



HUNTER WATER STAKEHOLDER ADVISORY FORUM

16 June 2026



OPERATIONAL UPDATE

Jennifer Hayes, Managing Director

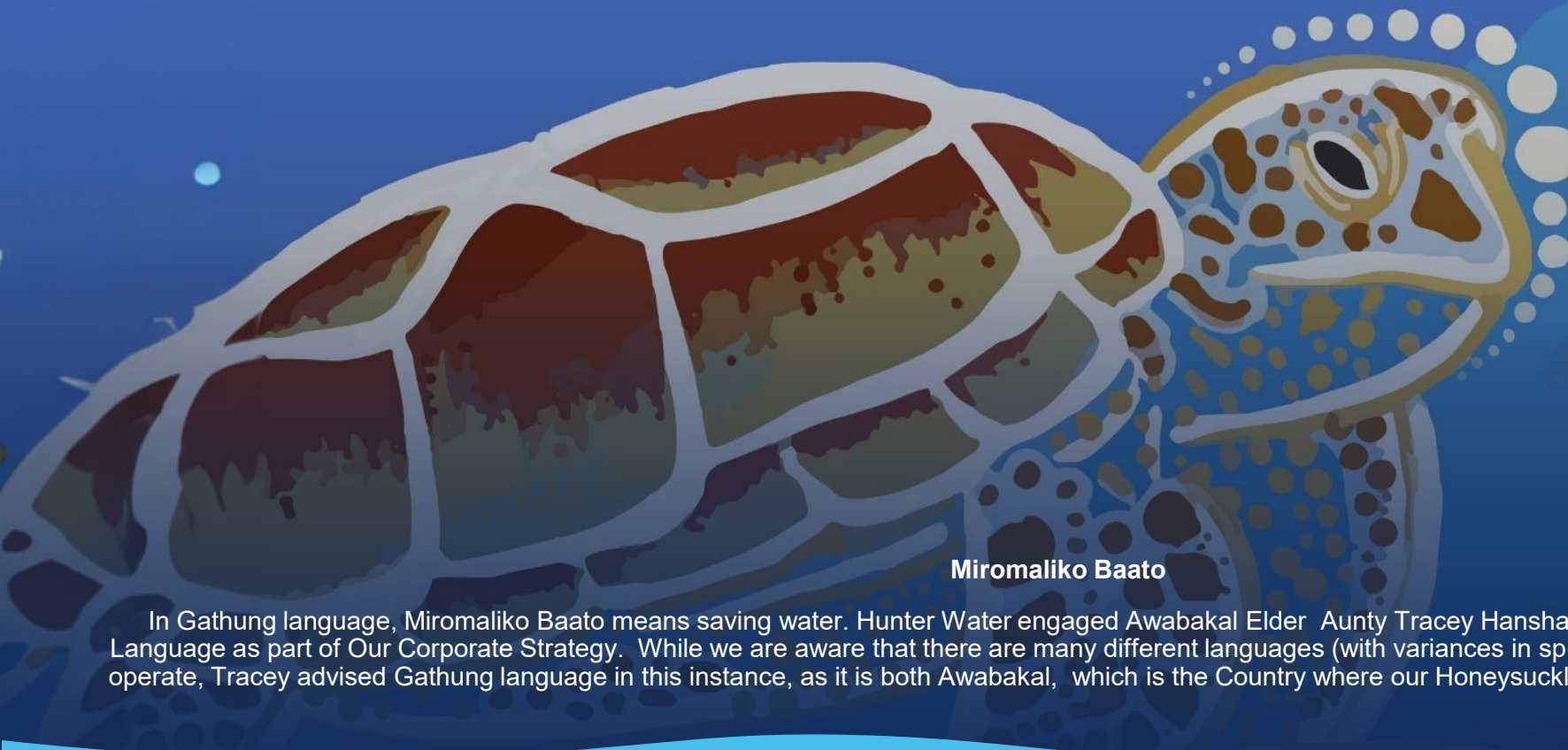
JUNE 2026

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY



Hunter Water acknowledges the Traditional Countries of the Awabakal, Darkinjung, Geawegal, Wonnarua and Worimi peoples and the Countries on which we operate and beyond where our water flows.

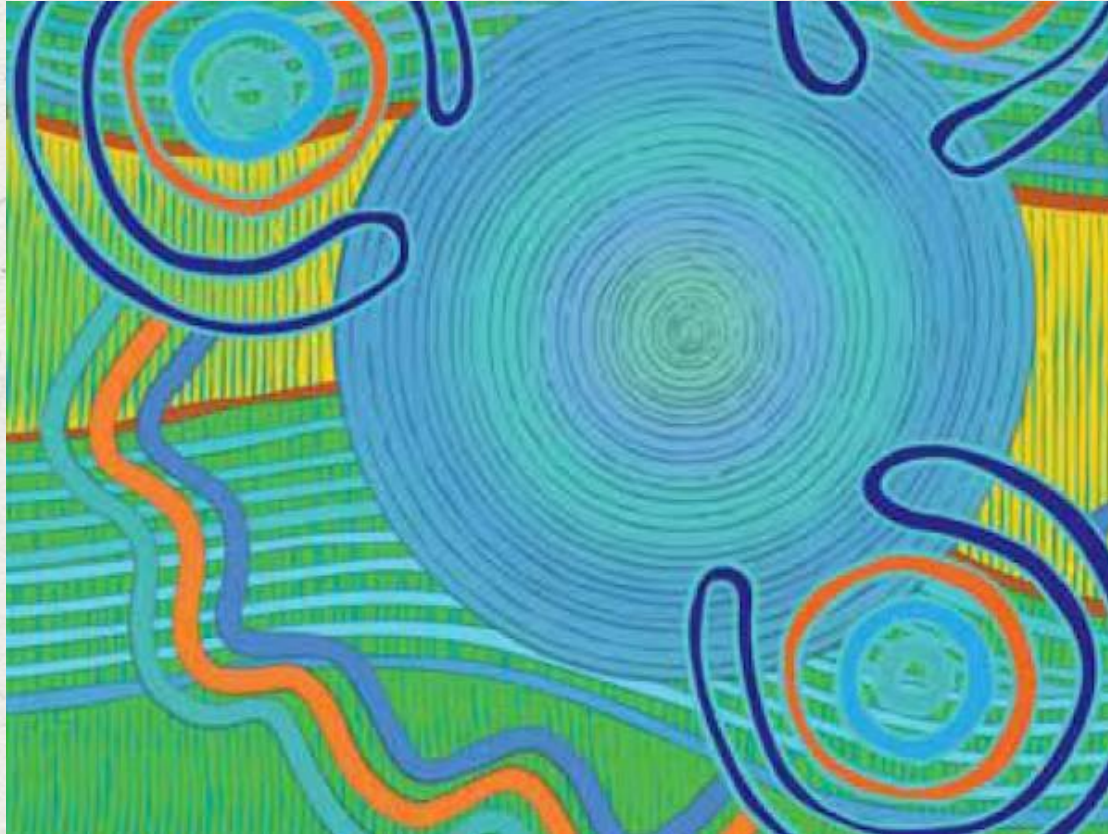
We recognise and respect the cultural heritage, beliefs and continuing connection to the lands and waters of our Traditional Custodians and pay respect to their Elders past, present and emerging.



Miromaliko Baato

In Gathung language, Miromaliko Baato means saving water. Hunter Water engaged Awabakal Elder Aunty Tracey Hanshaw to help us incorporate Aboriginal Language as part of Our Corporate Strategy. While we are aware that there are many different languages (with variances in spelling) from the Countries on which we operate, Tracey advised Gathung language in this instance, as it is both Awabakal, which is the Country where our Honeysuckle office lies, and overlaps into Worimi.

LAUNCH OF OUR CULTURAL PROTOCOL GUIDELINE



Respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, their cultures and their connection to Country is fundamental to Hunter Water's values and operations.

Our newly-updated **Cultural Protocol Guideline** provides a clear framework for respectful engagement, supporting culturally safe practices and helping us strengthen relationships with communities through trust, integrity and ongoing learning.

This work is part of our broader commitment to reconciliation and ensuring our decisions and actions reflect the communities we serve.

