

Dear Queensland Competition Authority,

I am writing to bring to your attention a concerning issue regarding the pricing policies of the Gladstone Water Board, specifically in relation to the minimum usage agreement enforced with Gladstone Council. As a rate payer in Gladstone, I believe that the current practice of requiring rate payers to pay for water they have not used is unjust and unacceptable.

Over the past three years, our water usage in Gladstone has increased by 28.5% above the normal CPI increase, primarily due to rate payers not utilizing their allocated water usage as advised by the Council. This means that despite our efforts to conserve water, we are still being charged for water we have not consumed.

The inclusion of a minimum usage amount in the pricing structure is fundamentally unfair to rate payers. It raises concerns about what would happen in situations such as a drought where water restrictions may be imposed. Would rate payers still be held liable for the minimum usage, regardless of external factors beyond their control?

In the current cost of living crisis, where many households are struggling to make ends meet, being forced to pay for unused water puts an unnecessary financial burden on rate payers. The inability to reduce usage to correspond with the allocated amount results in higher costs, making it challenging for residents to manage their expenses.

I urge the Queensland Competition Authority to review the pricing policies of the Gladstone Water Board and put an end to this unfair practice of charging rate payers for unused water. It is essential to implement pricing structures that are transparent, equitable, and responsive to the needs of the community.

Thank you for considering this matter and taking action to address the concerns of rate payers in Gladstone.

