability and deliver faster, more consistent repairs across our region. We'll continue to work with specialist contractors where needed to support our teams to respond effectively to maintenance challenges.

We are focused on improving customers' experience when they interact with us. To make it easier for our customers to get the help they need, we have employed extra customer service staff to reduce call wait times and call abandonment rates. We are improving our complaint resolution process and stabilising our online self-service platform.

We have added a dedicated leader and team focused on fixing our billing delays and payment issues and making improvements that matter most to our customers.

Outcome 3: We support our diverse communities and customers

Output		Unit		23-24	24-25	25-26	26-27	27-28
a	Number of open space assets irrigated with alternative water to support greening for community wellbeing.	Number	Target	-	-	206	-	226
			Actual	185	197			
b	Customer satisfaction that our prices for our services represents value for money via monthly satisfaction survey for customers who have interacted with us (customers rating satisfaction of 7 or higher out of 10)	Percentage	Target	-	>60%	>60%	>60%	>60%
			Actual	61%	43%			
c	Total value of hardship grants awarded to customers (\$)	\$	Target	-	\$307.2K p/a*	\$300K p/a	\$300K p/a	\$300K p/a
			Actual	\$178,636	\$80,924			

* Indexed for inflation at 2.4%

How is Greater Western Water tracking for outcome 3 in the regulatory period so far?

Business comment

Overall, for Outcome 3 the Customer Forum rated our performance as largely met, representing mixed performance across the measures.

We connected 12 new open spaces to an alternative water source, including Werribee Open Range Zoo, school grounds and reserves. This helped us achieve our 2030 strategic goal of 'enabling use of alternative water in the region to increase green open spaces and improve public amenity', and exceed our customer outcome target [3a].

Issues with our billing and payment system caused longer billing periods and higher bills for many customers. This had an understandable impact on customers' perception that our prices represent value for money [3b].

We were well below target for total value of hardship grants awarded to customers [3c]. However, across the reporting period we provided an extra \$2.9 million in other forms of financial support to customers to help them manage bill shock resulting from billing and payment system issues. We also helped customers access more than \$1.7 million in Victorian Government Utility Relief Grants.

Customer Forum statement:

While GWW has made considerable efforts to meet targets, challenges like billing issues and barriers to accessing hardship grants have impacted performance. The successful use of alternative water for irrigation to support community greening efforts is a key achievement. Improvements are needed in customer satisfaction, especially around hardship grants and clear communication, with a focus on overcoming barriers to access.

GWW improvement actions:

We are communicating with customers to help them understand their bill and increase awareness of the full range of services we provide. This includes plain-language bill explainers, content across the variety of channels our customers rely on, and tailored outreach to vulnerable and culturally and linguistically diverse communities. This work will help customers better understand where their money goes and make it easier for them to access the hardship support and services available.

We are continuing extended call centre hours and customer care days across our service area to offer more support to customers to get access to the help they need.

Outcome 4: We enable growth and help businesses thrive

Output			Unit		23-24	24-25	25-26	26-27	27-28
a	Business customer satisfaction with responses to enquires and complaints via monthly survey of customers who have interacted with us (customers rating satisfaction of 7 or higher out of 10)	Percentage	Target		-	65%	65%	65%	65%
				Actual	55%	36%			
b	Volume of recycled water delivered for agricultural uses	Volume of recycled water	Target		-	>3,500 ML	>4,500 ML	>5,000 ML	>5,000 ML
				Actual	4,714 ML	5,656 ML			
c	Pressure and flow information applications processed within five business days	Percentage	Target		-	>95%	>95%	>95%	>95%
				Actual	97%	99%			
d	Standard new customer contribution applications processed within 45 business days	Percentage	Target		-	>95%	>95%	>95%	>95%
				Actual	100%	99%			
e	Standard plumbing applications completed within 8 business days	Percentage	Target		-	40%	50%	65%	80%
				Actual	30%*	24%			

*Note the 2023-24 result noted is for the central region (former City West Water) only.

How is Greater Western Water tracking for outcome 4 in the regulatory period so far?

Business comment

Overall, for Outcome 4 the Customer Forum rated our performance as largely met, representing mixed performance across the measures.