CURRENT DRINKING WATER STORAGES

70.4%
AS AT 15 JUN 26



Grahamstown
Dam



STORAGE LEVEL

63.3%

115,363 ML

↑ 0.2% 1 WEEK AGO

↑ 5.3% 1 MONTH AGO

↓ 18.5% 1 YEAR AGO

MAXIMUM CAPACITY

182,305 ML

Tomago
Sandbeds



STORAGE LEVEL

76.5%

41,313 ML

↓ 1.2% 1 WEEK AGO

↑ 9.5% 1 MONTH AGO

↓ 23.5% 1 YEAR AGO

MAXIMUM CAPACITY

54,000 ML

Chichester
Dam



STORAGE LEVEL

99.6%

18,280 ML

↑ 0.5% 1 WEEK AGO

↑ 38.4% 1 MONTH AGO

↓ 0.4% 1 YEAR AGO

MAXIMUM CAPACITY

18,356 ML

Anna Bay
Sandbeds



STORAGE LEVEL

100.0%

14,537 ML

0.0% 1 WEEK AGO

↑ 0.5% 1 MONTH AGO

0.0% 1 YEAR AGO

MAXIMUM CAPACITY

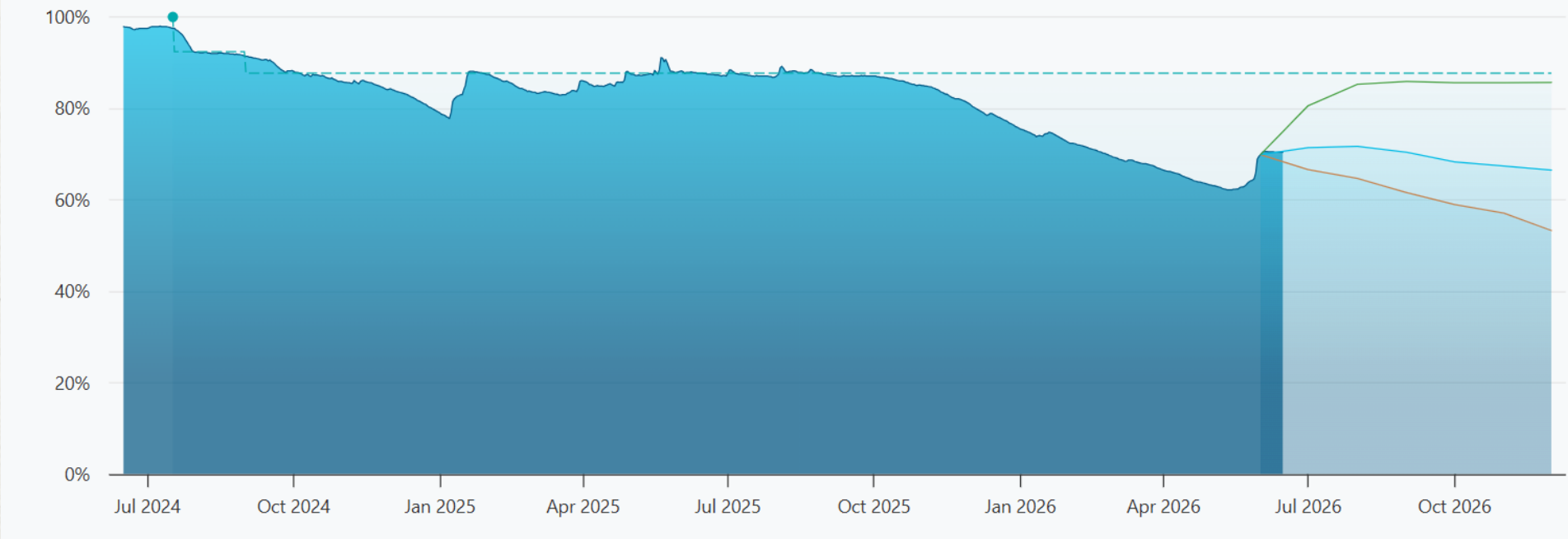
14,537 ML

HISTORICAL STORAGE LEVELS AND OUTLOOK



Historical water storage levels

AS AT 15 JUNE 2026



----- Dashed line represents interim top water level. In mid 2024, we progressively reduced the top water level at Grahamstown Dam to 82% storage capacity to reduce the risk to the community near the dam in the event of an earthquake that damages the dam's embankments.

FINNAN PARK PLAYGROUND REMOVAL



- Finnan Park playground equipment, owned by Hunter Water, has recently been removed.
- A 2025 safety assessment found the equipment has reached the end of its serviceable life and is no longer safe for use.
- We recognise that the playground has been valued by many in the community
- Hunter Water does not operate playgrounds as part of its core services. In addition, upcoming major **dam safety works at Grahamstown Dam** mean reinstating the playground is not viable at this time.
- Nearby facilities, including picnic tables, barbecues and toilets, will remain open.
- Hunter Water is working with Port Stephens Council to explore opportunities to support and enhance recreational and play facilities in the local area.

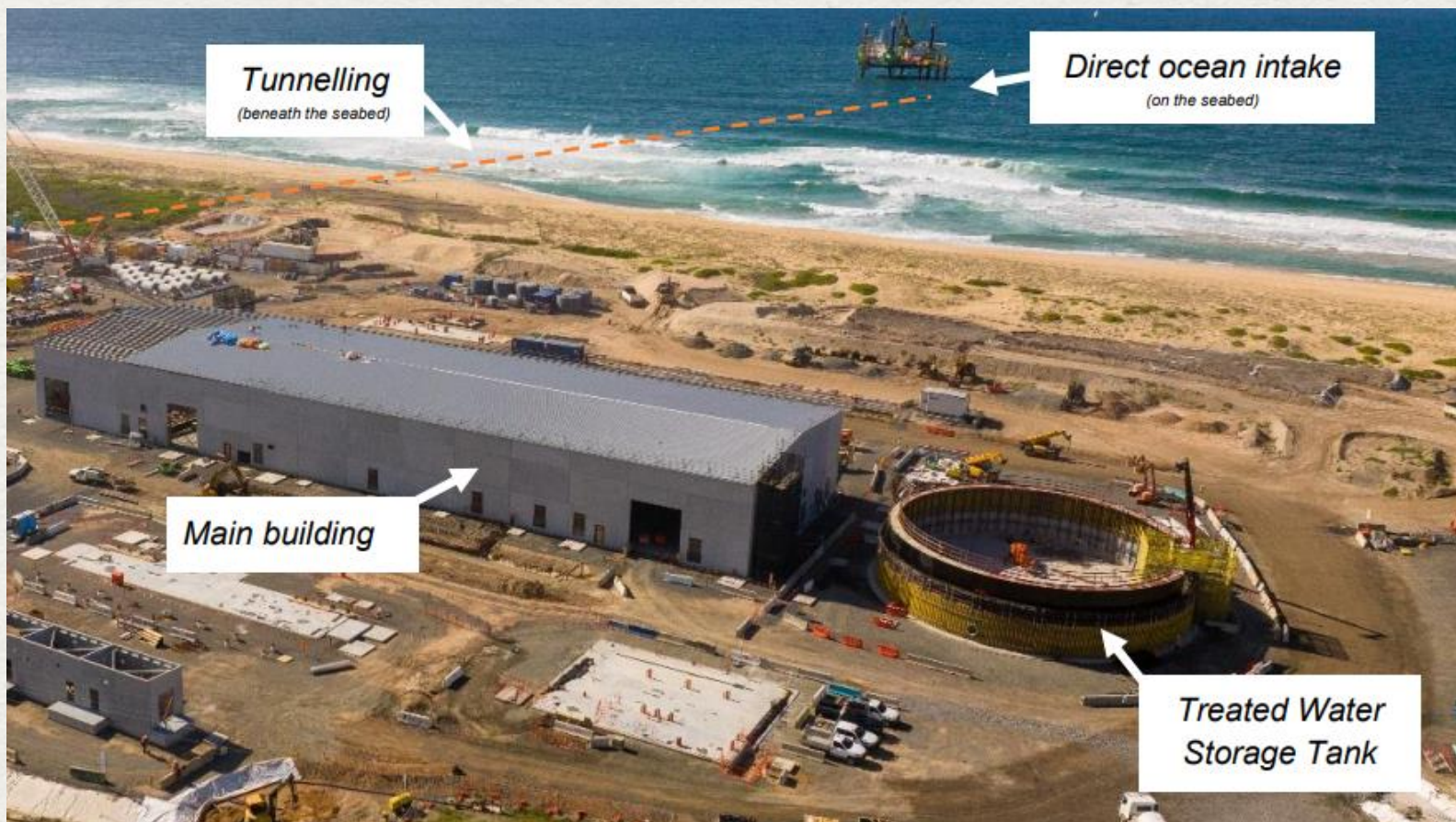


POWERFUL OWL TAKES FLIGHT ON ARCADIA VALE RESERVOIR



- Hunter Water's upgraded Arcadia Vale reservoir has been transformed into a striking piece of public art, celebrating local wildlife and strengthening connections with the community
- Refurbishment works completed in late 2025 have extended the reservoir's life, ensuring safe, high-quality drinking water for decades to come.
- The mural marks the completion of renewal works at Arcadia Vale, part of a broader program to strengthen water security and support the region's growth
- Artwork created by local muralist Jordan Lucky from Playstate

BELMONT DESALINATION CONSTRUCTION UPDATE – MARINE WORKS



- **Tunnelling is continuing 24/7** and is designed to be very quiet, so we don't expect nearby residents to hear it.
- **Marine construction works increased to 24/7 operation on 1 June.** Marine works may be more noticeable at times, but we are working to keep noise impacts low.
- Offshore, the tunnel boring machine is getting closer to breaking through into the intake caissons.
- Once the tunnel boring machine breaks through the caisson and is recovered, the dome roof will be installed on the direct ocean intake structure.



QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION



DROUGHT PREPAREDNESS

for community and business

SAF; JUNE 2026

WHAT IS DROUGHT ?

“Drought is a prolonged dry period in the natural climate cycle that can occur anywhere in the world. It is a slow-onset disaster characterized by the lack of precipitation, **resulting in a water shortage.**” – WHO

Tiddalik the Greedy Frog: . Tiddalik a giant frog who was overcome by an unquenchable thirst and drank all the water from the rivers and creeks.

The Federation Drought from 1895 to 1903 (8 years) was the worst drought ever recorded in Australia, post colonisation. During the drought Australia lost more than 40 per cent of its cattle, and it took 50 years for sheep numbers to recover.

HUNTER
WATER



Different phases of natural cycles occur at different times for different durations.



**DROUGHT IS A NATURAL PROCESS,
IT HAS ALWAYS BEEN PART OF OUR
LOCAL LANDSCAPE**

WE CAN'T CONTROL THE WEATHER...



.....but we have been changing it.

While drought cycles have always been part of natural processes. We are seeing changes in our climate.

