

20th January 2021

Submission to ESCOSA in regards to the Draft Regulatory Determination Relating to the Drinking Water Services provided by Robusto Investments P/L Trading as Compass Springs.

We had moved to Mount Compass in the April of 2016 having bought a property in September 2015.

This was just before the transition of the new ownership of the golf course and Robusto Investments P/L taking over the water supply licence.

On the matter of the determination relating to the drinking water services provided by Robusto Investments P/L Trading As Compass Springs, we fully endorse the submissions given by various residents and their concerns about pricing, the fact that we as consumers are unable to choose our supplier and the untold and unseen scars it is having on consumers as they try to budget their day to day living expenses.

We would like to add to the submissions so far given :

We were knowingly entering into an agreement (when we bought the property) whereby there was an existing private water licence being held (by Hillrise Investments P/L) but we weren't initially too worried because we were paying SA water rates + 5 %.

The sale of the golf course was common knowledge and hence that would also mean a change of ownership of the water supply licence as well.

On the 8th June 2016 Robusto Investments P/L acquired the Golf Course and the Water Supply.

Now known as Compass Springs.

In the September of 2016 (letter dated 23rd) we were informed of the change of ownership.

The letter reads that they will be reading the meters for the first time and issuing invoices up to the period ending 30th Sept 2016. **A contract from the new owner - Robusto Investments P/L was never sent to us.**

At this point, we as a community had had no introduction to Robusto Investments, [REDACTED] or anyone associated with the company. There was **NO** opportunity to have a Q&A to discuss contracts (Hillrise to Robusto) in any way, shape or form. There was **NO** transparency as to what was going to happen from here on. This manner from Robusto Investments P/L has continued to this day, even to the point of having someone at the recent meetings on the companies' behalf to report back on what was being said.

We were soon to find out:

On the 4th November 2016 there was a rates adjustment for the period from 9th June 2016 to 30 June 2016. They tell us in this letter that there will be a transition period to change from the Hillrise Investment water agreement to the ESCOSA format. This format was only ever explained to us as - "Detailed information is available on their website at www.escosa.sa.gov.au"

As per Robusto's reply :

3.15 of the Water Licence Application " This will be done progressively with the 165 existing retail customers and any new customers. We aim to have this completed within the first 3 months of taking over the business"

"The applicant will be working closely with Mr Richard Webster, Manager Regulatory Reporting, ESCOSA in determining its ongoing fee structure with a view to ensuring the ongoing sustainability and viability of the business"

Question To ESCOSA : Is Mr Richard Webster still an employee of ESCOSA and if so, is he still working closely with Robusto Investments P/L on their fee structure?

Question To ESCOSA: On the Licence Application for Robusto Investments P/L , 3.7" We have a high degree of confidence in our ability to meet existing customers (165) and proposed new additions (60) **in the short term**. I would have questioned this as to **what about the long term???**

THEN, in the same letter Robusto includes an Infrastructure Upgrade Charge on the bill for \$250.00 per quarter \$1.000.00 per year to cover an overhaul of the existing water infrastructure network.

Not only that, they had included GST on the invoice, which is not required.

We were not pleased to say the least, and in the following letter (dated 14th November 2016) the Infrastructure Charge and the GST fee was taken away and the water rates were in line with SA Water rates.

The consumption rates still had a 15% charge on them in line with the agreements. But were these ESCOSA's agreements or were they Robusto's ? This was never explained properly.

This letter tries to smooth the waters (pardon the pun) but the ripples have not subsided and now are becoming more like a wave, it keeps getting larger and larger.

The Draft Determination refers to a revenue cap which is a 21% increase above the SA Water rate, a rate which would place many households in a position of hardship which is neither necessary for a basic living utility nor is this increase justified considering that SA Water rates are being reduced. There is no guarantee that Robusto will accept this and appeal with the unacceptable pricing structure that they have submitted to ESCOSA of a ridiculous amount of 264%.

We strongly oppose both, the ESCOSA's increase of 21% and Robusto's increase of 264%.

As a community we would request a pricing tier within the ESCOSA revenue cap. To base the rates same as what SA Water would charge their customers for supply and usage.

We would also request that all customers to be charged the same tiered rate (there are currently 2 commercial customers) to make it a fair and equitable system.

We as a community, would request to have the option to choose who we purchase our water from.

At the moment, there is a monopoly even though SA Water is within reach and servicing other residents within the Mount Compass community.

Or, the other option is for the licence to be sold to SA Water along with the infrastructure and the Mount Compass community can be supplied by SA Water.

An overwhelming show of hands has shown in the last meeting on Thursday 14th Jan 2021 that the latter for the residents would be the better option.

We would also like to see a break down by Robusto Investment P/L of how they use the water :

Meter Readings for the Golf Course, for the Tankers watering the New Estate Development, Existing residents are **NOT** paying for future infrastructure (New Estate) , Meter Readings to be sight seen every quarter. The bills to be sent to each customer in a timely manner so as to give the customer time to pay within a timely manner.

Over the past 4 years since we have been living in what we believe is the best community, in the best state in Australia, this water issue has left a bit of a sour taste in the way we have been treated as a customer, and as a consumer and if I had to rate [REDACTED] business it would be 0.5 stars out of 5.

We have LOST our water supply 4 times over this time period, without notice and only through the community forum and constant communication between the residents do we find out why and when do we get the supply returned.

If there is going to be a cut in supply, an advance notice should be broadcast to all residents with the reason why and for how long until the supply can be restored. If the cut in supply is unforeseen, then an emergency broadcast should be sent out to all residents with the reason why and an estimate of how long the interruption will be.

Whenever the need arises that we need to contact the owner of Robusto Investments P/L for enquires regarding invoicing we have made numerous phone calls, which go unanswered, emails which we have to wait extensively for a reply and we are left with an under impressed feeling of we will not get a sufficient resolution to our query or problem.

In conclusion, We as a community will not be pushed around and we will not yield to a business [REDACTED] requesting an unrealistic pricing structures and manner which would put most other businesses out of business due to [REDACTED] lack of concern for customer service, and if [REDACTED] that [REDACTED] has the strings to pull us into any way [REDACTED] wishes, [REDACTED] is very sadly mistaken.

Sandra Reimerink