Victoria's response to Interim Update 1

Improve accountability for pricing trade-offs

Information request 1 on page 12

What the PC asks:

Roles and responsibilities of governments and regulators

Have unclear or overlapping roles between governments, regulators and utilities affected the transparency of pricing decisions or the security, sustainability or resilience of water services? Please provide specific examples from your jurisdiction.

In Victoria, the roles of the Department of Environment, Energy and Climate Action (DEECA) (governance and policy), the Department of Treasury and Finance (DTF) (shareholder oversight) the Essential Services Commission (ESC) (price and service regulation), and the water corporations (service delivery) have legislative roles and responsibilities with supporting. governance frameworks to provide clear authorisation and accountability and facilitates transparency. Ongoing coordination ensures the balance of security (safety, reliability and affordability) and sustainability water services.

Pricing determinations are delivered by the ESC through a clear process where guidance, submissions and decisions are all published and consulted on.

The security, sustainability or resilience of water services is subject to various reviews and strategies over different time horizons. These include annual water outlooks, urban water strategies, long-term water resource assessments and sustainable water strategies.

How would clearer public statements about the respective roles of governments, regulators and utilities improve pricing and investment decisions? What should role statements cover?

The roles of the various parties in Victoria are well defined by primary legislation (*Water Act 1989, Water Industry Act 1994, Essential Services Act 2001, Financial Management Act 1994* and the *Public Administration Act 2004*). This is supported by subordinate instruments which further define the role and functions of entities, particularly the Water Industry Regulatory Order for the ESC and various statements of obligations for the water corporations. These are complemented by existing public statements available via websites prepared by each element. It is unclear that value may be presented by additional role statements, and in light of some state or regional differences, it will be important to avoid confusion with conflicting statements.

Are there examples of governments making clear, specific upfront statements of policy or regulatory objectives, which has contributed to transparency or lower time/cost of pricing processes? For which objectives would greater upfront clarity be most valuable?

There are numerous examples, including Victoria's approach to developing public facing strategies and policies such as Water for Victoria and Sustainable Water Strategies. More recently, published *Industry Water Connection Guide,* sets out expectations for new large water connections. This provides clear guidance on policy and regulation – further enabling investment by providing proponents with greater certainty regarding approval requirements, sequencing of decisions, assessment criteria and agency responsibilities.

In Victoria, additional guidance material is published by the Essential Service Commission regarding pricing submissions processes including appeals and hardship processes.

Affordability as a social equity objective

Should governments define (or change how they define) affordability as a social equity objective of pricing processes, and if so what definition(s) should they use?

In a full cost recovery framework like Victoria's, affordability has to be considered against investment and service deliverability, and financial sustainability – including for current and future generations. Victoria does not have a specific measure of affordability but the framework achieves a balance by focusing on careful capital planning, prudent and efficient expenditure, and support for vulnerable customers.

Clear and agreed upon definitions might improve transparency, support more consistent decision-making and help distinguish between affordability issues that can be addressed through prices, and those that can be addressed by targeted support for financially stressed customers (including water sector specific hardship programs, or via statewide utility grants).

However, caution would need to be exercised to avoid creating a mechanistic approach to affordability and perverse outcomes such as artificial stable or reducing prices which impact on provision of services or delay required investment, impacting on affordability for future generations.

How should this objective be established – for example, through legislation, policy statements, pricing guidance or shareholder expectations?

Victoria's legislative framework for the ESC sets expectations around customer prices, which are reinforced by the Minister for Water's Water Industry Regulatory Order, and the ESC's Water Industry Standards, both under the Water Industry Act.

The Minister for Water emphasises these obligations of water corporations in the Corporate Planning Guidelines which sets customers and community-centred engagement as an expectation.

Financial sustainability objective

How would more consistent public reporting about utilities' financial resilience and investment capacity improve transparency about how pricing decisions affect the financial sustainability of businesses?

Victoria has a consistent public reporting framework for water corporations. As corporations, Victoria's water businesses are required to prepare corporate plans and publish annual reports including financial statements in accordance with AASB standards and any Financial Reporting Directions prepared by the Minister for Finance. Consistent public reporting helps stakeholders understand not only what customers are paying today, but that utilities remain financially capable of delivering safe, reliable, affordable and sustainable services into the future. It can help identify warning signs of emerging risks – increasing financial pressure, reductions in (asset) performance and other leading indicators.

What process should be applied to decide what metrics or analysis should be reported?

