



# CUSTOMER SERVICE CHARTER

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<b>Date</b>	<b>Version</b>	<b>Change</b>
21 <sup>st</sup> November 2005	Version 1 Revision 0	Approved for distribution
16 <sup>th</sup> August 2007	Version 1 Revision 1	<p>Inserted Table of Contents &amp; Table of Changes.</p> <p>Clause 1.4, 1.5, 1.6 edits to wording (clarification)</p> <p>Inserted Clause 2.5.1 RPZs</p> <p>Inserted Clause 2.5.2 Air Gaps</p> <p>Inserted Clause 2.6 Interference with assets</p>
28 <sup>th</sup> June 2010	Version 1 Revision 2	<p>Inserted table of contents and table of charges</p> <p>Paragraph 3.5 Change of 48 hours to 5 business days</p> <p>Paragraph 5.10 Change of period of 21 days to 15 days</p> <p>Change of fax number from 6346 7601 to 6346 6525</p> <p>Page 1 Fourth paragraph change of name to Department of Environment and Conservation</p> <p>Inserted new section 6 Customer connection paragraphs 6.1 to 6.7</p>
21 <sup>st</sup> July 2010	Version 1 Revision 3	Page 6. Names of Office staff deleted from Administration staff. Names deleted Rae Sanderson and Steve Campbell
23 <sup>rd</sup> September 2010	Version 1 Revision 4	Page 6. Name and phone details of new C.E.O. entered.
15 September 2011	Version 1 Revision 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whole document; minor gramatical and formatting changes.</li> <li>• Page 1 – add Northern Bore field</li> <li>• Pages 1, 3, 4 &amp; 10 – remove reference to demand management, replace with requirement for on-farm storage.</li> </ul>

## Table of Changes

<b>Date</b>	<b>Version</b>	<b>Change</b>
05 June 2012	Version 1 Revision 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Continuation Table of Changes to page 4</li><li>• Contact Details Updated<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ CEO details updated</li><li>○ Operations Supervisor &amp; Operations Assistant position only listed – personal names removed</li></ul></li><li>• Addition of Filename to footer</li></ul>

## HOW WE SUPPLY IRRIGATION WATER

This Customer Service Charter sets out the services and standards of the Gascoyne Water Co-operative Ltd (GWC). GWC supplies irrigation and non-potable water and related services to our member customers in accordance with the Operating Licence issued by the Economic Regulation Authority (ERA) under the Water Services Licensing Act 1995.

Most of our customers are shareholding members of GWC who have access to the Carnarvon Irrigation Distribution System.

Irrigation water is delivered to the farms and other landholders from Brickhouse Pump Station and the northern bore field through a network of pipes located adjacent to plantations on the north and south banks of the Gascoyne River.

Growers who have access to river front prolongations are also licensed to take water from private bores located within these prolongations. Licensing of these wells and bores is the business of the Department of Water. GWC is only responsible for the delivery of water through the piped scheme system.

The Carnarvon Irrigation Area (CIA) is relatively unique among Australian schemes because of the duality of sources for growers in the area served.

The GWC buys bulk water from the Water Corporation bore field south of the Gascoyne River and, under most circumstances, at a pressure suitable for direct delivery to our customers. During times of very high demand, water is diverted to Brickhouse tanks and there pressure is increased through the booster pumps to meet the increased demand.

The GWC is also developing its own bore field north of the Gascoyne River, to satisfy increased demand for water.

The water distribution scheme does not have the capacity to supply all properties with their normal irrigation supply at once (that is at the same time). It is therefore important that members have on-farm storage capacity of at least 24 hours of total water requirement. This way they can draw water from the scheme continuously over 24 hours, but apply water to their crops over a shorter period if needed.

Proper operation of the scheme is necessary to ensure water is supplied without excessive reduction in pressure in the reticulation system and to minimise the costly operation of the booster pumps .