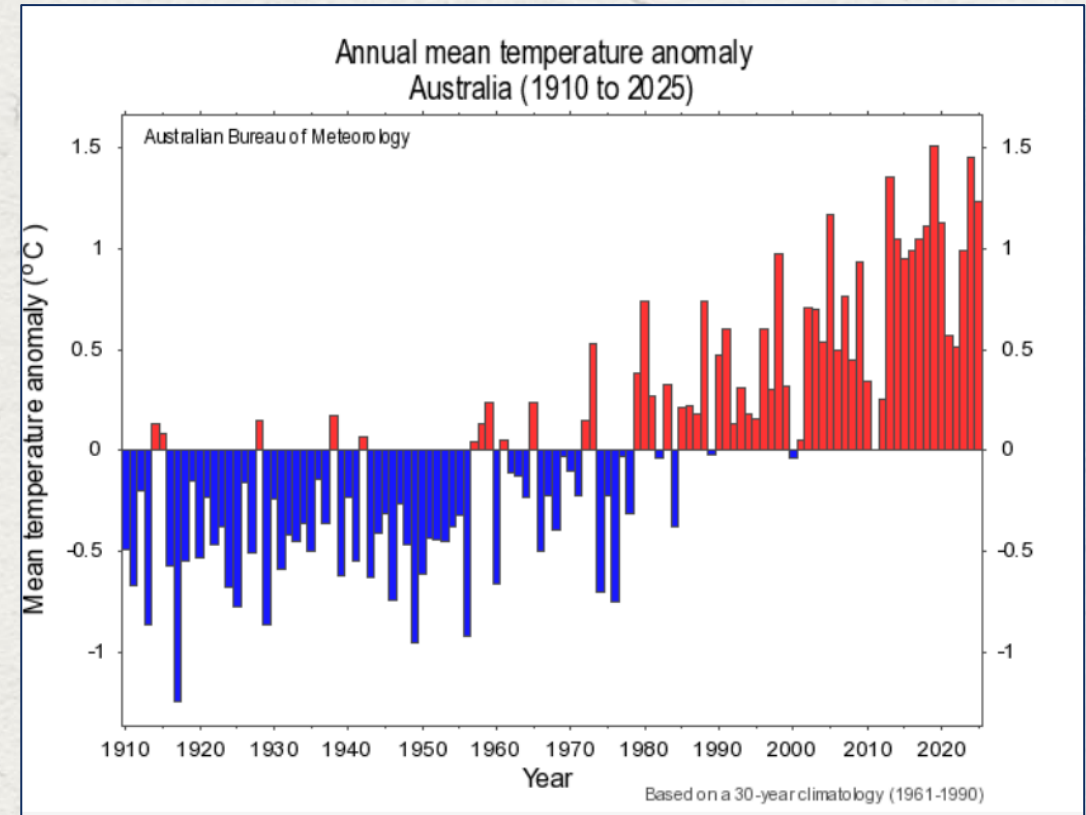
→ Sea temperatures increase = changes in currents

→ Air temperatures increase = holds more moisture

We are headed for more unpredictability, against a very small (since colonisation) weather dataset.

A little change can create large impacts – for every 1°C increase in air temperature, the air can hold 7% more moisture.

More water held in the atmosphere can create more intense rain events, but ALSO makes the air 'thirstier' enabling it to take up and hold more water, intensifying droughts.



HOW IS 'DROUGHT' DEFINED?...



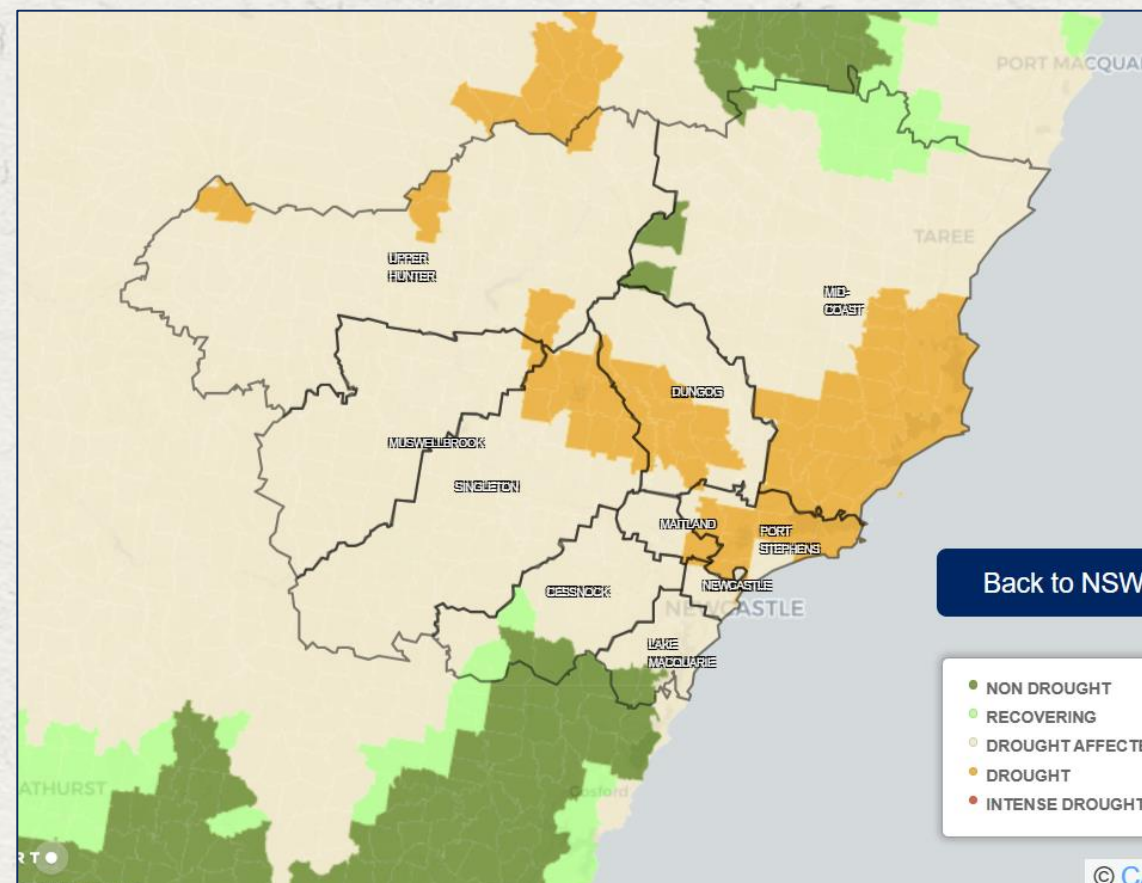
.....differently

“prolonged dry periodresulting in a water shortage.” – WHO

The Bureau of Meteorology has different types of drought.

NSW Government, DPI uses 'Combined Drought Indicators' and publishes drought maps of which regions are experienced drought conditions.

It is important to note that as part of the National Drought Agreement, 2024 - 2029, government doesn't 'declare' drought.



HOW DO WE MEASURE DROUGHT?

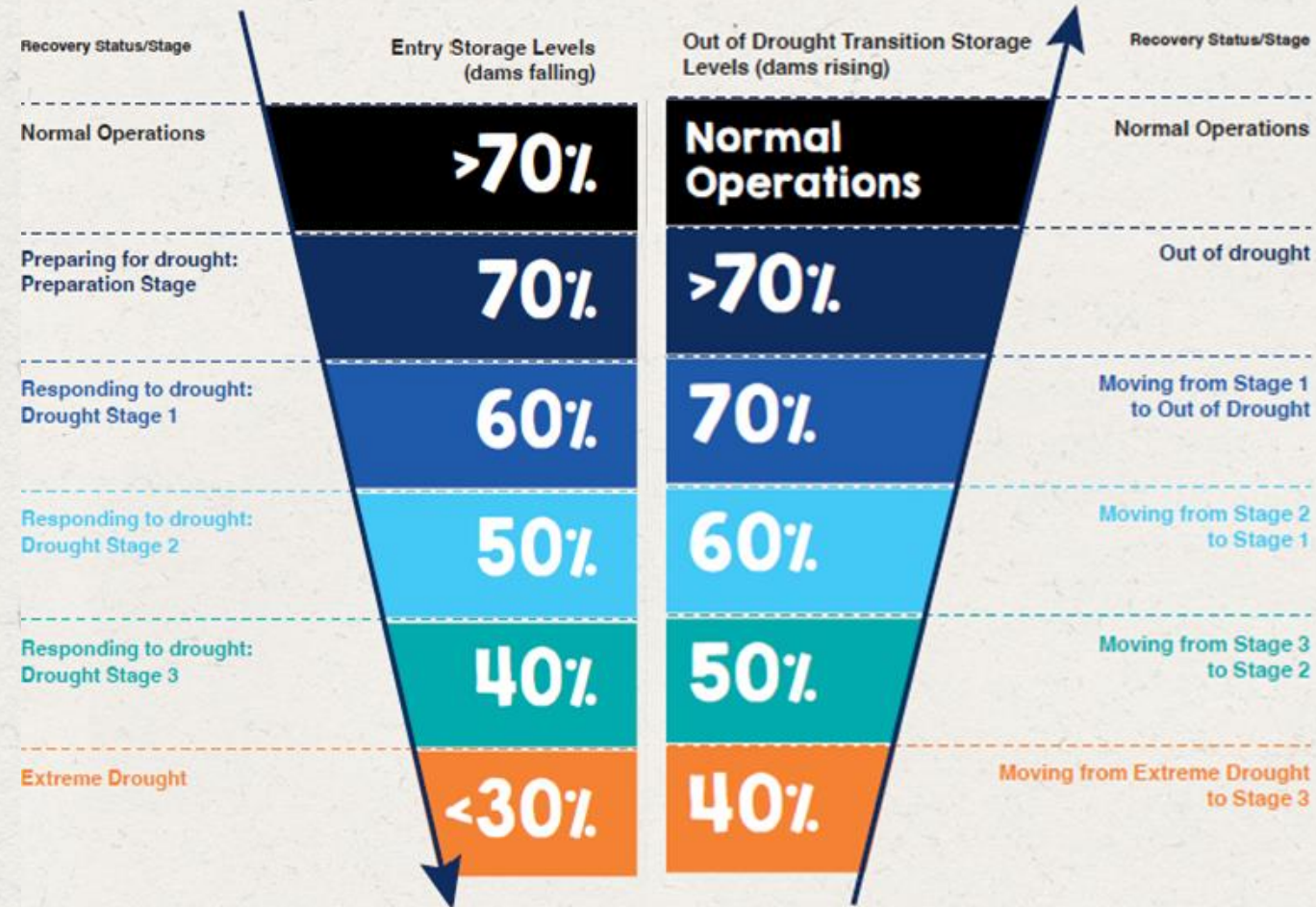


“Drought is a prolonged dry period characterized by the lack of precipitation, resulting in a water shortage”

Our storages are heavily dependent on rainfall. Lack of rainfall and ongoing use, creates a shortage, so our storages go down.