In Victoria, the state is shareholder of the water corporations and administers a financial governance framework.

The ESC uses financial metric to assess the financial sustainability of the entities in making its pricing determinations.

Who should report them, and where? If (beyond systematic collation) this involves any new reporting requirements, how should they be introduced to minimise compliance costs?

Water corporations should remain the primary source of financial and operating information, while the ESC is best placed to provide independent regulatory analysis and benchmarking, and DEECA and DTF are best positioned to assess broader budgetary, fiscal and financing implications. DEECA needs to maintain independent visibility of the statutory and regulatory metrics to ensure they are interpreted in the context of long-term policy objectives and portfolio operations. Any new reporting requirements should build on existing reporting obligations, with a focus on consistency, transparency and how this information is used – rather than additional compliance burden.

Enabling timely investment in large, long-term assets

What nationally consistent principles, or jurisdictional governance reforms, would improve the timeliness, transparency and efficiency of expenditure decisions on large or multi-stage water system augmentations or renewals, and support long-term capital planning? For example, should governments make these decisions separately from 5-year pricing processes (where they exist), and if so, how?

Victoria has well established frameworks and processes in place to support large scale and long-term capital programs. Water corporations prepare long-term capital management plans as well as water supply plans and under the legislative framework. DEECA prepares Sustainable Water Strategies and from time-to-time releases related water policies to guide investment processes and decisions – such as Water for Victoria or the Water Security Plan. The sector is also guided in considering climate change risks under the Climate Change Adaptation Action Plans.

The benefit of nationally consistent principles is unclear, given the variations across jurisdictional approaches. Any national reforms would need to consider the risk of complicating State planning frameworks and the additional cost to entities (and ultimately customers) to administer.

Jurisdictions should remain agile in their decision-making processes and if required enact processes outside the 5-year planning process cycled if required, noting and having clear understanding on the interaction with, and impact, of future pricing determinations. This needs to be supported by appropriate spend on readiness activities, such as planning/design before significant investment occurs ion major capital investment.

Transparent risk profile that reflects public preferences

What actions are governments or regulators already taking in your jurisdiction to improve transparency about trade-offs between near-term bill impacts and longer-term system resilience?

Victoria requires long-term water planning, transparent pricing reviews, and community engagement processes that explicitly assess and communicate trade-offs between short-term bill impacts, and the investment needed to maintain system resilience, reliability and future growth. All pricing proposals and determinations are publicly available and so are water corporations long term water security strategies (Urban Water Strategies).

What further actions should governments take to improve transparency of decision-making – such as relating to policy objectives, scenario analysis, or supply-demand balance assumptions?

The Victorian government supports water corporations with state-wide information on climate forecasts and through the Statement of Obligations frameworks and other policy and guidance documents including *Urban Water Strategy Guidelines*. The Urban Water Strategy guidelines require water corporations to outline they will address any forecast water supply imbalance and in doing so consider a range of scenarios.

How could governments better align risk settings with public preferences and willingness to pay for resilient services (including in the event of low probability but high impact disasters)?

This is already embodied in Victoria's pricing framework, where water corporations must demonstrate engagement with customers and provide evidence that public preference (willingness to pay) has been considered in, and influence, investment decisions.

How could any developments to improve the transparency of risk assumptions underlying pricing decisions be designed so that utilities are incentivised to innovate, including to manage risk?

Victorian Water Corporations are expected to clearly explain key risks, assumptions and decision triggers, while retaining flexibility in how risks are managed. The regulatory framework focuses on outcomes (rather than prescribing actions), which supports innovation, and the adoption of least-cost approaches to managing uncertainty. The economic regulatory framework incentivises water corporations to be innovative to drive efficiency and thereby outperforming their price determination.

What examples from other policy and regulatory practices in other infrastructure service sectors may be relevant?

Consideration could be given to greater transparency of the risk assumptions underpinning major capex decisions, including the use of confidence levels (for example P50/P90 estimates) where appropriate.

Balancing national consistency versus jurisdictional flexibility

How would nationally consistent guidance improve pricing and governance arrangements across jurisdictions? If so, what specifically should this cover?

What role, if any, should the Australian Government play in developing or supporting that guidance?

Victoria has a highly developed regulatory framework which balances the investment requirements of the sector and customer prices. The ESC is required under its act to have regard to interstate and international benchmarks for prices, costs and returns on assets in comparable industries. Setting this expectation for the regulators in other states might be appropriate.

