

**SOUTH AUSTRALIAN FEDERATION OF RESIDENTS
AND RATEPAYERS ASSOCIATIONS INC
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SUBMISSION TO THE ESSENTIAL SERVICES COMMISSION OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA (ESCOSA) – DRAFT DETERMINATION OF SA WATER'S WATER AND SEWERAGE REVENUES: 2013 / 14 – 2015 /16.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION FEBRUARY, 2013:

Submission: "South Australian Federation of Residents and Ratepayers Associations Inc".

The Essential Services Commission of South Australia
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Dear Sir / Madam

On behalf of the South Australian Federation of Residents and Ratepayers Associations Inc., we would like thank you for the opportunity to present our submission during the public consultation process. **Re: Draft Determination of SA Water's Water and Sewerage Revenues: 2013 / 14 – 2015 / 16**

Residents and Ratepayers Concerns:

1. Proposed changes to SA Water's Revenue – Resident's and Ratepayer's would like to have water and sewerage costs only to be increased by CPI and the many low income residents, people on benefits, pensioners (especially single pensioners), retirees on a fixed income who cannot afford the huge spikes in water and sewerage fees.

Business and in particular the rural industry water and sewerage fees must be affordable so South Australians businesses do not fold and keep local employment in the area. We would like to see local food grown not the imported food to feed our population. In other words fees adjusted, competitive for businesses in South Australia keeping local employment and the rural family farms alive.

We do not want to see later huge increases again after caps for water and sewerage prices come off. Never again in South Australia.

2. Determining the changes: The resident's and ratepayer's are very concerned that after May 2013 there will be no public consultation on Water and Sewerage pricing that the Treasurer set's the value of RAB. What happens if there get it wrong due to the information they have or do not have? Very concerning.

We believe the administration costs of ESCOSA will increase another extra beauracy in addition to SA Water and as a result increasing the costs of water and sewerage charges. An Annual audit of administration cost and the very highly paid executives within ESCOSA. Are we duplicating administration costs? Keep water and sewerage costs down and allow all South Australian's to have the ability to pay these costs.

1.

3. Drinking Water. SA Water has been cost efficient and with a profit (albeit going into General Revenue). There has been enough money generated through SA Water to fund desalination and infrastructure upkeep. In South Australia we believe residents want continual water supply guaranteed, a given, safe, good tasting water instead of the years of poor quality and awful tasting water historically which not enough South Australians appreciate how water taste today. Education programme, school, community groups, newsletter updates and media coverage. . We need to know, what programmes or services are to be cut to achieve \$145.2 savings and how the savings in operating charges are going to be achieve. No money (savings in current draft), for recycling water programmes and it's infrastructure and the infrastructure delayed i.e. Murray Bridge Treatment Works which due to budgets constraints is deemed to be not a propriety.

We have been led to believe that correct costs were being charged to most customers before. Spending money on a whole new system of management, ownership? Government & departments, re-badging, Bill/Act, seems to be a wicked waste.

4. Sewerage. The public needs to be well aware of the increase in sewerage revenue and how it will affect them financially and for the future new residents being connected to the sewerage system. We do not want unaffordable rises to the most vulnerable.

5. What may not be factored in are future costs? Preparation for 1 in 100 year flood- therefore **reservoir/dam/wetlands/?** planning, short, medium and long term; making **drainage** capacity; attending to **leaks** which is reducing waste as well; promoting or working out the value or not of **insurance (or substitution)** and home audits, flood proofing/prevention including sound planning via Development. Budget constraints.

6. Vulnerable members of the community. We believe this draft Determination of SA Water's Water and Sewerage Revenues 2013 -2016 does not take into account those low incomes, those new to these state pensioners, self-retirees ability to pay for current high water and sewerage charges. We need to safe guard the most venerable people and be taken into account and factored in to the revenue future charges. Ongoing changes - rebates, extensions to pay and government support regarding water and sewerage supply. Plans; for better advertising personal emergency planning including similar adverts to those on Weather channels which are practical and actually tell and show people what to do; best personal advice for 'during & post-' a water, fire, chemical etc, catastrophe.

7. Drought preparedness and the right of residents and ratepayers to have affordable water for their gardens without paying the earth for water. The importance of trees, grasses/lawns and shade and pervious areas/site coverage. The importance of green aesthetics to good mental health, (breathing fresh air), and maintaining physical and healthy active lifestyles. Furthering & promoting innovation and recycling. Not budgeted this time round. Broadcasting the importance of personal hydration & hygiene and cautioning the carting of water as we would the use of ladders etc. A resident allocation of gardening water at a reduced price.

8. Looking after our old river.

9. SAFRRA Inc., believes in keeping on hold water and sewerage costs and the reduction of household, food producing communities water and sewerage cost all of these must be taken into account to determine future revenue and affordable water and sewerage cost 2013 / 14 – 2015 / 16.

Yours sincerely

Kevin Kaeding

President

South Australian Federation of Residents and Ratepayers Associations Inc