

LOWER MURRAY WATER

Communication and
Engagement Strategy

May 2022



LOWER MURRAY
WATER

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1 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Lower Murray Water (LMW) is strongly committed to engaging with stakeholders, communities, customers, and partners to guide the planning, development, and delivery of vital water services.

Unique to most other Victorian water corporations, we deliver services across both urban and rural communities. This diverse range of stakeholders presents unique opportunities and challenges for LMW to provide the best possible service delivery and engagement for all stakeholders.

A key strategic priority of LMW is effective engagement with stakeholders and community. This Communication and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy sets out an approach for delivering communication and stakeholder engagement channels for appropriate audiences across LMW's network and operations.

Engagement is essentially about involving and informing partners, stakeholders, customers, and communities in LMW's key decision-making processes across priority areas, assets, services, maintenance, and delivery.

Engagement initiatives are already regularly carried out by LMW. This Strategy builds upon this existing knowledge and efforts, expanding the scope of engagement activity to include all LMW services, and embedding a more consistent and systemic approach, supported by appropriate tools and knowledge.

This Strategy was developed through a process of consultation with key stakeholders and tested by internal staff.

1.1 ENGAGEMENT DOCUMENT SUITE

Framework

The purpose of the Framework is to provide a conceptual, high-level, values-based overview of LMW's Communication and Engagement activities. It provides background and context on LMW's philosophy of communication and engagement, going in to depth on the purpose, vision, and strategic priorities. The document details how to use the Framework to maximum effect and how to utilise this document in tandem with the other resources provided.

Strategy

The purpose of this Strategy is to outline LMW's overarching approach to communication and stakeholder engagement, with an emphasis on best practice. It aligns LMW with the best practice rules and regulations to ensure LMW complies accordingly, setting up LMW for success with their stakeholder engagement. The Strategy breaks down LMW's stakeholders and details how LMW should approach engagement with each stakeholder or community group.

Toolkit

The purpose of the Toolkit is to provide a practical, easily digestible, and concise information of the various tools and templates that LMW should utilise for communication and engagement activities. Any LMW employee who regularly interacts with stakeholders should be able to pick up this document and easily find the tool they need for their specific purpose. The toolkit provides a step-by-step process of an action depending on the phase of the project and level of engagement.

1.2 DEFINITIONS

Organisation

An organisation is a business or industry group which is impacted and serviced by LMW. Effective engagement with our key organisations is key to maintaining positive stakeholder relationships.

Community

A community is a group of people living and/or working in LMW's rural or urban jurisdiction or people who are considered as a unit because of their common interests, social group, or nationality. Community input and sentiment towards a given project is crucial for a successful outcome. Engaging with a community allows us to have a broad understanding of how a project or our services will be received and ensures that the community's views are considered.

Customer

A customer is any person who pays for or receives services from LMW. For LMW, customers can be located in rural and urban locations. Customers are the primary recipient of LMW's services and are therefore very important to engage with to ensure that they hold LMW in high regard. Having a dialogue with the customer allows LMW to continuously improve and note customer demands as they evolve.

Partner

A partner is any organisation that LMW legislatively is obliged or chooses to work with. This can include local councils, government bodies, or various regulatory bodies. Partners help to enable LMW to meet its legal requirements to serve the communities they operate in. Engaging with partners is important for LMW as it ensures that they always comply with the correct procedures for any given project.

1.2.1 Stakeholder

A stakeholder is an individual, group, or organisation either impacted by, or with an interest in, LMW and its projects, sites, operations, or reputation. Stakeholders can influence project outcomes which is why it is important to identify and analyse relevant stakeholders.

Engaging with these stakeholders allows us to seek feedback and address potential or actual issues or concerns, to ensure they are not negatively impacted by a decision or work that we carry out.

Please note that stakeholders encompass all the previously mentioned terms, including organisation, community, customer, and partner.

1.3 AIM OF STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT

Our focus is to consistently and strategically communicate, engage, and educate our stakeholders to achieve LMW's purpose and vision.

This involves supporting and upskilling our staff, where needed, to ensure a consistent communications and engagement approach is taken across the entire organisation.

1.4 PURPOSE

This Strategy establishes:

- Stakeholder mapping to ensure all audiences are included in LMW's communication and engagement approach.
- Methods and tools to effectively communicate, consult and gain feedback from LMW's stakeholders.