The closer any guidance or frameworks are developed to the delivery agency or end customer the better, allowing for consideration of local requirements.

Support more integrated planning, charging and regulation

Information request 2 on page 16

What the PC asks:

Improve integrated planning for growth

How can economic oversight and pricing arrangements be improved to:

- address coordination challenges across water services planning, land-use planning, housing growth, data centre development, stormwater and wastewater planning, and/or broader regional water resource planning?
- ensure options that incur operating expenditure, such as water efficiency and demand management, are assessed on an equal footing with capital intensive options?
- improve how water services planning and delivery support self-determination of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and government commitments under the National Agreement of Closing the Gap?
- what national-level actions would best improve coordination? What specific matters should any national guidance or expectations cover?

Oversight should focus on supporting integrated, least-cost outcomes, rather than prescribing solutions or governance models. Victoria has a clear integration between long term water security planning, including actions required to respond to changing demand (population growth and emerging demands, such as large commercial water use) - via urban water strategies and sustainable water strategies - and translation of these into long term capital programs facilitated via 5 yearly pricing determinations.

Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander self-determination by requiring water corporations and the water sector to engage early and meaningfully with Traditional Owners.

As noted in Victoria's policy document *Water is Life*: "*Returning water rights without addressing fees and charges would be a significant financial burden for Traditional Owner groups and may result in Traditional Owners having to sell their water to pay the fees (see Hartwig, Jackson and Osborne, 2020). This would undermine the restorative justice approach, which aims to begin addressing the harms of colonisation, including the almost total exclusion of Traditional Owners from holding water entitlements.*" Pricing arrangements should therefore seek to support restorative water justice and consider mechanisms, including funding arrangements to support Traditional Owners in meeting fees and charges associated with their water entitlements and are adequately supported to participate in decision-making and consultation processes.

Any national guidance should build on existing planning processes and promote consistency, transparency and better decision-making, while allowing flexibility for jurisdictions to respond to local circumstances.

The PC previously recommended updating the National Urban Water Planning Principles and embedding them within the NWI to establish a standard for best practice urban water system planning. What, if any, other nationally consistent guidance would improve integrated planning for growth and urban amenity?

Victoria has a well-established framework for urban water planning that is regularly reviewed to ensure it is best practice (see summary below). It should be noted that like all regions the responsibilities for managing integrated planning for growth and amenity. Ongoing work is required to ensure that the legislation and planning instruments for the Planning and Water portfolios are aligned to achieve the best outcomes, including for urban amenity, economic growth and water security.

Victoria's urban water planning and assurance framework offers a robust example of how long-term water security strategic planning can be strengthened using annual water security monitoring activities to ensure urban water system planning remains sensitive to changes in population growth or declining water resource availability.

Urban Water Strategies, developed by water corporations are the key planning tools used by Victoria's urban water corporations to deliver sustainable water for cities and towns now and into the future. Developed every 5 years, these strategies aim to support resilient and liveable communities while balancing social, environmental and economic costs and benefits across the water cycle.

Developed using Ministerial guidance (latest version from December 2025), urban water strategies help urban water corporations decide what technology agnostic actions will be needed over the next 50 years to make sure the water and sewerage services in cities and towns are prepared for changes in population and climate.

Victoria also runs a program called 'Integrated Water Management' this program works across water corporations, local governments, catchment management authorities and other community parties to deliver fit for purpose water where required to meet growth and other demands and to minimise the environmental impacts that maybe caused by water in growth areas e.g. stormwater runoff.

In the short-term, Victoria's urban water corporations produce an annual water outlook to report on the current condition of each of their water supply systems, including storage positions, predicted future water availability and plans to cope with any shortages if they arise.

Developed using guidance provided by DEECA, annual water outlooks also enable Victoria's urban water corporations monitor changing trends in supply and demand and respond adaptively, by deferring or bringing forward system specific urban water security actions documented in their urban water strategy.

Improve charging for growth

The PC previously recommended that in updating the NWI, jurisdictions should recommit to cost reflective developer charges, improve guidance on funding stormwater management and incorporate stormwater into pricing frameworks. What, if any, other nationally consistent guidance would improve the clarity, consistency and efficiency of developer charges for water services across jurisdictions?

