



To: "water@esc.vic.gov.au" <water@esc.vic.gov.au>,
Cc:
Bcc:
Subject: TRIM (C/13/1708) Submission for Publication: Water Price Review 2013-18 -
Submissions received to Metropolitan, Regional and Rural Summary Papers
From: Peter Cox <p.cox@bendigocouncillors.org.au> - Monday 21/01/2013 01:42 PM

History: This message has been replied to.

Dear Sir/Madam

I write on behalf of residents and businesses who are located in the townships of Sebastian and Raywood and come under the Coliban water supply. For years these people have had a sub-standard water supply to both their townships and rural holdings and therefore should be excluded from any price rise until their service is upgraded.

They have only had water restrictions lifted last Saturday but still their water pressure is inadequate to gain benefit from the lifting of the restrictions. The urban supply has been trucked out for many years because the required infrastructure was inadequate. I have chaired two public meetings in the area over the past month to discuss the issues with Coliban staff present. I believe all concerned would agree a price increase at this time is not justified. The priority must be to get these communities a quality and secure water supply.

Some issues.

- Rural customers have been hanging onto their licences because Coliban promised them back in 2008 that their supply would be via a new pipeline. They have paid their licence fee year after year in the hope that a new pipeline would bring them a quality and secure water supply but still today, 5 years later, there is no guarantee of such a service. This is currently being reviewed with another meeting to be held in late March but until this new system is implemented no price rise should be approved.
- Rural customers are currently using recycled water with many reports that stock will not drink the water. This means that even though these customers have a licence they have to cart water at great cost. Pig farmers cannot use recycled water.
- Sebastian & Raywood customers do not have a secure water supply. While a new pipeline is now in operation the pressure to these towns is inadequate. The new pipeline does not extend to each property but pipes that are many years old will be used to supply water to each dwelling or business. These pipes will be tested over the coming months to verify their adequacy for use under the new system.
- There are also issues about permanent location of tanks for the water supply, chlorination techniques and safety.
- There are no standpipes in either town and this means access to water remains very difficult for some families and businesses in the area particularly in times of drought when their own water supply is inadequate because of low rainfall. The area is currently

experiencing very low rainfall. In fact non Coliban customers are excluded from consultation as they are not regarded as part of the process. I would have thought that access to water is a basic need and a responsibility that would fall into the Coliban charter.

I would strongly encourage your Commission to investigate these issues as a matter of urgency and refrain from recommending any price rises for both the Sebastian & Raywood communities. As a consequence of their disadvantage these communities need to be treated differently from other locations.

Your response on these matters will be appreciated.

Regards

Cr Peter Cox

Whipstick Ward



Phone: 03 5434 6189

Mobile: 0427 318 490

Email: p.cox@bendigocouncillors.org.au

Website: www.bendigo.vic.gov.au