We measure drought through nominal Stages, and these Stages are based on our total storage levels.

For us drought is linked to and measured by our Total Storage Percent.



HOW DO WE PREDICT



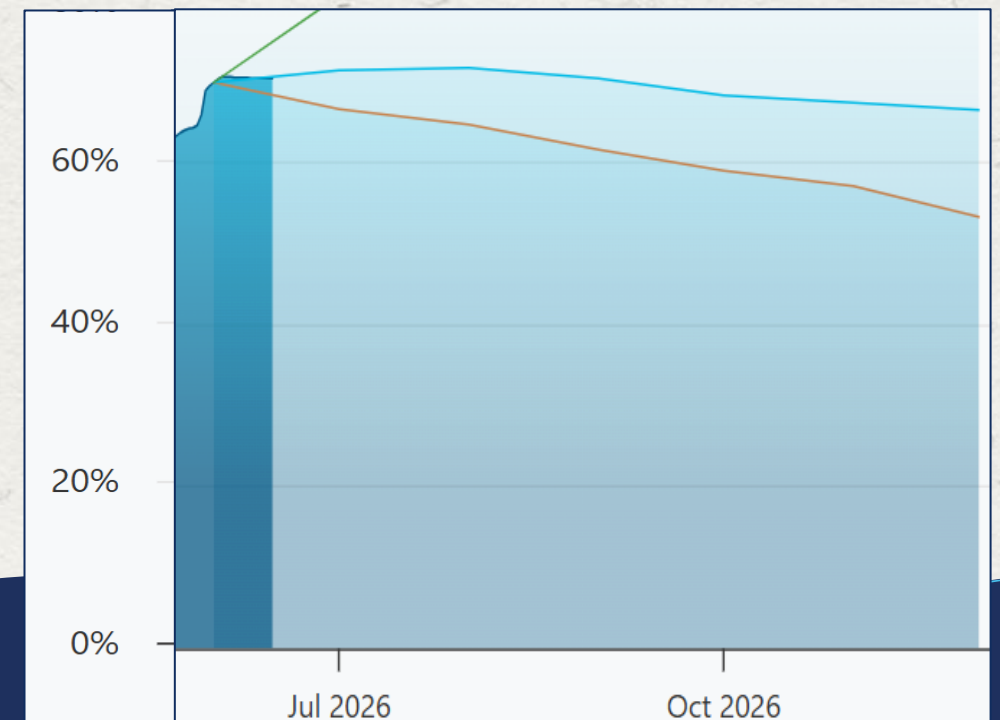
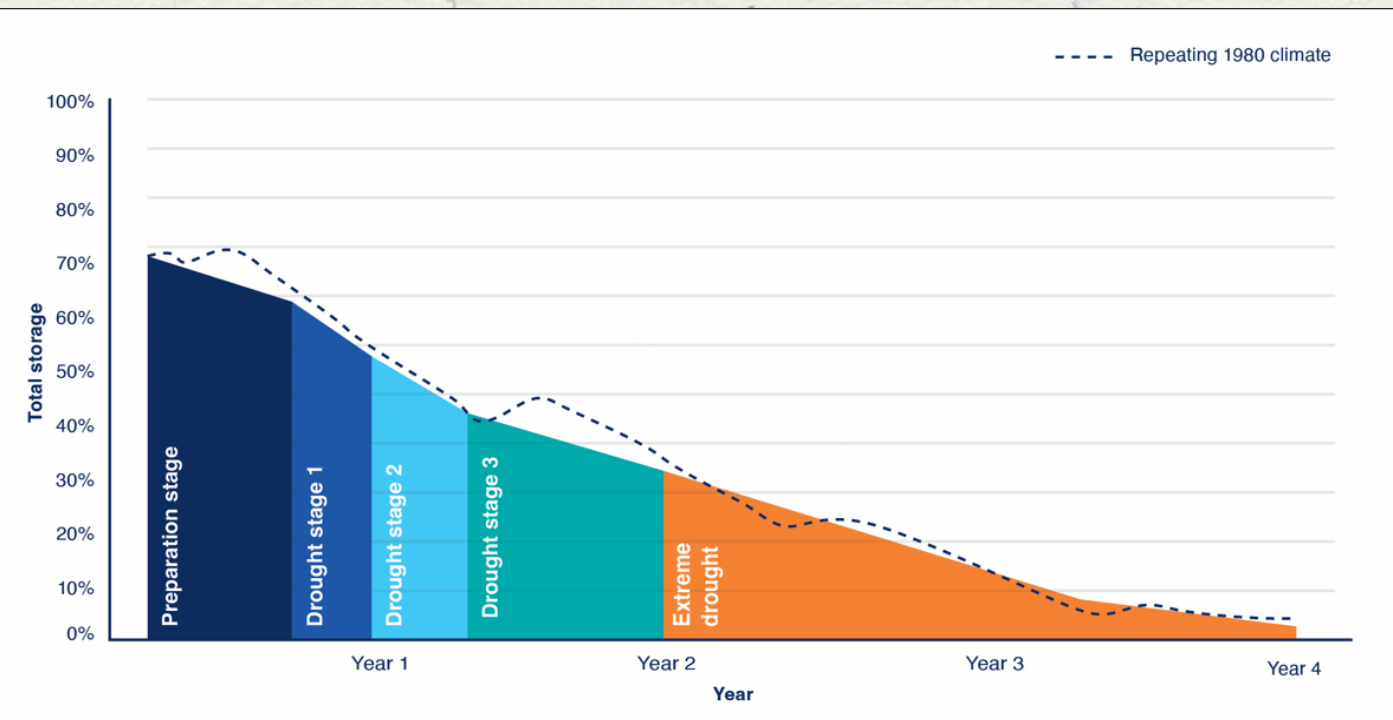
We look forward using a few different tools.

Bureau of Meteorology provides long term forecasts for rainfall and temperature.

Our team of modellers look at the BoM forecast and our 'design drought' to determine how storage levels may change.

The models are updated over time, as we experience rainfall, storages increase and forecasts change.

While we can do best effort to look forward, weather can be unpredictable, including the development of East Coast Lows.



WHERE ARE WE NOW

Recent rain was exactly what we needed, where we needed it.

Storages had a significant top-up; however, we are still within the current drought cycle – we are not ‘out of drought’.

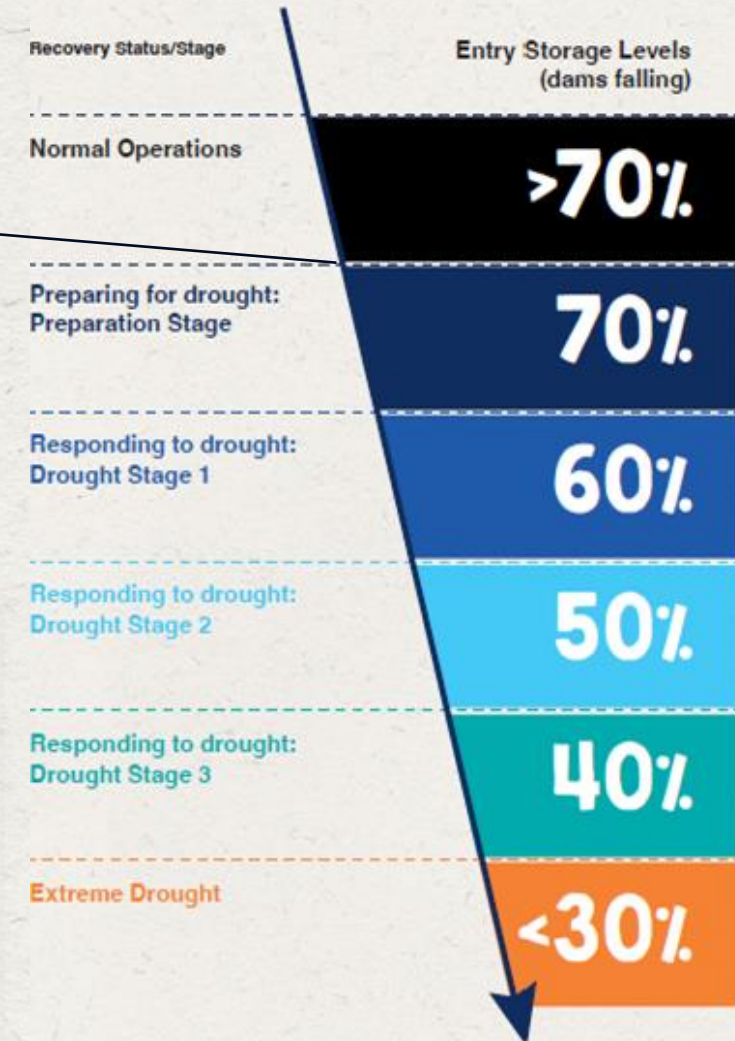
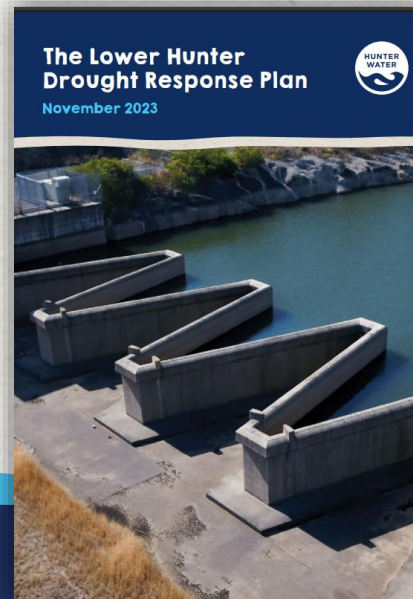
BoM indicates that dry (and warm) late winter going into spring. Potential for El Nino.