Understandably, ongoing challenges with our billing and payments system had a direct impact on business customers' overall satisfaction with us [4a]. Challenges included delayed bills and trouble getting property information, as well as extended wait times as we struggled to meet high call volumes.

Our supply of recycled water for agricultural uses was well above target [4b]. We were able to deliver on a substantial increase in demand after an extended dry start to 2025. Recycled water played a critical role in sustaining agricultural operations across our service region.

Targets for processing of pressure and flow applications were met [4c].

Processing of new customer contributions was also on target [4d], a key measure to service the sustained rates of urban development and growth across our region.

Various challenges impacted our performance against targets for processing standard plumbing applications [4e], including new processes relating to the billing and payments system implementation. However, results in the second half of this reporting period show a steady improvement, with most months achieving the eight-day target.

Customer Forum statement:

Overall, most measures were met, but GWW still faces challenges in responding to enquiries, clearing the backlog of pending applications, and addressing customer satisfaction concerns. While the delivery of recycled water is a positive environmental impact, improvements are needed in customer satisfaction data collection methods and understanding the root causes of dissatisfaction to enhance the overall customer experience.

GWW improvement actions:

We are bringing together our business customer teams to support an improvement in business customer interaction with us. In the short-term, we expect increases in our call centre capacity to improve our business customers' satisfaction with our response to their enquiries.

We will continue our dedicated program to improve the way we service developers and related applications. We are seeing system and process improvements, and this progress gives us confidence in stronger results next year.

Outcome 5: We heal and care for Country

Output		Unit		23-24	24-25	25-26	26-27	27-28
a	Proportion of beneficial reuse of biosolids (a mix of water and organic materials that are the by-product of the sewage treatment process that can be used as fertiliser, power production and landscaping) from our treatment plants	Percentage	Target	-	>90%	>90%	>90%	>90%
			Actual	101%	101%			
b	The number of EPA-notifiable sewer spills	Count/number of spills	Target	-	<13	<13	<13	<13
			Actual	20	34			
c	Tonnes of CO ₂ equivalent emissions	Tonnes CO ₂ e	Target	-	<27,586	<27,586*	<27,586*	<27,586*
			Actual	33,000	27,585			
d	Deliver actions outlined in our Reconciliation Action Plan	Percentage of RAP actions delivered	Target	-	80%	To be developed	To be developed	To be developed
			Actual	On track	80%			
e	Development and implementation of our Traditional Owner Water Program	Project milestones	Target	-	On track (co-design program)	On track (projects initiated)	To be developed	To be developed
			Actual	On track (program developed)	On track			

How is Greater Western Water tracking for outcome 5 in the regulatory period so far?

Business comment

Overall, for Outcome 5 the Customer Forum rated our performance as met, representing good performance across most measures.

Beneficial reuse of biosolids from our treatment plants was above 100% due to re-use of stockpiles accumulated from previous years [5a].

Our Environment Protection Authority (EPA) notifiable sewer spills did not meet our target [5b]. This was due to a combination of factors, including increased blockages from fats, debris and wet wipes, and tree root intrusions caused by dry conditions.

GWW's Statement of Obligations and 2030 Strategy commit us to achieve net zero emissions by 2030. We continue to deliver on this commitment by meeting targets this reporting period [5c].

Development and implementation of our first Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) has been a core focus for us since inception. We will complete our inaugural RAP shortly after this reporting period (August 2025) and we are on track to meet this related target [5d].

We are also on track for development of our Traditional Owner Water Program, with all but one program agreement signed off this reporting period [5e].

Customer Forum statement:

GWW has made good progress in meeting key targets, particularly in engaging with and advancing the Traditional Owner Water Program. However, the significant number of sewer spills remains a concern and it is recommended for GWW to work towards reducing this. Continued focus on preventative measures and detailed action plans for reducing CO2 emissions, rather than only using carbon offsets, will be essential for long-term success.

GWW improvement actions:

We have started a new CCTV and sewer cleaning program to reduce blockages in commercial areas linked to inadequate grease trap maintenance. We will continue to monitor our sewer network performance and our preventative maintenance and condition monitoring programs.

We are implementing our Net Zero Strategy, defining the framework and actions we will take to reach our commitment of net zero Scope 1 and 2 emissions by 2030. By the end of 2025, GWW will source 100% renewable electricity, reducing our carbon emissions by two-thirds.