## HOW WE SUPPLY NON-IRRIGATION WATER

Customers who take water for purposes other than irrigation of crops will be customers of a wholly owned subsidiary of GWC – Coral Coast Water Pty Ltd (CCW) and fall under one of two categories: Commercial Customers; and Stock and Garden Customers.

Customers in the first of the two above categories (commercial) include properties where a commercial operation is carried out and the water needs (or part thereof) is supplied from the piped irrigation scheme.

Commercial water use is defined as water used to produce income as opposed to general garden use and stock purposes (such as horses etc). CCW reserves the right to reclassify the service if it becomes evident that commercial business is being conducted and/or produce sold.

They will be charged at the Commercial Rate for Service Charges as determined by the Board of GWC for the size of service installed. The Annual Service Charge for a 50mm Commercial Service will be set at the equivalent of the Irrigation Annual Asset Contribution and will be reviewed annually.

Customers in the second category who take water from the scheme for stock and garden purposes will be charged at the Stock and Garden Rate for Annual Service Charge as determined by the Board of GWC. The Annual Service Charge for a 25mm Stock and Garden Service will be reviewed annually.

There will be no fixed price component to the volumetric charges as there is no defined allocation (but a maximum consumption for each meter size may be applied) for these customers and the Volumetric price for both service categories will be set by GWC from time to time and will be passed through to the customers of CCW. This price will vary in accordance with the Financial Plan of GWC and will be reviewed annually.

## THE SERVICE WE PROVIDE TO YOU

### 1. OPENING AND CLOSING THE IRRIGATION SEASON

- 1.1 The Irrigation Year will commence on the first day of January of each year and close on the last day of December of each year.
- 1.2 The Irrigation Year will also reflect the Billing Year for Commercial and Stock and Garden customers.

### 2. SERVICE DELIVERY

- 2.1 We will endeavour to supply irrigation water that is safe for the irrigation of crops. However, because we purchase bulk water from the Water Corporation, we cannot guarantee that actions by others, beyond our control, will not compromise the quality of the water delivered on farm.
- 2.2 We will work with the Water Corporation, who, under the Bulk Water Supply Agreement, are required to use their best endeavours to deliver water in accordance with the standards for raw water used for town water supplies. (that is, quality standards for water prior to chlorination treatment for microbiological and bacteriological contamination).
- 2.3 Supply of irrigation water for purposes other than irrigation of horticultural crops (Commercial and Stock and Garden) may be on application. If supply is to be made, it would be provided under the terms of a Special Agreement between GWC and the applicant. This agreement would require the recognition by the customer that the water is not provided for human consumption and is regarded as 'non-potable' water.
- 2.4 Any customer intending to use water supplied from the piped irrigation scheme for domestic purposes, does so at their own risk. **Under no circumstances is any water, supplied from the piped irrigation scheme, considered fit for human consumption purposes.**
- 2.5 We will use our best endeavours to supply our customers with their daily irrigation water requirements over 24 hours.
- 2.6 We will allow at our discretion the transfer of water entitlements between properties within the district subject to the completion of the *Transfer of Water Entitlement Form* by both parties, payment of any fees and charges including any arrears from their properties, and the capacity of the system to supply the transferred water. Both parties must be members of the Gascoyne Water Asset Mutual Co-operative (GWAMCO) and GWC. Transfer can be temporary or permanent, but land must not be allowed to be left 'dry', that is with no permanent water allocation at all.