- Key messaging that will facilitate consistent communication, while providing transparency and a single source of truth.
- Media and escalation processes.

1.5 COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT APPROACH

LMW's approach to communication and stakeholder engagement is guided by best practice techniques.

The International Association for Public Participation Spectrum (IAP2) and the Essential Services Commission (ESC) provide guidance on the development and implementation of approaches towards communication and engagement.

More information on this and other governance measures can be found in LMW's Communication and Engagement Framework.

1.6 DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

LMW's approach to communication and engagement aims to include all sections of our diverse and valued community. We acknowledge that there are many ways in which elements of a person's identity can increase their likelihood to experience discrimination and marginalisation.

These intersectional factors such as age, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, race, religion, or sexual orientation can amplify barriers to services and increase the risk of social isolation, and social and economic disadvantage.

LMW has an obligation, under the *Gender Equality Act 2020*, to consider gender impact assessments when developing or reviewing any policy, program, or service which has a direct and significant impact on the public. This requirement has provided us with an opportunity to ensure we are as accessible and equitable as we can be for all members of our diverse and valued community.

LMW have developed Community Impact Assessments (CIA's) as a way of critically thinking about how policies, programs, and services will meet the different needs of a diversity of people. The overarching aim of the CIA process is to create better and fairer outcomes, and to ensure all people in our community have equal access to opportunities and resources.

2 OUR STAKEHOLDERS

Individual stakeholders have been, and will continue to be, identified on an ongoing basis. An internal database will be established to record and report on all communication and engagement activities.

Table 1 below provides the basis of a detailed LMW stakeholder map.

Table 1 - Stakeholder map

Stakeholder group	Description	Objective of relationship	Strategy
LMW indoor staff	LMW staff who work in our offices.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain positive and transparent relationships with staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employee benefits programs Open and transparent company policies Employee retention initiatives Positive internal relationships Effective management Regular, clear communication Regular opportunities to provide feedback
LMW outdoor staff	LMW staff who maintain operational proceedings day to day.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain positive and transparent relationships with staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employee benefits programs Open and transparent company policies Employee retention initiatives Positive internal relationships Effective management Regular, clear communication Regular opportunities to provide feedback
LMW Board	Our board oversee the management of our organisation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure the board feels informed and included and that we can utilise their knowledge in our decision making. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep regularly informed Respect and value their time and inputs Provide opportunities for participation in engagement
Urban customers	Customers of LMW who live in urban areas of our service region and receive water and waste water services from LMW.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain positive relationships with customers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customer committee Annual satisfaction survey Responsive customer service team Water education initiatives Request input into decision making process

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep informed of activities which impact them • Provide with safe and reliable water services • Targeted education campaigns
Private diverters	Customers along the Murray River in Victoria between Nyah and the South Australian border who own and operate pumps on the river.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain positive relationships with customers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer committee • Annual satisfaction survey • Responsive customer service team • Water education initiatives • Request input into decision making process • Keep informed of activities which impact them • Provide with safe and reliable water services • Targeted education campaigns
Domestic & stock	Domestic and stock customers in the districts of Mildura, Merbein, Red Cliffs and Robinvale and Millewa rural district. These are customers who are connected to our rural system but use the water for house/garden and watering pets and stock.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain positive relationships with customers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer committees • Annual satisfaction survey • Responsive customer service team • Water education initiatives • Request input into decision making process • Keep informed of activities which impact them • Provide with safe and reliable water services • Targeted education campaigns
Irrigators	Irrigation customers in the districts of Districts of Mildura, Merbein, Red Cliffs and Robinvale.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain positive relationships with customers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer committees • Annual satisfaction survey • Responsive customer service team • Water education initiatives • Request input into decision making process • Keep informed of activities which impact them • Provide with safe and reliable water services • Targeted education campaigns
Customer Service Advisory Committees (CSAC) (rural) Red Cliffs, Merbein, Robinvale, Mildura, Millewa, Private Diverters	The purpose of the CSACs is to provide advice to the board and management of LMW on a range of water and service-related matters.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek customer input into our strategic decision-making processes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage regularly and meaningfully • Engage on key operational decisions
Strategic Advisory Committee (SAC) (rural)	The purpose of the SAC is to provide advice and its opinion to the board and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek customer input into our strategic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage regularly and meaningfully • Engage on key operational decisions