Victoria has a well-established framework for recovering the costs of development. This was recently reviewed by the ESC and included engagement and consultation with stakeholders including developers. Any national guidance should be principles based rather than prescription, focus on promoting cost-reflective charging, transparency, consistency and efficient investment outcomes, while recognising differing planning, regulatory and governance arrangements across jurisdictions.

Reduce regulatory burden

What arrangements would ensure that impact analysis is undertaken consistently, early enough, and with sufficient transparency, to inform decisions about new or changed regulatory requirements affecting water utilities?

Victoria has a highly structured impact statement process for new regulations.

Priorities for self-determined improvements to water services in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities

Information request 3 on page 20

What the PC asks:

Are there additional priorities to those summarised in figure 2 that would support self-determined improvements to the security, resilience and sustainability of water services in discrete Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities?

Figure 2 broadly captures what we've heard from Community. Additional priorities outlined below are intended to be relevant for all First Nations communities, beyond just discrete communities.

- Standards and reporting:
    - Introducing oversight by Traditional Owner/First Nations Groups on the implementation of these priorities to ensure they are being implemented in an appropriate and effective manner.
- Community capability and partnerships:
    - Working with Traditional Owners, water entities and responsible departments to reduce/remove barriers to self-determination.
- Infrastructure, governance and data:
    - Explicitly recognising the need for sustained resourcing to support community participation in water service planning, governance and decision-making. Essentially ensuring that our Traditional Custodians are sufficiently resourced to participate/progress the priorities.

What are the key policy reforms that Australian governments could undertake to support those additional priorities?

N/A

Service delivery in regional and remote areas

Information request 4 on page 21

What the PC asks:

Please provide information about specific cases of existing or prospective collaborative models that support secure, resilient and sustainable water service provision in regional or remote areas, including any approaches by governments/government-owned service providers to:

- coordinate between government agencies
- enable water service providers and/or their customers and consumers to navigate government approval, grant-making and regulatory processes
- ensure self-determination by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander customers and consumers
- design funding criteria, guidelines, staging and timelines to incentivise innovation, efficiency and customer/consumer-led planning
- select technology and infrastructure options that are fit for purpose, place and people, including to ensure financial sustainability and resilience to adverse events
- build the capacity of regional and remote service providers, and the local community more generally, in water services planning and delivery, including local

employment and skills or other changes that were or could be fundamental to successful outcomes.

All Victorians are covered by a water corporation and with over 95% of Victorians receiving water services from these public entities.

Victoria's Water Security Plan and the Urban Water Strategies involve coordinated planning across multiple water corporations and government agencies to manage climate risks, population growth and future supply augmentation.

Victoria's *Water is Life* Roadmap provides a framework for increased Traditional Owner participation in water planning, management and decision-making, supporting self-determination and long-term stewardship of water resource.

What state and territory government policy reforms and actions would expand the adoption of collaborative, efficient service delivery models across regional and remote areas? Such as related to:

- facilitating adoption and upscaling of learning from successful cases
- state budget proposal design
- grant administration and evaluation.

How could the Australian Government support jurisdictions to facilitate adoption of improved service delivery models?

The Water Services Association of Australia (WSAA) provides a knowledge-sharing network to enable successful models to be shared across jurisdictions. The Australian government could provide financial support to WSAA to support its work.

Sustainable funding for improvements in small towns and communities

Information request 5 on page 24

What the PC asks:

Basic level of services (BLOS)

How should governments address key barriers to establishing a BLOS, including (but not limited to) any related to:

- coordination or consistency of objectives between health, water, infrastructure, housing, energy and/or central agencies?
- collection, collation and transparent reporting of accurate data on service outcomes?
- establishing the variable and incremental costs of efficiently meeting a BLOS?

- establishing the long-term multi-sector benefits of a BLOS, including to inform state and territory budgetary decisions?
- potential risks or unintended outcomes of establishing a BLOS and how could they be avoided?

A BLOS framework would require clear service expectations, transparent data, sustainable funding arrangements, appropriate economic oversight and strong coordination across governments and sectors.

Consideration should also be given to the metric and impact for which a BLOS is being provided – in relation to the provision of water services and/or water security measure. For example, consideration of Water Security Levels of services is required to be explored as part of urban water strategies for all areas supplied by a water corporation in Victoria (i.e. over 95% of the population).

Cost-reflective pricing could be a barrier for BLOS if measured at the individual community / small regional town scale. In Victoria, prices are generally set across an entire water corporation service area so that existing small towns can be cost-effectively serviced, but connecting additional communities that are located outside of existing service areas has been challenging to date as the 'user pays' pricing model often makes this cost prohibitive for those customers.