The rate of storage decline generally slows over winter, but we expect it to continue trending downwards.

We have a Drought Response Plan that provides us a framework on the actions that are to be taken at each Stage of drought.

We are continuing to prepare for drought, including water restrictions.

15 June 26
70.4%





HOW WE RESPOND



The underlying basis of our drought response actions is to reduce the amount water we use, to allow as much time as possible for a climate correction.

The longer we are in drought the more water we try to save.

Water Restrictions are a tool used to reduce usage.

They apply to both residential and non-residential customers.



We also ask Business Customers to create Water Efficiency Management Plans (WEMPs)

We increase our responses to leak detection and repairs

We also bolster our supplies using Tomago and Central Coast Transfer

THANK YOU

Any questions?



Call

1300 657 657, weekdays 8am-5pm
1300 657 000, 24 hours, seven days
Translation service: 13 14 50

Head Office

36 Honeysuckle Drive
Newcastle NSW 2300

Email

enquiries@hunterwater.com.au

Mail

Hunter Water
PO Box 5171
HRMC NSW 2310

Connect

hunterwater.com.au





REBATES FOR SERVICE DISRUPTIONS

16 JUNE 2026

WHEN REBATES MAY APPLY



**Long unplanned
water interruptions**

1st, 2nd & 3rd per year



**Long planned water
interruptions**

3rd per year



**Wastewater
overflows**

1st, 2nd & 3rd per year



Low water pressure

1 per year



Boil water alert

1 per year



Dirty water

WE ASKED THE COMMUNITY TO HELP US ANSWER:



Are the current rebates well targeted and set at the right level?

New insights from ~ 600 people

- 2 workshop activities with Community Committee
- Questions in Quarterly Community Survey
- 1 dedicated survey

Existing insights from ~ 1,700 people

- 3 surveys 2020 - 2021

We heard mostly 'yes' but some changes would make rebates more meaningful



OUR PROPOSED PACKAGE – AT A GLANCE



Changing



**Long unplanned
water interruptions**
1st, 2nd & 3rd per year
Increasing amount for
2nd & 3rd



**Long planned water
interruptions**
2nd & 3rd per year
Increasing eligibility



**Wastewater
overflows**
1st, 2nd & 3rd per year
Changing amount for
3rd event?

Staying the same



Low water pressure
1 per year
20 kL



Boil water alert
1 per year
20 kL



Dirty water
Cost of water used to
flush the system

OUR PROPOSED PACKAGE - CHANGES



Long unplanned
water interruptions

WE HEARD....

- The second and third event are more inconvenient than reflected in the current rebates.

WE PROPOSE...

- *Increasing the rebate for the second and third events. This means 100 customers per year will receive a higher rebate*

Event number (per FY)	# Affected properties	2022-27 Customer Contract		2027-32 Customer Contract	
		Equivalent kL water usage	\$ In 2025-26	Equivalent kL water usage	\$ In 2025-26
1st	3,700	20	65.40	20	65.40
2nd	100	20	65.40	30	98.10
3rd	10	32	104.64	40	130.80

OUR PROPOSED PACKAGE - CHANGES



Long planned water interruptions

WE HEARD....

- Least inconvenient type of disruption
- Half as inconvenient as an unplanned interruption
- Minimum rebate to be considered a goodwill gesture is \$50
- We also found that having 3 in one year is rare

“Not too inconvenient, can plan around it.”

Community Committee participant, one planned interruption

WE PROPOSE...

- *Adding a rebate for the second events. This means 90 customers per year will receive a rebate that currently wouldn't.*

Event number (per FY)	# Affected properties	2022-27 Customer Contract		2027-32 Customer Contract	
		Equivalent kL water usage	\$ In 2025-26	Equivalent kL water usage	\$ In 2025-26
1st	3,000	No rebate	No rebate	No rebate	No rebate
2nd	90	No rebate	No rebate	20	65.40
3rd	0	20	65.40	20	65.40

OUR PROPOSED PACKAGE - CHANGES



Wastewater
overflows

WE HEARD....

- Rebates for 1st and 2nd are “*about right*” but 3rd is higher than the relative inconvenience

WE PROPOSE...

- Collaborating with Community Committee to set amount for 3rd event in year, based on the principle-based question:

After the 3rd should the affected customer have received enough to have effectively waived the whole annual wastewater charge?

- Follow-up question:

Would your answer to that change if that involved a significant decrease in the rebate amount?

Event number (per FY)	# Affected properties	2022-27 Customer Contract		2027-32 Customer Contract	
		Equivalent kL water usage	\$ In 2025-26	Equivalent kL water usage	\$ In 2025-26
1st	1,800	40	130.80	40	130.80
2nd	120	80	261.60	80	261.60
3rd	7	280	915.60	130 or 280	425.10 or 915.60



ENABLING GROWTH

Matt Hingston – Executive Manager Customer Services

Rajesh Khadka – Water Planning Engineer

Luke Bianchi – Manager Water Planning

JUNE 2026

WHY UNDERSTANDING GROWTH MATTERS



Safe, reliable supply

Forecast future water demand to ensure clean drinking water remains available as communities expand.



Stable Infrastructure

Identify when and where capacity needs to increase to prevent pipe failures and treatment plant overflows.



Saves money and time

Installing right-sized infrastructure during construction is far cheaper than costly retrofitting later.



Protects the Environment

Integrate water recycling and wastewater treatment to protect local waterways as urban footprints expand.



Enabling homes and jobs

Timely infrastructure delivery means new housing estates and businesses connect to services without delay.

OUR ROLE IN REGIONAL GROWTH



STRATEGIC SERVICING AND INVESTMENT PLANNING



Hunter Water's long-term investment planning is guided by catchment-wide growth expectations and regional strategies.



At a local level, Hunter Water provides servicing advice and collaborates on strategy development for specific developments seeking connection to our network.

We fund connecting assets where:



They align with our growth maps

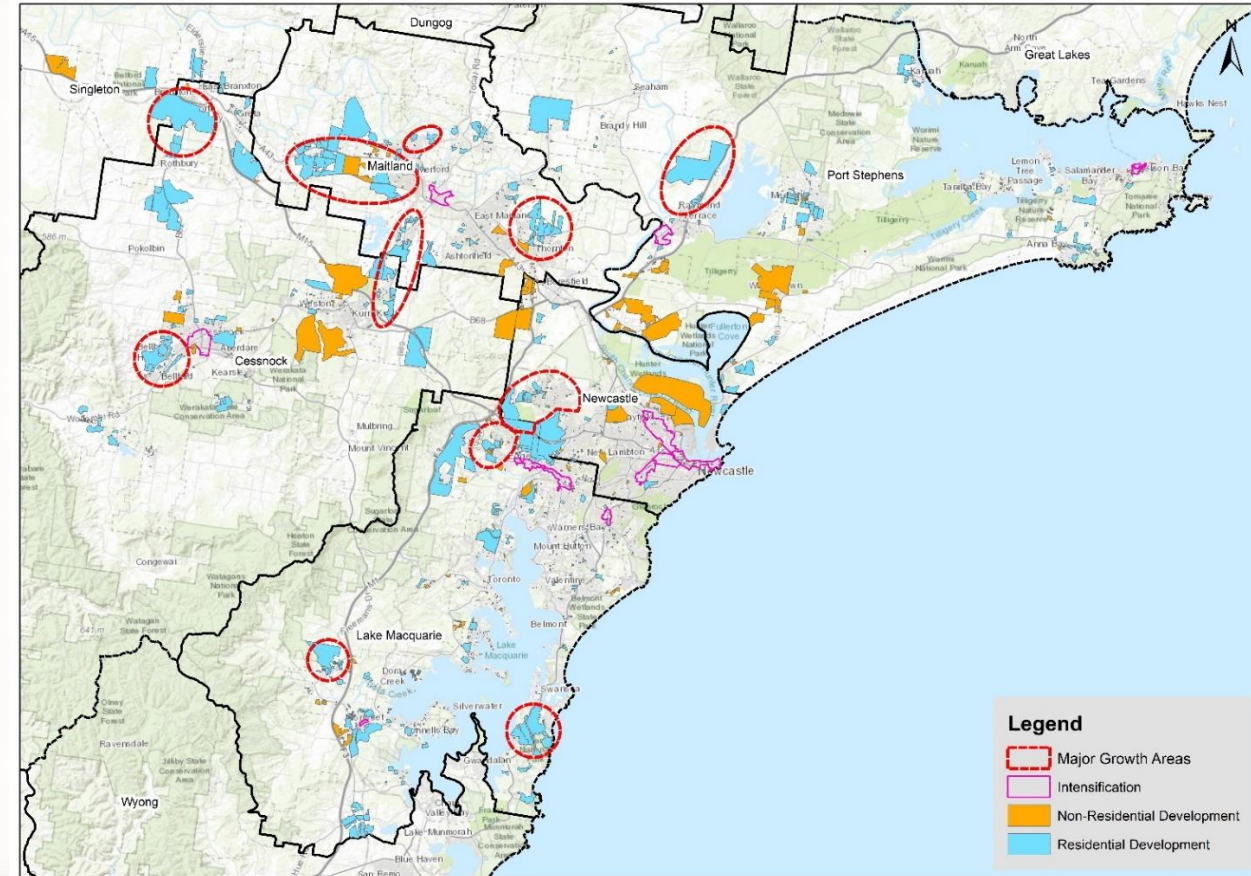


They support efficient and sustainable servicing outcomes



They provide shared benefits to multiple development sites

This approach ensures our infrastructure investments deliver maximum value to the region and support coordinated growth across the catchment.