	management on strategy, policy or industry matters as they affect irrigation customers and LMW generally.	decision-making processes.	
Customer Consultative Committee (CCC) (urban)	The purpose of the CCC is to provide advice to the board and management on a range of water and sewerage related matters.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek customer input into our strategic decision-making processes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage regularly and meaningfully Engage on key operational decisions
Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP)	LMW is accountable to DELWP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek input into our strategic decision-making processes. Maintain positive relationship. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep regularly informed Attend briefing sessions Maintain ongoing relationships Ensure all measures are taken to comply with regulations and legislation
Vic Minister for Water	LMW is accountable to the Minister for Water.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek input into our strategic decision-making processes as required. Maintain positive relationship. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep regularly informed Maintain ongoing relationships Engage early and provide necessary information on impacts to agencies or stakeholders Provide briefings where necessary on project issues pertaining to each agency
Government departments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MDBA ESC Parks Vic Dept of Health Water NSW Mallee CMA Goulburn Murray Water Coliban Water VIC Water VIC Police CFA 	LMW work alongside many government departments to meet their legislative requirements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain positive relationships with key stakeholders who hold significant influence on LMW. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep regularly informed Attend briefing sessions Maintain ongoing relationships Engage early and provide necessary information on impacts to agencies or stakeholders Provide briefings where necessary on project issues pertaining to each agency Ensure all measures are taken to comply with regulations and legislation
Politicians Member for Mallee Member for Mildura Member for Murray Plains	LMW work alongside numerous politicians and local councils to effectively deliver services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain positive relationships with key stakeholders who hold significant influence on LMW. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep regularly informed Attend briefing sessions Maintain ongoing relationships Engage early and provide necessary information on impacts to agencies or stakeholders

Member for Northern Vic			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide briefings where necessary on project issues pertaining to each agency • Ensure all measures are taken to comply with regulations and legislation
Councils Mildura Rural City Council Swan Hill Rural City Council Gannawarra Shire Council	LMW work alongside numerous politicians and local councils to effectively deliver services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain positive relationships with key stakeholders who hold significant influence on LMW. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep regularly informed • Coordinate and attend briefing sessions • Maintain ongoing relationships • Engage early and provide necessary information on impacts to agencies or stakeholders • Provide briefings where necessary on project issues pertaining to each agency • Ensure all measures are taken to comply with regulations and legislation
First Nations people	The First Nations' people who live, work, or reside in the communities in which LMW serves. Particularly, the Traditional Owners of the land in which LMW operates.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain positive relationships with local Traditional Owners and continue ongoing commitment to reconciliation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage early and consistently throughout project development • Development of recognition/informative/historical installations containing local artwork on sites • Partnership to develop meaningful employment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
Customers experiencing vulnerability	The barriers that the ESC highlight to define vulnerable people are as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Event-based circumstances such as illness, job loss, financial stress, family violence, death of a loved one, ageing and disability, natural disaster, global pandemic. • Systemic factors such as unaffordable and poor-quality housing, insufficient work and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain positive and respectful relationships with our customers, particularly those who are experiencing vulnerability. • Ensure customers experiencing vulnerability feel supported and comfortable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued support through LMW's hardship program • Sensitive engagement techniques

	<p>employment insecurity, siloed services, digital living and the emergence of a digital divide, regional limitations, low and inadequate rates of income support, racism, and colonisation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Market based circumstances such as inadequate or overly complex documentation, pricing strategies, marketing practices, and targeted services that exclude some customers. 		
<p>Industry</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citrus Australia • Murray Valley Wine Grape Growers • Australian Almonds • Dried Fruit Association • Australian Table Grapes Association • Mallee Wine Grapes Association • Sunraysia Rural Financial Counselling • Regional Development Victoria • Mildura Regional Development • Water brokers • Real estate agents • Developers, builders, plumbers 	<p>LMW services many commercial customers and large industry groups who rely on our services to maintain their businesses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain positive and mutually beneficial relationships with commercial customers and industry groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep regularly informed • Engage on key operational decisions • Make efforts to understand their business and key concerns