What service outcomes should be included in the definition of a national or jurisdictional BLOS?

- Which existing indicators and data sources could be used to measure those service outcomes (for example, from the urban National Performance Report)?

Existing data collection provides a starting point for defining and monitoring a BLOS. The Essential Services Commission (ESC) in Victoria already collects and reports a range of service performance indicators across Victorian water corporations, including drinking water quality complaints, water supply interruptions, sewer blockages, sewer spill containment, customer complaints, affordability measures and customer support outcomes. see Water performance reports | Essential Services Commission.

Victoria is unclear on the benefits derived from setting national BLOSs given variation in jurisdictional approaches to water services and variation in community/ customer expectations. BLOS should be at the discretion of jurisdictions and be issue specific – for example LOS in relation to water security and role of water restrictions.

How should local considerations or flexibility, such as standards related to reliability, be determined, assessed and publicly reported so that they:

- accurately reflect customer and consumer expectations?

- provide a basis for providers and governments to be accountable for service outcomes?

Any indicator needs to be based on the expectations of customers and the community on the appropriate level of service they expect from their water corporation and their willingness to pay. The ESC's PREMO framework in Victoria ensures customers and the community are engaged in this process, and that their preferences are reflected in long term planning/pricing outcomes. Urban Water Strategies also consider community expectations in relation to water security and the use of water restrictions.

Community service obligation (CSO) payments

In addition to establishing a BLOS, how should governments address key barriers to implementing transparent, predictable CSO payments, including (but not limited to) any related to:

- decision-making about changes to cross-subsidies?
- transaction costs of implementation for both government agencies and service providers?

If the CSO is outside the legislative responsibilities of the entity and what can be charged to customers, appropriate funding arrangements should be considered. Noting that the water corporation hardship schemes are a CSO but these are within the regulatory framework.

How should CSO payments be designed to:

- cost-effectively increase resilience of service outcomes to climate variability and extreme weather, input cost shocks and other sources of risk and uncertainty?
- incentivise collaboration between providers?
- incentivise and enable innovation and efficiency, including if and as far as possible, to recover costs?

In Victoria, the Minister can specify obligations of the regulated entity in performing its functions and exercising its powers under the Statement of Obligation. These obligations are funded by customers.

What principles and accountability mechanisms should be implemented to support the transparency of CSO payments within a governments' budget cycle?

- Should affordability be defined to support calculation of CSO payments by state and territory governments and if so, how? Would a nationally consistent definition support transparency?
- What other criteria should be developed and how?

- What governance arrangements, economic oversight, evaluation, public reporting (such as by departments and/or Ministers), or other arrangements would support transparency of CSO payment allocations and outcomes?

Generally, Victoria does not make CSO payments. However, were they to be introduced appropriate level of oversight and evaluation is also needed, possibly via reporting to the accountable Minister.

Standardised tools for consumer-led planning, monitoring and evaluation

Information request 6 on page 26

What the PC asks:

How could adoption of standardised tools and processes support improved consumer-led planning and overall water service outcomes?

We understand the use in some places, however it is also Victoria's experience that standardised tools can disincentivise innovation or make engagement more procedural and therefore less meaningful.

How could such tools be applied to ensure accountability of service providers and government agencies for service outcomes?

See above.

Are there any potential risks or unintended outcomes of using standardised tools and processes, and how could they be avoided?

See above.

What lessons are there from other consumer- or community-focused tools and processes in related areas (for example, water management, health) that could inform the development of equivalent tools for water service provision in regional and/or remote areas?

To realise the value of standardised tools and processes for consumer-led planning, monitoring and evaluation:

- how could they be adapted to local needs and contexts including, but not limited to, culturally appropriate methods for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities?
- how should the costs of adapting and implementing such tools on an ongoing basis be managed?

- how could the outputs from locally implemented community tools for planning, monitoring and evaluation inform government processes at a jurisdiction or national level?
- who should have what roles in developing and using such tools? What, if any, should be the roles of governments?

See above.

Nationally consistent reporting on drinking water quality

Information request 7 on page 27

What the PC asks:

Is legislative change to enact reporting standards the most appropriate way to facilitate greater national consistency in drinking water quality data? If not, what alternative approach could improve consistency, noting the current Australian Drinking Water Guidelines (ADWG) have been inconsistently adopted and applied?