- 2.7 Transfers do not apply to Commercial or Stock and Garden services.
- 2.8 We will allow growers with more than one entitlement to pool their water so that all or part of the entitlement can be delivered to any Supply Point owned by the grower. By completing the pooling administration process, the grower will not have to transfer water each year.
- 2.9 Due to the need to undertake maintenance of pipes, including repairs to leaks and bursts, availability may at times be limited. We will limit interruptions to supply for scheduled shut downs of the supply to normal business hours and affected customers will be advised 5 business days in advance. In the case of leaks and bursts, advanced warning of an interruption to supply may not be possible.
- 2.10 Clearing of blocked meters, damaged services etc. will normally be carried out during normal business hours. Non urgent repairs affected outside normal business hours, at the request of a customer, may incur a charge to cover the additional costs to the GWC.
- 2.11 In the piped irrigation scheme, we will endeavour to supply a consistent pressure of between 15 - 25 metres head, **measured at Brickhouse Pump Station**. Operation at this pressure will ensure a supply of up to 28 Megalitres per day (MLD) into the distribution system which is the equivalent of 10.2 Gigalitres per year. We cannot guarantee the level of pressure in the Piped Irrigation Scheme because we cannot control who is irrigating at any one time. We rely on the cooperation of all members to maintain a 24 hour spread of water usage so that the maximum working pressure is maintained at all times.



### **3. ASSET MANAGEMENT**

- 3.1** We will ensure that cost effective pipe maintenance is carried out to enable efficient and effective distribution of water to customers' supply points.
- 3.2** We will respect the assets and operations of our customers' properties and "leave as found" all infrastructure on private land.
- 3.3** We will provide written notice of entry at least 14 days in advance when it is necessary to enter onto private land for planned major construction works. However, because of the nature of irrigation operations, and the frequent need to enter onto our customers' properties, we are not always able to advise of entry onto their land for routine operations and maintenance. We will endeavour to contact you in person at least 48 hours prior to entry. Should you not be present we will leave a calling card to advise of our visit.
- 3.4** We will endeavour to prevent disruptions to supply, however, where they are unavoidable we will use our best endeavours to limit them to a maximum of three days.
- 3.5** If a planned disruption to supply is required we will advise all customers affected in writing at least 5 business days before the disruption occurs outlining the reason for the disruption and expected duration.
- 3.6** In the event of an emergency shutdown of supply we will endeavour to contact affected customers within six hours and advise them of the reason for the shut down and its expected duration.
- 3.7** We will endeavour to repair or replace within 24 hours, any water meter found to be faulty.
- 3.8** We do not supply drinking water (as per the Water Corporation's Town Water Supply Reticulation) to any property (See Service Delivery 2.3 above) and consequently we cannot give the same guarantees that are expected of suppliers of drinking water for domestic purposes.
- 3.9** Where a meter is found to be recording incorrectly we will estimate water consumption based on previous months and/or same period for previous year.
- 3.10** We will thoroughly investigate all instances where supply points or measuring devices (meters) appear to have been tampered with and may withhold supply while the cause is investigated. Where, in our opinion, water theft has occurred we will estimate the quantity not properly measured and charge the property owner accordingly.

- 3.11** We will uphold the Australian Standards and legislated requirements for Back Flow Prevention. Any customer found to be in breach of the requirements may have supply discontinued unless and until the customer's plumbing is fully compliant. Repeated instances of non compliance may result in the lengthy or even permanent disconnection of water services to the affected property.
- 3.12** We will continue a program of investment in new technology to ensure the water distribution system is capable of meeting customer needs at lower real costs while improving efficiency and reducing water losses.

#### 4. CUSTOMER BILLING – Irrigation Purposes

- 4.1 We will raise an invoice to member customers for 25% of the Annual Asset Contribution, payable to GWAMCO on the first day of each quarter, i.e. January, April, July and October.
- 4.2 We will raise an invoice to member customers for 25% of the fixed charge components of your allocation, payable to GWC and GWAMCO on the first day of each quarter, i.e. January, April, July and October.
- 4.3 We will read your meter(s) on the last business day of each calendar month to calculate your monthly consumption.
- 4.4 We will raise an invoice on a monthly basis for water usage charges based on meter readings, within 5 business days of the end of the month.
- 4.5 We will issue accurate consumption accounts on a monthly basis within five business days of the end of the month.
- 4.6 Accounts issued will contain all the necessary information to enable our customers to identify the property and service being charged, as well as details to enable account payment.
- 4.7 We will issue to Irrigation, Commercial and Stock and Garden Customers, each month, a Water Statement showing monthly and year to date consumptions from Scheme services connected to your property.
- 4.8 We may charge interest on overdue accounts and may refuse supply to **any** customer where fixed charges and/or consumption charges remain unpaid more than **30 days** beyond the due date. Penalties may be imposed as a result of disconnection action.