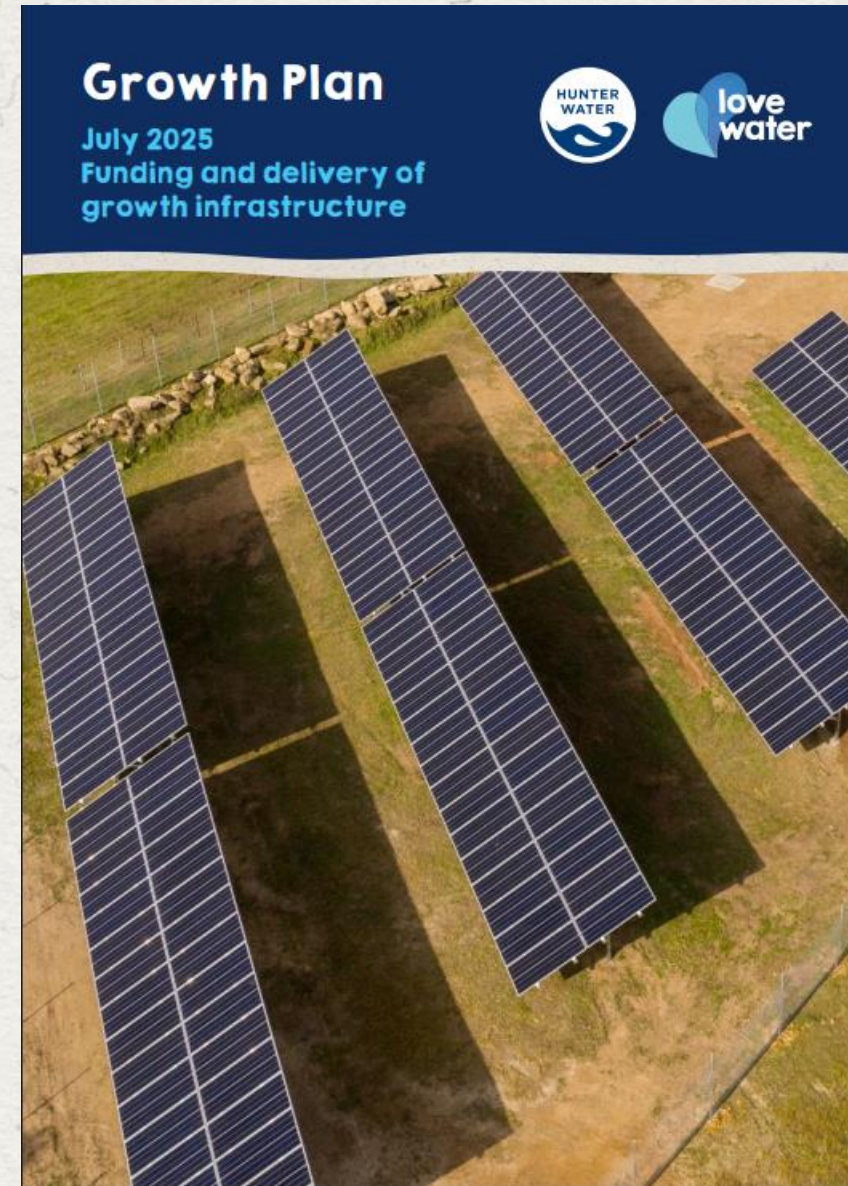


PLANNING FOR GROWTH

Our annual **Growth Plan** guides our capital portfolio and informs our pricing proposal.

Our Growth Plan is informed by:

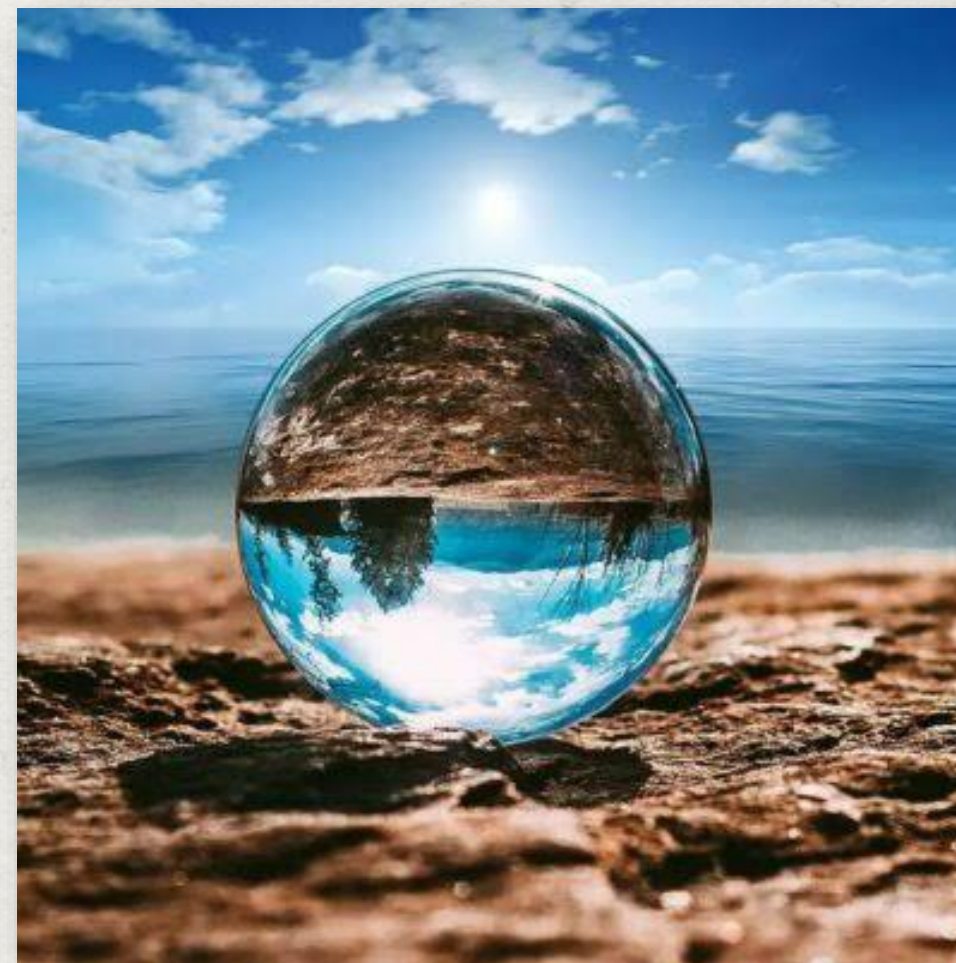
- **NSW Government data**
 - Hunter Regional Plan 2041
 - DPHI insights, inc. Urban Development Program
 - Common planning assumptions
- **Local Council insights**
- **Industry engagement**
 - UDIA and Property Council engagement
 - Consultations with major developers
- **Internal data**
 - Development Applications



PLANNING CHALLENGES & RESPONSE



- Our annual **Growth Plan** includes likely time frame for new developments
- Visibility can be challenging
- Early and ongoing engagement is key
- Emerging large water users place risk on constrained system
- NSW government planning reforms can reduce transparency
- Increasing engagement with industry and government, and improving layers in growth plan