What national reporting standards would be most useful (for example, minimum, maximum, average values for water quality compliance outcomes; boil water alerts; do-not-drink notices)? What elements of the ADWG could be drawn on for national reporting standards?

Which Commonwealth agency(s) are best placed to be involved in the process of data collection, analysis, custodianship and coordination to improve national consistency in data and reporting?

How could the process to develop consistent reporting standards be designed to benefit and account for the end uses of a range of stakeholders – including customers and consumers, regulators and government agencies, and community-controlled organisations?

How could national reporting requirements be implemented and enforced to minimise costs and regulatory burdens for service providers? For example, by using technology to streamline reporting and reduce duplication (such as the central repository managed by NSW Health), or by staging implementation to support providers to adjust to changes (as in the rollout of Queensland's Statewide Water Information Management system).

In addition to drinking water quality reporting, are there other service outcomes (for example, reliability and affordability) where greater national consistency in definitions and reporting would support more secure, resilient and sustainable water services delivery?

What approaches to nationally consistent reporting on drinking water quality would support Indigenous data sovereignty and Indigenous data governance?

The Department of Health administers the Safe Drinking Water Act 2003 and Safe Drinking Water Regulations 2025. The regulations include health-based drinking water quality standards that incorporate all Australian Drinking Water Guidelines listed characteristics with a health-based guideline value.

The Department of Health produces the Annual Water Quality Report which is tabled in Parliament each year. These annual reports summarise Victoria's drinking water quality performance and the activities of the Department of Health every financial year.

Further information requests regarding 'Nationally consistent reporting on drinking water quality regarding drinking water treatment and quality reporting' should be directed to the Victorian Department of Health and need to take into account regulatory burden.

Current practices of water corporations in applying Australian Drinking Water Guidelines:

- Water corporations monitor and manage water quality based on a risk-based approach required under the *Victorian Safe Drinking Water Act 2003* and apply Australian Drinking Water Guidelines.
- They report annually to the Department of Health Secretary on issues relating to the quality of drinking water quality as required by section 26 of the Safe Drinking Water Act 2003.
- Water corporations also produce their own annual reports on drinking water quality, and these reports are available on their individual websites.

Role of Australian Government investment and funding programs

Information request 8 on page 28

What the PC asks:

Given there are multiple levels of government involved in funding and delivering water services, are there improvements to governance arrangements that would better facilitate funding provision?

For example, are there parts of the National Water Grid Investment Framework or other supporting documentation that could be made more specific or binding as a condition for the Commonwealth to provide funding (for example, requiring cost-benefit analyses be published, or specifying the types of operational expenses that jurisdictions must provide to support projects after the capital investment)?

What opportunities are there to improve the security, resilience and sustainability of Australia's water services through existing Australian Government programs, and further support the 'crowding in' of investment by jurisdictions and the water services industry?

For example, could investment be supported by a component of the Remote Jobs and Economic Development program being targeted towards establishing long-term employment in community-led essential services delivery? Or by expanding eligibility for the Green Treasury Bonds program to include finance for other water projects that meet climate change or environmental objectives

National Water Grid Fund (NWGF) Investment Framework principles

- Victoria follows the NWGF Investment Framework principles when seeking co-funding for projects.
- This includes demonstrating alignment with cost recovery pricing, public benefit, benefit-cost analyses and engagement with First Nations (Traditional Owner) communities.
- This principle is also important in securing state co-funding for projects in accordance with *Water for Victoria*, *Water is Life* and water corporation *Statement of Obligations*.

Transparency

- Victoria supports transparency in the Commonwealth publishing details of how it assesses funding proposals and criteria weighting.
- In relation to publishing project summaries once funded, Victorian also supports this as part of transparency (as already done via DCCEEW web and FFA-Schedules).
- However, some project documentation (e.g. business cases) entails commercial in confidence information that are not appropriate for publishing, such as propriety and financial information.

Other fund sources

- Victoria supports the utilisation other Federal funding for investment into water infrastructure projects. This may include the Green Treasury Bonds program, Remote Jobs and Economic Development program or others as appropriate.
- As reported to the NWGF, Victorian has a significant pipeline of major water infrastructure projects over the next 4-10 years seeking Federal co-investment to enable their scale up and construction.

- Victoria is well placed to deliver projects that deliver objectives of multiple fund sources, including projects that can deliver regional water security, productivity; plus socio-economic, environmental and Traditional Owner outcomes.