<p>Community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools • SuniTAFE • La Trobe University • Mallee Family Care • SMECC • Intersectional groups 	<p>The broader community who are directly and indirectly affected by LMW's operations, services, and reputation in the community.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain positive reputation within our communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain community sponsorship initiatives • Community pop ups • Education initiatives
<p>Media</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sunraysia Daily • Mildura Weekly • ABC Radio Mildura-Swan Hill • River 1467 • Hit 99.5FM • Triple M 97.9 • 3SH and MIXX FM • The Guardian Swan Hill • Robinvale Sentinel • Gannawarra Times • The Koondrook and Barham Bridge 	<p>Local media is a valuable asset to inform and engage with stakeholders in the local area.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain positive community reputation. • Keep stakeholders informed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide media releases • Seek out opportunities for good news stories • Carry out regular media monitoring

2.1 HOW WE ENGAGE

How we engage with our stakeholders

Refer to Table 2 for communication and engagement tools and channels we use at LMW to engage with our stakeholders.

Table 2 - Engagement tools and channels

Advertisements (newspaper, radio, tv)	Fact sheets	Phone calls
Customer email	Focus group	Pop up information stall
Bill stuffers	Forum, briefing, information session	Poster
Brochure, flyer	Growers' Conference	Public displays
Comments card, postcard	Hotline, phone-in	Reports
Committee meetings	Stakeholder meetings	School/community education programs/workshops
Community Sponsorship and Donations Program	LMW social media (posts and advertising)	Site tours/ visits
Customer SMS (rural)	FAQs	Static displays
Customer property visits (rural)	LMW website	Surveys
Deliberative panel	Letters/ letter drops	Videos, photos, images
Desktop background	Media releases and opportunities	Webinars
Door knocking	On hold telephone message	Workshops
Face to face meetings	Outdoor signs	Written submissions

LMW will regularly check and monitor engagement tools and channels, ensuring they are best suited for each stakeholder group. The team will amend communication and engagement plans as required to reflect any changed engagement approaches.

2.2 ACTION PLAN

The annual Communications and Engagement Plan outlines the specific communications actions and timeframes.

2.3 STAKEHOLDER ENQUIRIES AND COMPLAINTS

As part of LMW's daily operations, we will receive enquiries and complaints from our customers, stakeholders, and community. Our commitment is to ensure that they are handled with integrity and transparency, with a solutions and customer-focused approach.

2.3.1 Customers' Rights to Assistance

LMW will address all enquiries and requests for assistance in a timely, courteous, and helpful manner. The customer will be informed of the name/s of our employee/s handling their enquiry.

Verbal enquires

A customer may make a verbal enquiry about an account, payment options, concession entitlements, or any other information about our services, by telephoning or attending any of our offices during our normal business hours. Where possible, enquiries will be answered at once, whilst the customer is either on the telephone, or is present in person. If it is not possible to complete the response to a verbal enquiry at the time of contact, the customer:

- a) May be asked to put their enquiry in writing; and
- b) Will be told when they can reasonably expect to receive a reply.

Written enquires

Customers making written enquiries can expect prompt and clear answers. If a customer asks for a written reply, we will send a response to the customer within 10 business days of receiving the enquiry. If the customer does not ask for a written reply, we may respond to the enquiry by a telephone call and will do so in a timely manner. Whether written or verbal, the response will either:

- a) Deal with the substance of the enquiry; or
- b) Acknowledge the receipt of the enquiry and, if the enquiry is complex, inform the customer when they can reasonably expect to receive such a reply.

If a customer asks for information that does not relate to a service provided by LMW, suggested external avenues of enquiry shall be provided.

Requests for information

LMW will store the records of the last three years of a customer's consumption history in such a way that information can be provided quickly, and at no cost to the customer, during a telephone enquiry. For consumption history beyond three years, we may apply an administrative charge.

We will, upon request, provide customers with information regarding the following:

- a) The Customer Charter
- b) The results of the annual customer survey
- c) The results of its water quality monitoring program
- d) Lower Murray Water's water quality improvement programs
- e) Water conservation strategies and initiatives

- f) Current schedule of tariffs and charges
- g) Current lists of local offices and emergency telephone numbers
- h) Any regulations or by-laws, other than primary legislation, under which we operate.

We will provide customers with special communication needs and access to language interpreter and Tele Typewriter (TTY) services for speech and hearing-impaired customers.

- For language interpreter services, customers can call 13 14 50.
- Customers who are deaf or have hearing impairment or a speech/communication impairment may contact our office by calling through the National Relay Service (NRS) using modem or text phone (TTY) by dialing 133 677 and quoting 03 5051 3400.