## 5. CUSTOMER CONTACT

- 5.1** We will treat our customers with respect and courtesy.
- 5.2** We will keep our customers fully informed, of all matters which may affect them, through direct mail, newsletters, notices in newspapers circulating in the district and advice through local radio stations. In particular, we will publish details of fixed and volumetric charges applicable for the next Irrigation Year and other relevant information in November of each year in a newsletter which will be mailed to each customer.
- 5.3** Our staff will be available during business hours for general enquiries and concerns of all customers (See Contacts Page 6).
- 5.4** At least two newsletters will be produced each year.
- 5.5** We will respond to reports of faults within the irrigation system within two working days unless the fault is deemed urgent by the Chief Executive Officer or Operations Supervisor.
- 5.6** Urgent faults will be responded to within two hours. Initial response(s) may be by telephone or personal visit by a GWC employee or contractor.
- 5.7** We will establish and resource an efficient and effective process for receiving, recording and resolving written customer complaints.
- 5.8** We will respond to customer complaints within two working days unless the fault is deemed urgent by the Chief Executive Officer, in which case the complaint will be responded to within one working day.
- 5.9** A dispute will be determined to exist if a complaint cannot be resolved through the normal administrative processes. The dispute will then be submitted to the Disputes Committee (a panel of not less than 5 and not more than 7 people, including any 2 directors and any 3 Members who are not directors).
- 5.10** GWC must resolve complaints within 15 business days. If your complaint has not been resolved within 15 business days, GWC will inform you of the option of referring your complaint to the Department of Water.  
If you have a dispute with GWC regarding a provided or requested water service, you may refer your dispute to the Department of Water. The Department of Waters' contact details are as follow:

Customer Services Officer,  
Department of Water, Water Services Branch  
PO Box K822  
Perth WA 6842

The Atrium  
168 St Georges Terrace  
Perth WA 6000

Telephone: (08) 6364 7600  
Facsimile: (08) 6364 6525  
Website address: [www.water.wa.gov.au](http://www.water.wa.gov.au)  
Email address: [WISBcomplaints@water.wa.gov.au](mailto:WISBcomplaints@water.wa.gov.au)

The Water Services Branch (WSB) will seek a detailed explanation of the nature of the complaint, the solutions or actions offered by GWC and the reasons why these are not acceptable to you. The WSB will respond with its opinion on the matter and suggest a solution to the parties involved.

- 5.11** If you remain dissatisfied with the outcome, you may submit the matter to arbitration by an Arbitrator selected by you from a list provided by the WSB. The Arbitrator's decision, including awarding of costs, shall be binding on both parties and will preclude further action on the matter. You may elect to bypass the arbitration process and take legal action to resolve the matter.
- 5.12** We will reply to all written correspondence within five working days. If the matter requires investigation we will advise in writing and will nominate a date for further contact.
- 5.13** We will make available for inspection in our office during normal business hours, plans of the irrigation system, and copies of legislation and by-laws relevant to the irrigation business.
- 5.14** We will carry out surveys seeking customer input or opinions on general or specific aspects of GWC's service delivery or proposed changes to the nature of the services delivered, every two years or at more frequent intervals if required by Government.
- 5.15** Members will also have the forum of Annual General Meetings of the GWC to raise any issues (in accordance with the GWC Rules) or make suggestions to improve the efficiency and performance of the GWC.

## **6. Customer Connection**

**6.1** Customers and Members are reminded we supply non-potable water to be used for irrigation, stock and garden and commercial use only.

