

Summary of recommendations made by the Loch Garry Reference Committee

23 June 2023

The Terms of Reference for the Loch Garry Reference Committee state that the role of the committee is to:

1. Confirm the service requirements of the Loch Garry Flood Protection District.
2. Define the levels of service to be provided based on the current infrastructure.
3. Assess the effectiveness and appropriateness of the existing infrastructure at Loch Garry and the impact of any potential change to infrastructure.
4. Review and recommend improvements to the Operating Rules.
5. Engage with local Landholders and other interested parties regarding the improvement opportunities and recommendations regarding the Loch Garry Operating Rules.
6. Consider costs and pricing impacts of any recommendations relating to changes to the existing asset management practices and/or the type of infrastructure at Loch Garry.

The Committee first met on 13 February 2023, to discuss the terms of reference and identify the key topics for discussion and exploration. As at 12 June 2023, the Committee had four meetings.

The following recommendations have been prepared by the Chair of the Committee, Cath Botta. An initial draft of recommendations was discussed by the Committee at Meeting 4 on 23 May 2023, and then revised based on Committee discussion and feedback. The final version of the recommendations were discussed and endorsed by the committee at Meeting 5 held on 23 June 2023.

For Role 1 and 2: Confirm the service requirements of the Loch Garry Flood Protection District; Define the levels of service to be provided based on the current infrastructure.

- Key Service requirements and levels of service expected from the regulator are: quick, safe, reliable and flexible operation for flood protection.
- The Committee confirmed the current service levels provided by the Loch suit the needs of customers of the Loch Garry Flood Protection most of the time.
- The Committee supported the formation of a “Future Services Strategy Group” to consider future services and infrastructure requirements in more detail. Members from this Committee are encouraged to nominate for appointment to this new group.
- The Committee commented that the “Future Services Strategy Group” will need to be well resourced and supported by GMW.
- GMW will also consider minimum standards of maintenance of the levee banks which will include consideration of the removal of trees/shrubs growing in the levee banks.

Date & version no; DM #

RECOMMENDATIONS SUMMARY



For Role 3: Assess the effectiveness and appropriateness of the existing infrastructure at Loch Garry and the impact of any potential change to infrastructure.

- The Committee was advised that the expected lifespan of the Loch is 100 years and there is approx. 15-20 years life left of Loch Garry. A range of future options need to be fully explored as part of the development of the Future Services Strategy.
- The hydraulic capacity of the regulator; changes to the flow regime; and the capacity of levee banks need to be more fully understood and considered in combination to assess the effectiveness and appropriateness of the existing infrastructure.
- The impacts of increased flood protection upstream of the Loch, and climate change, needs to be more fully understood and considered to assess the effectiveness and appropriateness of the existing infrastructure.
- As part of the Future Services Strategy, consideration should also be given to the effectiveness of the current bar operating system for quick, safe and reliable operation of the Loch.

For Role 4: Review and recommend improvements to the Operating Rules.

- In summary, the Committee recommend the following additions to the operating rules:
 - When the Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) *predicts a flood event above 11m at the Shepparton gauge*, GMW will send out SMS notification to the customers of the Loch Garry Flood Protection district that *all bars will be removed once the flood level reaches 10.36m at the Shepparton gauge* on the Goulburn River.
 - When the BoM (Bureau of Meteorology) *predicts the Shepparton Gauge will exceed 10.36m but not 11.0m*, GMW will send out SMS notification to the customers of the Loch Garry Flood Protection District that *bars will start to be removed 24 hours after the Shepparton Gauge reaches 10.36m* on the Goulburn River.
- The Committee noted that customers need to opt-in to the SMS service to receive these notifications from GMW. Each customer needs to ensure the most appropriate and updated contact information for each property is entered into the GMW database.

For Role 5: Engage with local Landholders and other interested parties regarding the improvement opportunities and recommendations regarding the Loch Garry Operating Rules.

- GMW will develop a media release and a fact sheet to highlight the recommendations from the Committee. Members are encouraged to discuss the recommendations with their communities.
- GMW will request a meeting with the Loch Garry Flood Protection District customers to discuss the changes to the operating rules and proposed engagement with customers.
- The Committee suggests that any engagement with customers' needs to include a reminder that customers need to opt-in to the SMS notification service to receive notifications from GMW.

RECOMMENDATIONS SUMMARY



For Role 6: Consider costs and pricing impacts of any recommendations relating to changes to the existing asset management practices and/or the type of infrastructure at Loch Garry.

- Members support the draft funding model presented to the Committee. Namely, DEECA have committed \$750K, consisting of \$500K for repairs and \$250K for development of the Future Services Strategy. The estimated cost of repair works of \$950K would be funded by DEECA (\$500K) and an increase in rate payer's fees spread over an 80-year period. This equates to an annual increase of 10% on the rates to cover the costs of repairs.
- Members requested repairs to Levee Banks be carried out in the most efficient and cost-effective method available.
- GMW need to consider the broader benefit of the Loch to other communities and how the costs and benefits can be recognised and shared with the broader beneficiaries. This needs to be reflected in the "Future Services Strategy".