2.3.2 Customer Complaints

Complaints may be lodged by telephone or in writing to any of our offices. Any complaint will be initially dealt with by the appropriate section who will offer a solution under the direction of the section manager. If a written reply is requested, we will take no more than 10 business days to respond to an enquiry or complaint.

If the solution or action taken does not satisfy the complainant, the matter will be referred to the Managing Director for review. The Managing Director will ensure that the complaint has been properly investigated and that the final decision has taken into account the customer's rights and obligations. The reply will inform the customer of the actions or decisions taken by LMW and the reasons for these decisions, including any legislative or policy basis for them, if appropriate.

A dispute is considered to be resolved if LMW has informed the customer of the decision on the customer's complaint and the outcome of any review, and 10 business days have passed during which time the customer has not:

- a) Sought a further review of the complaint; or
- b) Lodged a claim in an external dispute resolution forum.

The complaint review will be conducted in accordance with the procedures for enquiries, as set out above. In the event that the complaint is not resolved, the matter will be considered to have become a dispute. We will inform the customer that they may refer the matter to an external body for dispute resolution. Such bodies include EWO(V) (free call: 1800 500 509), VCAT or Consumer Affairs Victoria. We will advise the customer how they may contact these bodies.

Lower Murray Water keeps a record of all complaints made, the action taken to achieve their resolution, and our responses to the complaints.

3 MEDIA AND SENSITIVE ISSUES ESCALATION PROCESS

LMW's Communication and Engagement Team is responsible for:

- Developing story leads
- Responding to media enquiries
- Providing information to assist with closing out project-specific media enquiries
- Developing and regularly updating briefs around specific matters.

All media enquiries and ideas for news stories should be directed to LMW's Communication and Engagement Team.

As per the LMW External Media Policy (CTD/003254), the Managing Director is LMW's spokesperson.

3.1 REACTIVE MEDIA

All media enquiries are directed to comms@lmw.vic.gov.au.

Once received, LMW's Communication and Engagement Team will draft the response and manage approvals (including through DELWP Media) as per Figure 1 below.

Figure 1 - Managing media enquiries

Media enquiries
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Acknowledge receipt of email with journalist or sender2. Decide if written statement or interview will be provided3. Alert Managing Director and relevant General Manager4. Write draft response/talking points: check existing information, fact sheets, website for agreed messaging, check facts with staff. If supplying images, check they are approved for release5. Send enquiry details and proposed response/talking points to subject matter expert for approval6. Send enquiry details and proposed response/talking points to relevant General Manager for approval7. Send enquiry details and proposed response/talking points to Managing Director for approval8. Send enquiry details and proposed response/talking points to DELWP Media (who will gain approval from Department/Minister's Office)9. Send approved response to journalist (cc comms@lmw.vic.gov.au)10. Send copy of approved response to relevant staff11. File response in Content Manager

Proactive media and communications

LMW develops an annual Communications and Engagement Plan to map out proactive communications. Other news stories (human interest stories, outstanding work, etc.) should be directed to the Communications and Engagement Team.

4 KEY MESSAGES

LMW communications will be developed using the following key messages as a guide (these can be adjusted for specific use). These key messages are to be updated as topics or issues emerge for LMW.

Lower Murray Water

- Lower Murray Water provides water and sewerage services to some 75,000 customers in north-west Victoria, spread from Kerang/Wemba-Wemba through to the South Australian border/Latji Latji Land.
- Our customers are made up of 71,000 urban customers and 4,700 rural customers.

- On the urban side, we provide residents and businesses with drinkable water as well as waste services.
- We provide our customers with safe, clean and reliable drinking water as well as waste water services.
- Our rural customers are a mix of irrigators and stock and domestic customers.
- We work with our irrigation customers to ensure we can provide safe and reliable water when they need it. We maintain and upgrade a network of approximately 1820 kilometres of channels, pipes, and drains across Sunraysia and Robinvale, supporting the vital agriculture sector that our region relies on to thrive.
- We are unique to most other Victorian water corporations because we deliver services to urban and rural customers.

Workforce

- We employ around 200 people based at offices and worksites right through our service region. Our people are experts in fields such as water treatment and testing, project delivery, electrical and engineering, finance, information and communications technology, and communications.
- We pride ourselves on our inclusive and diverse workforce and celebrate that everyone at LMW is unique in their own way.