### **6.2 Connection for non-member customers**

**6.2.1.** A customer seeking a new connection service has to apply to GWC informing of the location and purpose for connection. The GWC Board will review the application at the next monthly meeting, or as soon as time permits. Approval of the application will depend on the ability to service the location, whether the purpose of use meets the requirements and the availability of water.

**6.2.2.** A supply and connection agreement will be forwarded to approved customers detailing the conditions of connection, standard of service, cost of service connection, usage rates and annual charges. This is a legal document. The service will be installed within a reasonable time frame. An annual fixed water charge payable to CCW is billed quarterly for Commercial and Stock customers, and annually for Garden customers, and the water usage charge is billed monthly based on water consumption.

### **6.3 Connection for irrigation members**

**6.3.1.** A customer seeking an irrigation member's connection service must:

- Apply for membership of GWC;
- Apply for membership of GWAMCO;
- Provide information on the location and purpose of the connection;
- Have or be in negotiation for a parcel of land approved for irrigation purposes; and
- Purchase a minimum of 5000 KL of water allocation on the market.

**6.3.2** The respective Boards will review the application at the next monthly meeting, or as soon as time permits. Approval of the application will depend on:

- The eligibility of the applicant to be a member of GWC & GWAMCO;
- The ability to service the location;
- Whether the purpose of use meets the requirements; and
- The availability of water.

**6.3.3** If the boards approve the application, the applicant will be informed of their rights as a member, service installation fees and the various water charges (please see customer billing, page 8). The service will be installed within a reasonable time frame.

- 6.4 Disconnection by a non-member.** A non-member customer wishing to have the service disconnected may do so by requesting this in writing to GWC. Disconnection will be performed within five business days of notice being received. Should the customer request a specific disconnection date, five business days notice is requested by the GWC office. A disconnection fee will be charged by GWC.
- 6.5 Disconnection by a member.** A member cannot have their service disconnected as the water supply is attached to the property. A member can elect not to use the property's water entitlement. A member may choose to dispose of any water entitlement above 5000 kilolitres.

## WHAT WE ASK IN RETURN

To help GWC provide the level of service outlined above, we ask that you help us in the following ways:

### 1. SERVICE DELIVERY

- 1.1. Treat our staff and contractors as you would have them treat you.
- 1.2. Advise us at our Carnarvon office on **(08) 9941 4488** of any service difficulties or faults or advise the Operations Officer in the field.
- 1.3. Liaise with your local Operations Officer to help ensure efficient water distribution in your area.
- 1.4. Keep us informed of your irrigation plans, crop types and watering requirements through regular liaison with your GWC office and responding to annual surveys. This will help us to establish benchmarking comparisons with other irrigation districts through Water Use Efficiency Benchmarking.
- 1.5. Take care when installing private pipes and electrical cables to allow for safe access to supply points and pipelines by our staff for operations and maintenance purposes. Contact the GWC before you dig anywhere near the distribution mains. If you damage the distribution pipeline and you have not had our staff provide pipe location information, you may be held liable for the cost of repairs. Mark all private cable and pipe locations at road and scheme pipe crossings to warn others of your buried infrastructure.
- 1.6. Ensure that you have enough on-farm storage capacity for stock and garden purposes to withstand supply interruptions of up to 3 days.
- 1.7. Maximise your on-farm storage for irrigation purposes to provide you with a reserve of irrigation water during peak demand periods. Aim for enough storage for a full day's irrigation requirement at peak demand.
- 1.8. Notify GWC in November each year, of your water requirements for the following year (the percentage of your allocation that you estimate you will need for the season). This will allow us to plan for delivery of the allocations and to estimate water available for trade and emergency allocations.



