

Approval of Ord Irrigation Co-operative Customer Service Charter

8 January 2009

Economic Regulation Authority



WESTERN AUSTRALIA

DECISION

The Economic Regulation Authority (**Authority**) has approved the Ord Irrigation Co-operative (Ord Irrigation) Customer Service Charter for irrigation services (charter) on 8 January 2009.

REASONS

The Authority has reviewed the charter against the requirements of Ord Irrigation's licence and notes the following:

Existence

Schedule 3, clause 2.1 of the Ord Irrigation licence states that the licensee must produce a charter that accords with the Authority's Customer Service Charter Guidelines (**review guidelines**).

Schedule 3, clause 2.6 of the licence requires that Ord Irrigation undertake a review of the charter at least once in every three year period. Furthermore, clause 6.1 of the review guidelines requires the licensee to undertake a review process, at regular intervals and within the required timeframe.

The previous charter was approved by the Authority in November 2006.

Ord Irrigation originally submitted its charter to the Authority for approval on 10 November 2008. The Secretariat of the Authority provided feedback to Ord Irrigation regarding the charter. The Shire submitted a revised version of its charter on 10 December 2008.

The Authority finds that Ord Irrigation has submitted its new charter for approval within an acceptable timeframe.

Accuracy

Under clause 6.2 of the review guidelines, the charter must comply with all relevant legislative, code or regulatory requirements and be in line with the standard form contract and/or the licence requirements.

The Authority finds that the principles, terms and conditions, as set out in the charter, are generally consistent with relevant legislation and licence requirements.

Consultation

Clause 6.3 of the review guidelines requires that the licensee engage with customers and/or their representatives in the development and/or review process.

Ord Irrigation has advised that a draft customer service code was circulated to members of the co-operative and feedback was invited. Minimal feedback was received. Additionally the draft code was considered at three consecutive board meetings, at which it received input from the six board members who are also shareholders of Ord Irrigation.

The Authority finds that, on the basis of the information provided, Ord Irrigation undertook a reasonable level of consultation with regard to this review.

Accessibility

Schedule 3, clause 2.2 of Ord Irrigation's licence requires that the charter be developed in 'plain English' and that it should address all of the service issues likely to be of concern to its customers.

'Plain English'

The Authority finds that the accessibility of the charter is generally sound, however, it could be further improved through the simplification of some technical and legalistic language. However, given the size and professional expertise of Ord Irrigation's customer base the Authority does not consider this to be a significant issue at this time.

Issues likely to be of concern

The Authority finds that the charter is generally consistent with the licence provision in covering all of the service issues likely to be of concern to Ord Irrigation's customer base.

LYNDON ROWE
CHAIRMAN

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