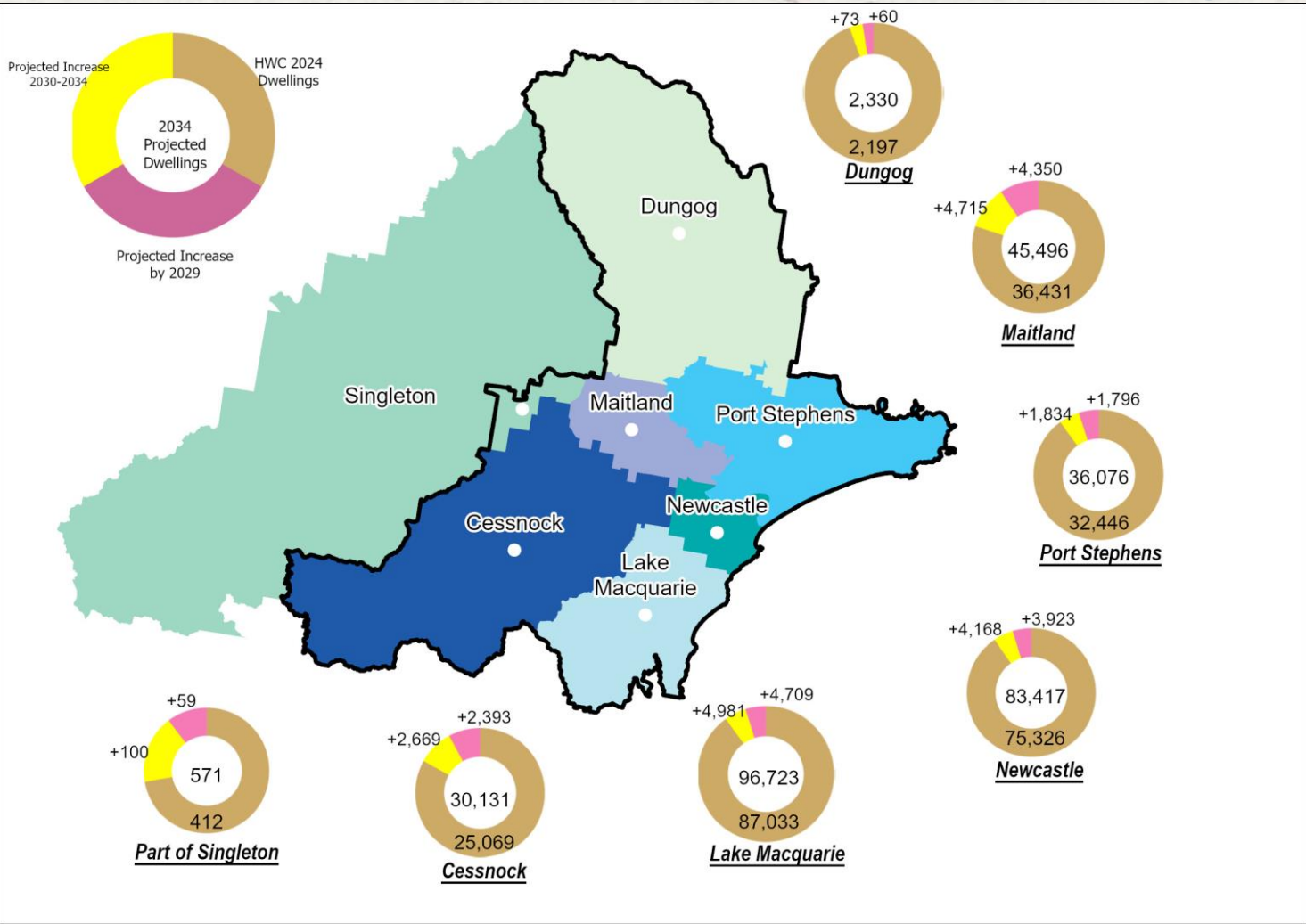


RESIDENTIAL CONNECTION AND FORECAST



Local government area	Residential dwellings at July 2024	Distribution %
Cessnock	23,823	9.2
Dungog	2,197	0.8
Lake Macquarie	86,435	33.4
Maitland	36,431	14.1
Newcastle	75,326	29.1
Port Stephens	32,446	12.5
Singleton	412	0.2
Private Network Operators*	1,844	0.7
Total	258,914	100.0

* Private network operator areas, Huntlee Water (1,246) in Cessnock LGA, and Cooranbong Water (598) in Lake Macquarie LGA, include customers that are not direct Hunter Water customers, but are supplied with bulk water from Hunter Water.



SYSTEM INFORMATION

Water

- Drinking water catchments
- Storage capacity
- Water treatment plant (WTP) capacity
- Supply zones
- Average daily water delivered
- Water network details (including network length, pumping stations, and reservoirs)

Wastewater

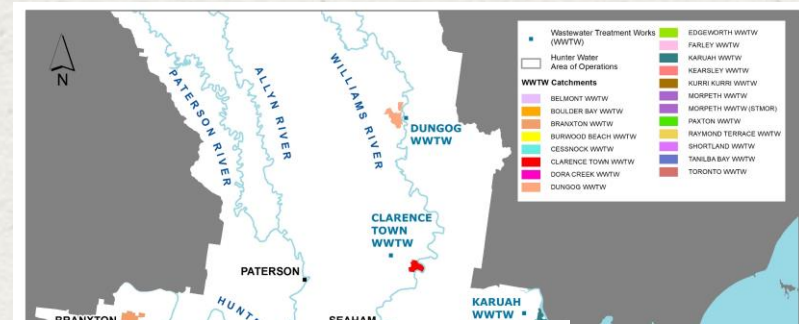
- Wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) capacity
- Average annual treatment volumes
- Catchment areas
- Network details (including network length and pumping stations)

Recycled Water

- Wastewater treatment plants supplying recycled water
 - Commercial and industrial reuse
 - Residential non-potable supply areas

Stormwater

- Hunter Water-managed stormwater channels
- Detention basins and storage assets



CAPITAL EXPENDITURE



Provides information on Hunter Water's;

- Capital works prioritisation process
- Connecting Asset Funding

Includes details on recent(past 5 years) and planned investments(next 5 years) by driver and Local Government Area.

- Investment values(\$)
- A list the major upgrade projects

Figure 6: Hunter Water Capital Expenditure 2019-20 to 2023-24 (\$m) by driver

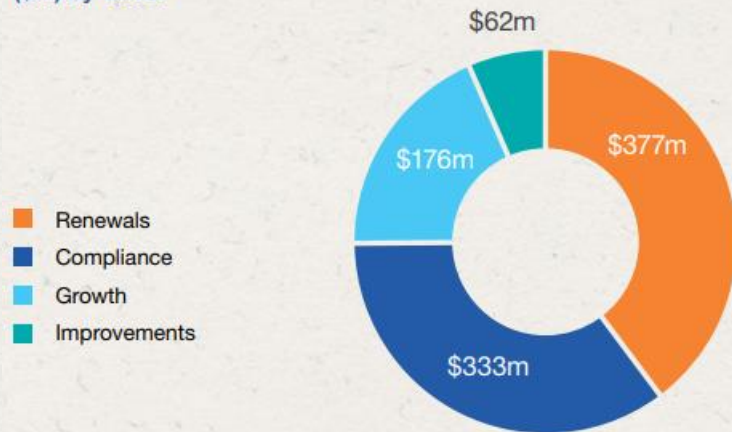


Figure 7: Hunter Water's Capital Expenditure 2023-24 to 2027-28 (\$m) by driver

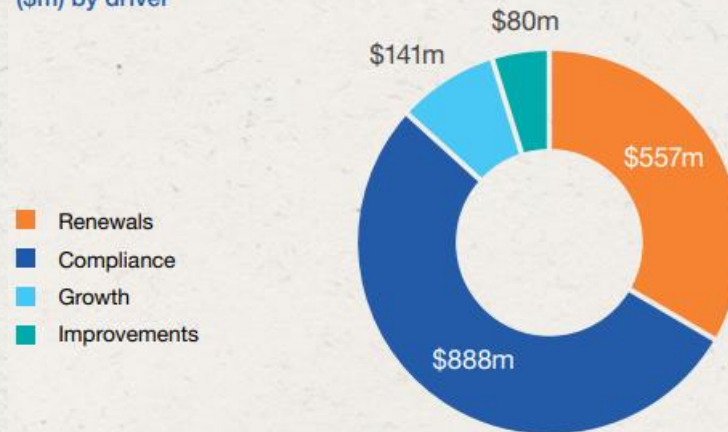
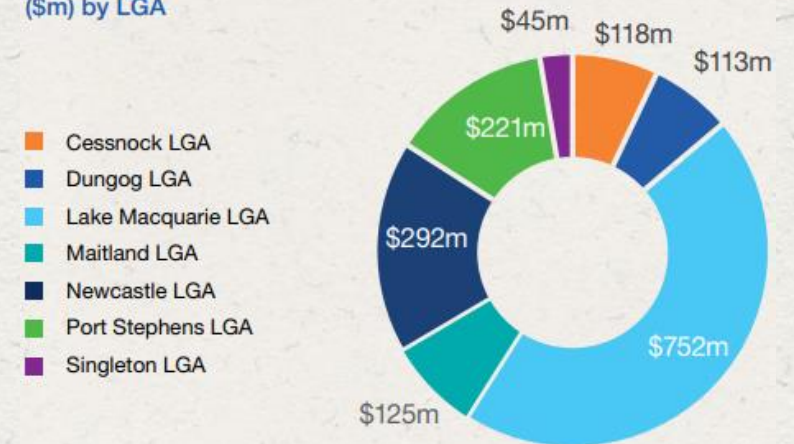
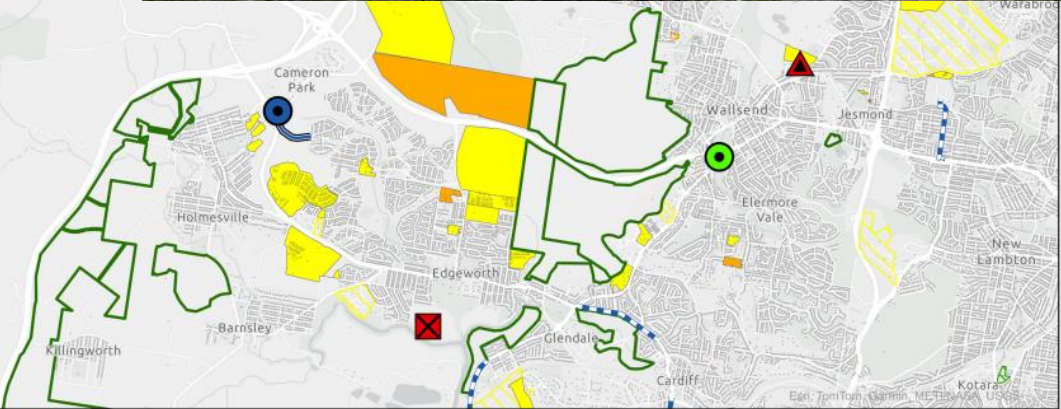
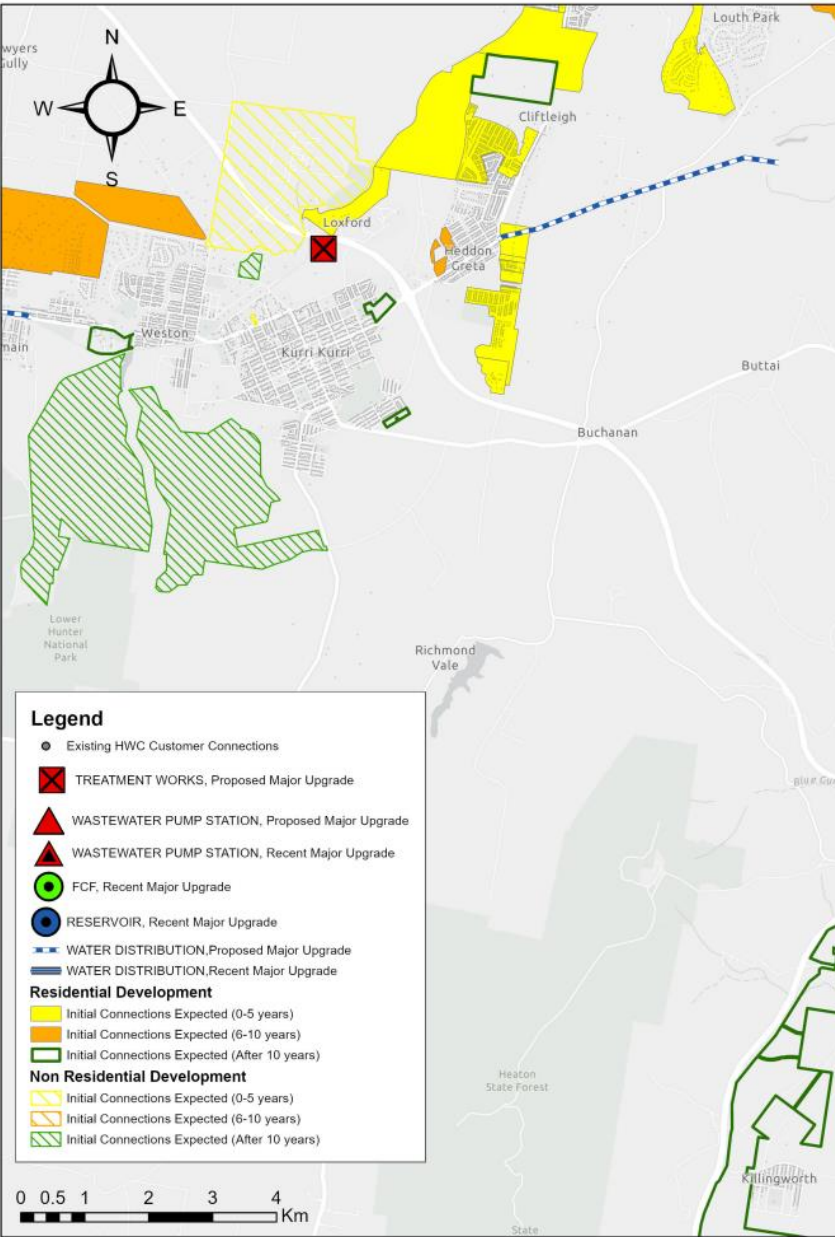


