

Decision to approve Ord Irrigation Co-operative Ltd's Customer Service Charter

17 September 2013

Economic Regulation Authority

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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DECISION

1. The Economic Regulation Authority (**Authority**) approves Ord Irrigation Co-operative Ltd's (**OIC**) Customer Service Charter (**Charter**) for irrigation and non-potable water supply services.

REASONS

2. The Authority has reviewed the Charter against the requirements of OIC's Operating Licence 37 (**Licence**) and the Authority's *Water Customer Service Charter Guidelines* (**Guidelines**) and notes the following:

Existence

3. Schedule 3, clause 2.1 of the Licence states that the licensee must have in place a Charter that accords with the Guidelines.
4. Schedule 3, clause 2.6 of the Licence requires OIC to undertake a review of the Charter at least once in every three year period. Similarly, clause 5.1 of the Guidelines requires the licensee to undertake a review process at regular intervals and within the required timeframe.
5. The previous Charter was approved by the Authority in January 2009.
6. In June 2011, the Authority wrote to all water licensees granting a 12 month extension to their charter review periods. At the time, there was uncertainty as to whether charters would continue to be required once the new water legislative framework would take effect.
7. On 11 October 2012, OIC submitted a reviewed version of its Charter to the Authority for approval. The Secretariat of the Authority provided feedback to OIC regarding the amended Charter. OIC submitted the final version of its Charter to the Authority on 2 September 2013.
8. The Authority finds that the review has been undertaken within the required timeframe.

Accuracy

9. Under Schedule 3, clause 2.1 of the Licence, the Charter must accord with the Guidelines. Clause 5.2 of the Guidelines further requires that the Charter comply with all relevant legislative and regulatory requirements and be in line with the licence requirements.
10. 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

11. Clause 5.3 of the Guidelines requires that the licensee engage with customers and/or their representatives in the review process.

12. OIC has advised that it sent emails and faxes to all member and non-member customers requesting comments on the Charter. Copies of the documents were provided free of charge on request. OIC has advised it received two comments as part of the consultation process. OIC further sought comment from the Department of Water.
13. The Authority finds that, on the basis of the information provided, OIC undertook a reasonable level of public consultation with regard to this review.

Accessibility

14. Schedule 3, clause 2.2 of the Licence states that the Charter should be developed in 'plain English' and that it should address all of the service issues likely to be of concern to customers.

'Plain English'

15. The Authority finds that the accessibility of the Charter is generally sound.

Issues likely to be of concern

16. 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 OIC's customers.