



## **CUSTOMER REFERENCE GROUP CHARTER**

**November 2009**



## **1. Introduction**

Cradle Mountain Water (CMW) is committed to achieving its Vision of "Providing superior water and wastewater services and being recognised for our commitment to customer service and the environment."

A key element to achieving this vision is the establishment of a series of Customer Reference Groups (CRGs) comprising four District groups and a Regional group.

CMW has divided its serviced area into four geographic areas in an endeavour to ensure the whole region has a customer voice. The geographic areas are Mersey, West North West, the West Coast and King Island.

## **2. Purpose**

The purpose of the CRGs is to provide a forum for open discussion between Cradle Mountain Water, the appointed community representatives and other interested stakeholders with the aim of incorporating the community voice into CMW's decision making processes.

Cradle Mountain Water's purpose in creating the CRGs is to assist the organisation,

- Become a more customer and community focused organisation
- Achieve higher levels of customer satisfaction
- Provide customers with better value for money
- Operate a business that is responsive to the changing needs and expectations of all its customers.
- Become an integral and responsible member of the regional community

## **3. Scope**

The scope of the CRGs extends to the provision of community based feedback and advice to Cradle Mountain Water management in the areas of:

- pricing, customer service, operational performance, strategy, regional growth and development, the environment and business initiatives;
- the design, implementation and analysis of market research programs; and
- improving the overall standard of customer service delivery and responsiveness.

The CRG's do not make recommendations or determine policy positions.

## **4. Role**

The role of the CRG's will be to:

- Provide a direct link between Cradle Mountain Water and its customer base, thus allowing Cradle Mountain Water to be responsive to customer needs and concerns.
- Test community reaction to possible new or modified services.
- Provide a mechanism by which Cradle Mountain Water can understand problems, issues and test possible solutions from the perspectives of the various interest groups and regional areas.
- Provide Cradle Mountain Water with access to valuable community/local knowledge.
- Give feedback on customer awareness and perception of Cradle Mountain Water's level of customer service

## 5. Responsibilities

All CRG members agree to

- Attend meetings and actively participate in discussions
- Report their views and those gained from the wider community
- Give feedback from the meetings to the wider community
- Respect the right of all members to present their views
- Make suggestions to improve the operation of the CRG
- Honour the requirements of this charter.

## 6. Term of Membership

Membership of CRGs will be initially for either a one or two year period, but may be extended for a further term, subject to assessment of each member's performance by the CEO and Executive Manager, Customer and Community Relations.

Following the initial period membership will be for a two year period.

## 7. CRG Membership

### District CRGs

There will be four district CRG's servicing the following areas

- Mersey, incorporating Latrobe, Kentish, Devonport, East Ulverstone
- West North West incorporating, Smithton, Waratah Wynyard, Burnie, Penguin and West Ulverstone
- West Coast incorporating Queenstown, Strahan, Rosebery and Zeehan
- King Island

The District CRG's will consist of up to 8 representatives drawn from a cross section of community members. CMW will endeavour to have one representative in each district CRG linked to social welfare e.g. a financial counsellor or aid agency to ensure a voice for customers with special needs. This representative may be recruited by an invitation to join the group as opposed to the expression of interest process.

### Regional CRG

The Regional CRG will consist of up to 12 representatives including

- The chairperson from each district sub group
- Representatives from regional peak bodies
  - Manufacturing and Industry
  - Farmers Federation
  - Social Welfare
  - Chambers of Commerce
  - Trades Hall
  - Building and Developers
  - Youth
  - Regional Development

### District CRG Map



### 8. Chairperson

#### District CRG

Each District CRG will be chaired by a Chairperson appointed by the CEO initially for a period of two years, which may be extended for a further term subject to a performance assessment by the CEO.

In the absence of the Chairperson, the CRG will be chaired by a CRG member nominated by the Executive Manager Customer and Community Relations in consultation with the Chairperson.

#### Regional CRG

The Regional CRG will be chaired on a rotating basis by each of the Chairs of the District CRGs.

### 9. Role of the Chairperson

The role of the Chairperson is to

- Chair meetings in a manner that enables agenda items to be limited to those issues within scope of the CRG charter
- Ensure that the differing views of group members are acknowledged. As the CRG consists of a diverse group of people representing many different interest groups, it is not necessary that consensus be reached by group members on issues of discussion. It is important, however, that all points of view are noted
- Clarify the extent of the different views of group members.
- Ensure that group members have the option to express a dissenting opinion and have that opinion recorded in the Minutes.
- Be the spokesperson for the CRG when providing Cradle Mountain Water with formal feedback on the operation of the group.

### 10. Quorum

The quorum for a meeting of a CRG is a majority of members.

### 11. Meeting Frequency

#### Regional CRG

The Regional CRG will meet up to 3 times per year. Additional meetings may be convened as required with group members being provided with at least two weeks notification of meetings. The meetings will be held at Cradle Mountain Water's head office in Forth.

#### District CRG

The Mersey, West North-West and West Coast district groups will meet three times a year. Additional meetings may be convened as required with sub-group members being provided with at least two weeks notification of meetings. These meetings will be held at various locations within the district.

The King Island District group will meet with the CEO twice a year at a King Island location. Additional meetings may be convened as required with District -group members being provided with at least two weeks notification of meetings.

### 12. Agenda Items

Agenda items may be nominated by CMW or by CRG members. Members will be required to forward agenda items in writing to the nominated CMW officer fourteen days prior to the scheduled meeting. The agenda will then be compiled and forwarded to group members one week before the meeting.

Chairpersons will provide a written report at each CRG meeting

The opportunity to raise general business will be made available at each meeting.

Administrative support will be provided by CMW

### 13. Minutes

Minutes will be taken at each meeting and consist of a record of discussion from each meeting, a statement of feedback, actions and accountabilities arising.

A copy of the minutes will be distributed to all group members within two weeks of a meeting taking place.

Administrative and secretarial support will be provided by CMW

### 14. Attendance

Members unable to attend a meeting of the CRG must notify CMW in writing or by telephone or email prior to the meeting. If a member is absent from a CRG meeting without an apology for three consecutive meetings his/her membership will lapse.

### 15. Conflict of Interest

If a CRG member believes that he/she may have a conflict of interest in relation to a particular agenda item or general business item, the member must notify the chairperson and fellow members of the said conflict of interest. This will not prevent the group member concerned joining in discussion on the subject issue,

### 16. Advice and Feedback

One of the key functions of the CRG is to provide advice and feedback on a variety of issues to Cradle Mountain Water.

Regional and District CRG members will be encouraged to feed back items raised to members of their community.

Any queries that may be forthcoming as a result of a particular meeting, or any information requests by group members, should be directed to the communications manager at any time.

### 17. Confidentiality

From time to time group members may be requested by the Chairperson to maintain confidentiality, particularly when Cradle Mountain Water is seeking the group members' views on policy options prior to forwarding submissions to the Board of Cradle Mountain Water for endorsement.

### 18. Remuneration of Members

Service on the CRGs will be on an honorary basis.

Members will be entitled to reimbursement of reasonable travelling and other expenses incurred by them in attending meetings relating to the business of the CRG.

### 19. Evaluating the Performance of the Group

A process of monitoring and evaluating the performance of the CRG and sub-groups will be implemented annually including self assessment to be undertaken by group members.