Figure 8: Hunter Water's Capital Expenditure 2023-24 to 2027-28 (\$m) by LGA



GROWTH MAPPING



Cameron Park Reservoir

GROWTH PLAN LOCATION



<https://www.hunterwater.com.au/growth>



[Faults leaks and outages](#) [Help and support](#)

[Accounts and billing](#) [Business](#) [Building and developing](#) [Water and environment](#) [About](#) [Log in](#)

Building and developing

+ Builders and home owners

- Developers

- Property self service portal

+ Land development

- Developer deeds
- Developer charges

- Growth infrastructure

- Growth servicing information

+ Accredited suppliers

- Recycled water development servicing plans

+ Plumbers

- Building, development and plumbing application forms

+ Drawings, plans and specifications

- Building and developing frequently asked questions

+ Building and development fees

Building and developing / Developers

Growth infrastructure

We have a number of strategies in place to support good development in the Lower Hunter region for years to come. Learn more about our Growth Plan and the funding initiatives available.



Enabling good development in the Lower Hunter region is a strategic priority for Hunter Water.

 Help

 Live chat

 Feedback

THANK YOU

Any questions?



Call

1300 657 657, weekdays 8am-5pm
1300 657 000, 24 hours, seven days
Translation service: 13 14 50

Head Office

36 Honeysuckle Drive
Newcastle NSW 2300

Email

enquiries@hunterwater.com.au

Mail

Hunter Water
PO Box 5171
HRMC NSW 2310

Connect

hunterwater.com.au





SURVEY RESULTS

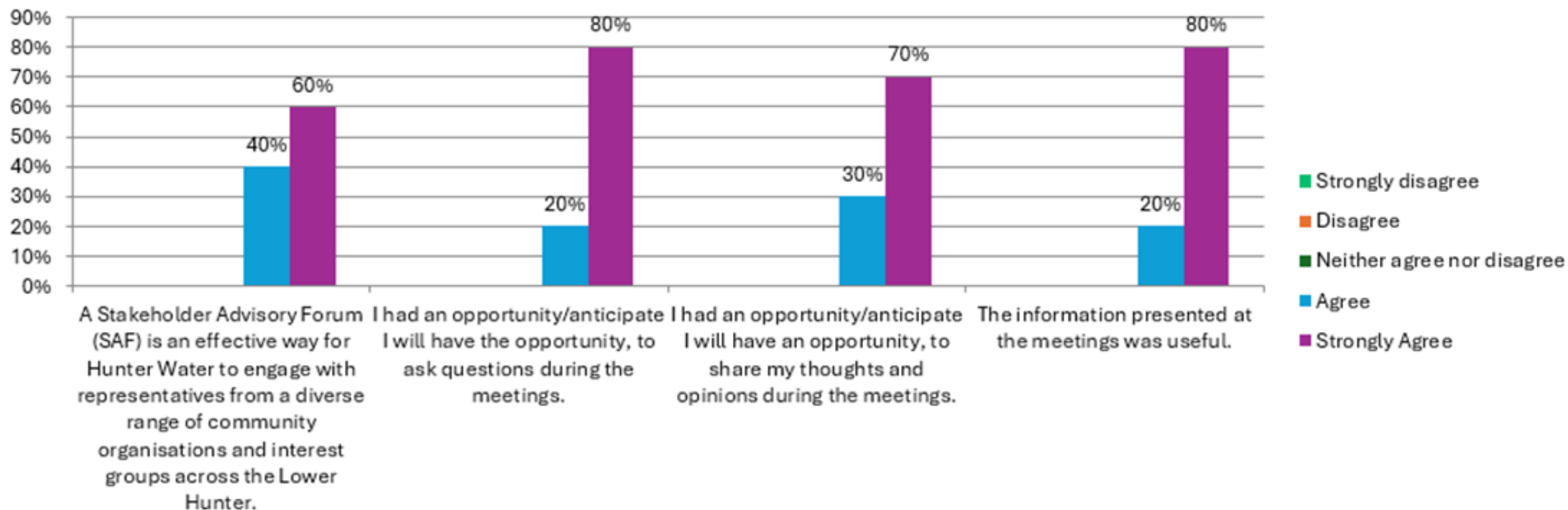
Stakeholder Advisory Forum

JUNE 2026

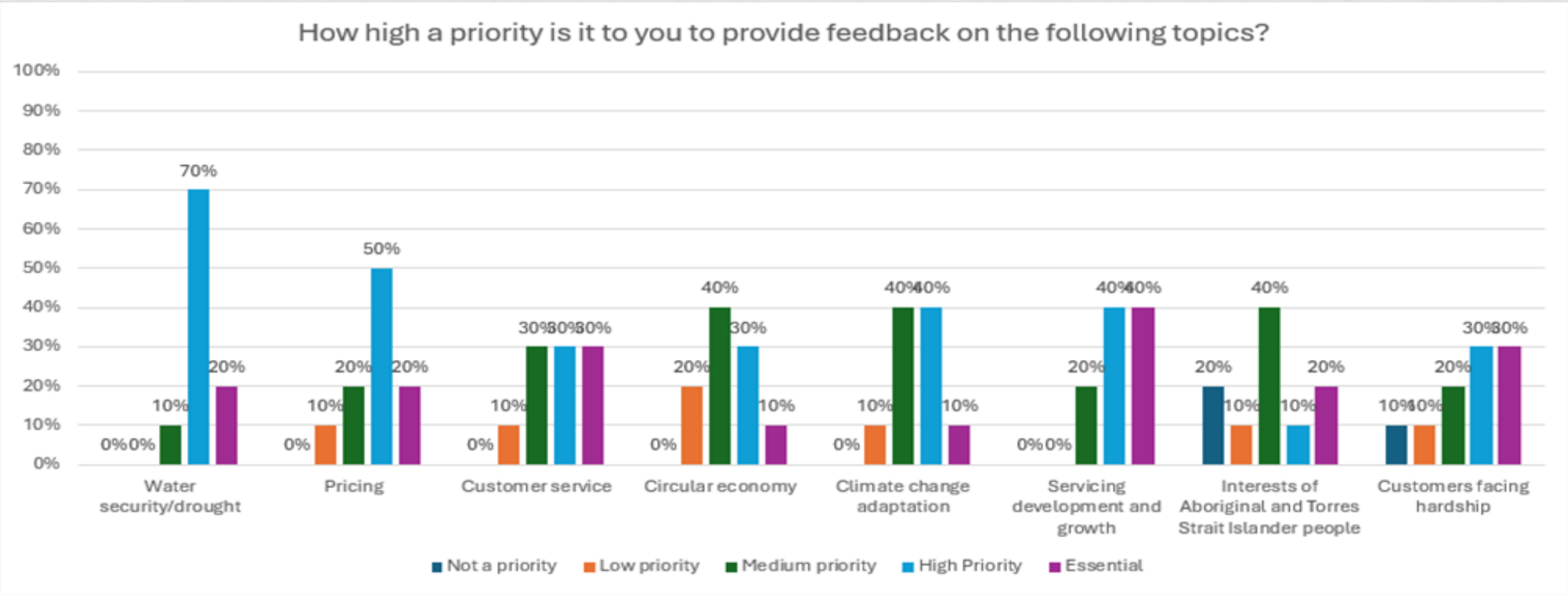
SAF SURVEY RESULTS - EFFECTIVENESS



Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements.



SAF SURVEY RESULTS – TOPIC PRIORITY



THANK YOU

Any questions?



Call

1300 657 657, weekdays 8am-5pm
1300 657 000, 24 hours, seven days
Translation service: 13 14 50

Head Office

36 Honeysuckle Drive
Newcastle NSW 2300

Email

enquiries@hunterwater.com.au

Mail

Hunter Water
PO Box 5171
HRMC NSW 2310

Connect

hunterwater.com.au