## **2. ASSET MANAGEMENT**

- 2.1.** Maintain a clear area of at least 2 metres radius around and above your meter to allow field staff safe access for reading and maintenance purposes.
- 2.2.** Keep us informed of any maintenance changes or improvements that you feel could improve the operation of the irrigation system.
- 2.3.** Seek to use water as efficiently as possible so as to keep waste to a minimum. This will help reduce total water used and save you money.
- 2.4.** Do not discharge polluting or hazardous wastes into the irrigation area or river course.
- 2.5.** Ensure that your supply point complies with backflow prevention legislation at all times to protect the safety of fellow irrigators, their families and their crops.
  - 2.5.1.** If you have a Reduced Pressure Zone device (RPZ) fitted for backflow prevention (instead of an air gap into a tank), you **MUST** have the RPZ tested every year. The test must be carried out by a licensed plumber suitably endorsed for backflow device testing and the plumber must lodge the completed test certificate with the GWC. Members who fail to comply with this requirement may have supply discontinued until such time as a certificate of compliance is lodged with the GWC or the GWC may engage a qualified plumber to carry out the test and the member will then be billed for all costs incurred.
  - 2.5.2.** Members who have their delivery point connected directly to on-farm storage tanks are required to maintain a 150mm air gap between the inlet to the tank and overflow point of the tank. Such backflow prevention methods will be randomly inspected by a qualified plumber and any deficiencies will be brought to the Member's attention through a Non-compliance notice and the member will be required to have a licensed plumber make good the defects and submit a certificate of compliance and completion to the GWC. Members who fail to comply with this requirement may have supply discontinued until such time as a certificate of compliance is lodged with the GWC.
- 2.6.** Do not interfere with any of GWAMCO or GWC's assets. In particular any metered offtake believed to have been tampered with (e.g. visually broken seals or other signs of interference), may result in disconnection from the distribution scheme while investigations are completed and any remedial works carried out. If tampering or other interference is confirmed, the member may be held liable for any costs involved in reinstating the assets and an estimate of consumption for the period since the previous meter reading may also be carried out and billed. Repeat offences may result in disconnection action being taken on a temporary or permanent basis.
- 2.7.** Irrigators must notify GWC if they wish to carry out works in the near vicinity of any GWC assets e.g. pipes, meters, valves etc. GWC has a free service to Members to locate such assets and provide advice before works begin. Irrigators may be liable for any damage which occurs to assets during such works.

### **3. CUSTOMER BILLING**

- 3.1.** Pay, by the due date invoices for Annual Asset Contributions, Fixed Charges, Consumption Charges and other chargeable services raised on your property for the services provided.
- 3.2.** Let us know before the due date if you are having difficulty in paying any amounts charged. We may, in certain circumstances, be able to arrange to reschedule payments.
- 3.3.** Notify us as soon as possible of any changes in address and/or ownership of property in the irrigation district. Failure to notify GWC of a change of address may cause delays in the delivery of your accounts and disconnection action may result from accounts more than 30 days overdue. Disconnection may incur a penalty payment which must be paid before reconnection.

## CONTACT NUMBERS (Normal and Emergency)

During normal business hours (8:30 am to 4:30 pm Monday-Friday)

- **Administration Staff**

- Office Manager (08) 9941 4488
- Account enquiries (08) 9941 4488
- Allocation enquiries (08) 9941 4488
- Faults and Complaints (08) 9941 4488
- Facsimile: (08) 9941 4499
- Email: [gwc@gascoynewater.com.au](mailto:gwc@gascoynewater.com.au)

- **Operations Staff**

- Operations Supervisor 0429 414 488
- Operations Assistant 0427 414 488

- **After Hours**

- Faults and Complaints **(08) 9941 4488**  
(Phone is redirected to Operations staff on standby. Please use only for *genuine faults and service problems* as field staff cannot answer account or policy enquiries).

- **CEO**

- CEO (08) 9941 4488
- Mobile: 0427 41 44 81
- Email: [leo@gascoynewater.com.au](mailto:leo@gascoynewater.com.au)

- **GWC Mailing Address:**

PO Box 5  
CARNARVON  
WA 6701

- **GWC Street Address:**

50 Boundary Road  
CARNARVON  
WA 6701