Consumer engagement – the what, the why, and the how

Presentation to Essential Services Commission Water Pricing Conference

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### **About Consumer Action**



### Overview

- 1. Why consumer engagement?
- 2. Behavioural biases
- 3. Some strategies

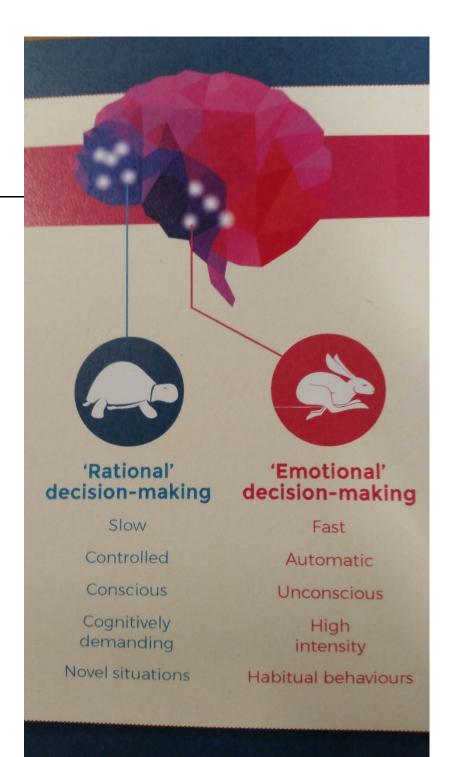
# Why consumer engagement

- Understanding consumer needs and priorities
- Inform decision-making
- Proxy for consumer choice



# Behavioural biases

- Cognitive bias
- How people think
- Can we consciously activate rational decision-making?



Strategies to guide consumer engagement

- 1. Agency commitment
- 2. Transparency creates trust
- 3. Consumer committees not a panacea
- 4. Consumer forums/research can test attitudes
- 5. Complex issues require deliberation
- 6. Consumer research needs to be ongoing

### Resourcing consumer input

#### Productivity Commission

- 2011 report into Urban Water Sector recommended additional resourcing for consumer research, representation and advocacy
- This has been ignored
- In Victoria, only CUAC is specifically funded for consumer advocacy on water
  - This will need to change for effective consumer engagement

## Questions

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