Our purpose

- Our purpose is to support our region to prosper by successfully delivering vital water services.
- Our vision is for a healthy, sustainable water future underpinned by a LMW culture of performance excellence, built in partnership with our staff, customers, and communities.

Customer service

- Our customers are at the centre of everything we do. Their concerns, interests, and priorities are at the heart of our future planning.
- We want to know how our service as a provider of water and waste services impacts individuals and our community.
- We are a part of the community in the regions we service. We encourage all customers to contact us with any questions or concerns.
- We operate a 24/7 emergencies and afterhours fault line - please call 1800 808 830.

How we manage your water

- The water we manage comes mostly from the Murray River, including Lake Hume. Through government agreements, we receive a bulk water entitlement which we then manage for homes, irrigators, businesses, and the environment such as parks and sporting grounds.

Sewerage

- We provide sewerage services to some 31,100 customers across the region.

- Sewerage includes everything that goes down the kitchen, laundry, and bathroom sink, as well as what you flush down the toilet.
- Anything you put down your sink or flush down your toilet can have a major effect on the environment, our assets (such as pumps), and on the costs associated with treating the sewerage.
- We operate ten sewerage treatment plants and associated sewerage systems. The sewerage system is made up of the pipes, pump stations, treatment plants, and equipment required to collect, transport, treat and dispose of the sewage.

Our environment

- Water is a vital resource and we all need to work together to make every drop count.
- We rely on a healthy environment to source the best quality water for our customers. This is why we are constantly looking to improve our environmental practices.
- We provide urban water, rural irrigation services, and sewerage services to our customers in an environmentally responsible and ecologically sound manner.

Water conservation

Water is a vital resource and we all need to work together to make every drop count.

Lower Murray Water continues to actively promote water conservation within the community.

Lower Murray Water focus on educating the next generation through our primary and high school programs that are filled with age specific water conservation and sustainability messages.

- We host tours of our treatment plants so students and the broader community can get an understanding of our process and how the water gets from the river to their tap or property.
- We run programs directed at the general community, such as water conservation education programs and sprinkler exchange for urban customers.
- For more information on water saving and conservation, visit our website at www.lmw.vic.gov.au

Water quality

- Our expert staff ensure your water is safe, of a high quality, and tastes good.
- We start with the water from the Murray River and put it through various filtration processes before pumping it for use in our communities.
- The water quality must also meet the requirements of the Safe Drinking Water Act 2003 (SDWA).
- All our treatment plants treat the water to comply with the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines (ADWG), which is the standard required by the Victorian Government.

Monitoring and testing

- We continuously monitor our water to ensure it is safe.
- We collect samples before and during the water treatment process so we know exactly what to treat the water with. The environment around the Murray River is constantly changing and this means the water changes as well.

- We test the water before it leaves our treatment plants to check it is safe and ready for our customers.
- An independent laboratory that is accredited by the National Association of Testing Authorities (NATA) and approved by the Department of Human Services, tests the water samples.

Safety and risk management

- Lower Murray Water puts the safety of our staff and customers above all else.
- We are continuously looking for ways to improve our practices and have a ‘Safety First’ approach to our work.

5 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Table 3 describes some targets that can be used to measure the successes of our communication and engagement efforts. These targets are separated into our main stakeholder groups.

LMW’s 2025 Strategic Plan includes a range of aspirations to be achieved which are relevant to communication and engagement. The Key Performance Targets recognise the role of communication and engagement in delivering on these aspirations.

Table 3 - Key Performance Targets

Stakeholder Group	Key Performance Targets (KPTs)	IAP2 Spectrum in relation to stakeholder/s
<p>Regulators Environmental Protection Authority (EPA), Essential Services Commission (ESC)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timeliness of required regulatory reporting met • Limited negative interactions with the community <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Quantity of queries or complaints received on a specific matter ii. LMW’s response time to queries and complaints • Facilitate opportunities to provide regulators with quarterly updates on mitigation and management to measure performance, community interaction and site inspections (where relevant) • Demonstration of ongoing engagement with stakeholder groups • Evidence of how ongoing engagement has informed LMW’s operational decisions • Benchmarks of community engagement on water management, water conservation, and water regulation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform, involve, collaborate
<p>State and Federal governments/departments, local councils, Members of Parliament, relevant Ministers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement on matters of interest <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Timeliness and frequency of updates ii. Satisfaction with level of service, quality of information • Effectiveness of LMW’s consultation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Timeliness ii. Targeted channels iii. Relevance and usefulness of information collected/shared 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform, consult

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> iv. Evidence of how engagement has informed LMW's operational decisions v. Reviewing enquiries and complaints data to identify unresolved or recurring issues and emerging trends 	
<p>General public i.e. customers, residents, community groups, CALD and vulnerable communities, schools</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community sentiment (targeted surveys) • Quality of customer response to campaigns/surveys • Reviewing enquiries and complaints data to identify unresolved or recurring issues and emerging trends • Observing the level of participation at activities/events such as displays and information sessions • Media monitoring including social media • Analysis of website data • Analysis of data from community outcome reports, community and stakeholder meetings and from stakeholder contact database • Lessons learned to share with LMW's organisation-wide operations • Delivery of relevant messages regarding how we manage the community's water • Relevant or required upcoming work notifications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform, consult, collaborate

6 REVIEW PERIOD

Review of this Strategy should be undertaken on an annual basis, or as required in the event of the following:

- Upon receipt of new regulatory approval conditions, licences and permits.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of LMW's communications and engagement against Key Performance Indicators.
- When directed by any appropriate regulator.

APPENDIX A - 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN COMMUNICATIONS, ENGAGEMENT AND STAKEHOLDER GOALS

Aspiration	Priority / Foundation	KPI/s	2021/22 KPIs/Target/s	2021/2022 activities
Embed authentic customer engagement across the business	Service Delivery - Achieve high quality outcomes for our customers	Achieve a year-on-year improvement on customer service data		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report provided to Board and Executive to describe 2020 Customer Survey Results including summary of key metrics and opportunities for improvement
Enhance communications and education with customers and communities to build confidence in LMW	Service Delivery - Achieve high quality outcomes for our customers Engagement - effective engagement with our stakeholders	100% delivery of our Communication and Community Engagement Plan (currently unmeasurable)	100% delivery of our Communication and Community Engagement Plan (currently unmeasurable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement an annual Communication and Community Engagement Plan
Enhance stakeholder relationships to build confidence in and generate future opportunities for LMW and our region	Engagement - effective engagement with our stakeholders	100% delivery of Stakeholder Engagement Plan	100% delivery of Stakeholder Engagement Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement a Stakeholder Engagement Plan Bi-annual meetings with councils, MRD, major customers Quarterly CSAC and SAC meetings Annual meetings with major customers Update and publish future development sequencing/servicing plans for transparency (website, other channels)
Enhance stakeholder relationships to build confidence in and generate future	Engagement - effective engagement	Increase stakeholder engagement in LMW projects (from concept and design to		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify stakeholders Re-invigorate relationships with key stakeholders and identify potential concept projects

opportunities for LMW and our region	with our stakeholders	implementation and assessment)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with the project team to engage stakeholders throughout the process • Evaluate success of engagement at end of project •
Enhance stakeholder relationships to build confidence in and generate future opportunities for LMW and our region	Engagement - effective engagement with our stakeholders	Reconciliation Action Plan's full implementation	Reconciliation Action Plan's full implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsibility assigned (Executive level) and appropriate resources provided • Review and develop annually • Completion of cultural heritage management plans for Victorian Murray Floodplain Restoration Project
Enhance stakeholder relationships to build confidence in and generate future opportunities for LMW and our region	Engagement - effective engagement with our stakeholders	Water Plan 5's development PREMO rating maintained ('standard' categorization) by the Essential Services Commission (ESC)	PREMO rating maintained ('standard' categorization) by the Essential Services Commission (ESC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water Plan 5 project plan delivered in full and on time
Optimise our infrastructure through improved life cycle management	Infrastructure - ensure our assets and infrastructure meet current and future needs	Service Performance: Year-on-year improvement in customer satisfaction with infrastructure and asset-related services (regarding water pressure, service interruptions and availability)	Service performance: year on year improvement in customer satisfaction with infrastructure and asset-related services (regarding water pressure, service interruptions and availability)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyse customer survey, complaint data to identify areas of poor performance • Provide advice to project manager on feedback from community engagement • Promote the delivered WP4 projects through communication and stakeholder engagement activities • Promote the actions/works within WP5 and their benefits to customers and communities through communication and stakeholder engagement activities.



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