

PUBLICATION GUIDE

RIVERINA WATER COUNTY COUNCIL

INTRODUCTION

This Publication Guide has been prepared in accordance with Section 20 of the Government Information (Public Access) Act (GIPAA).

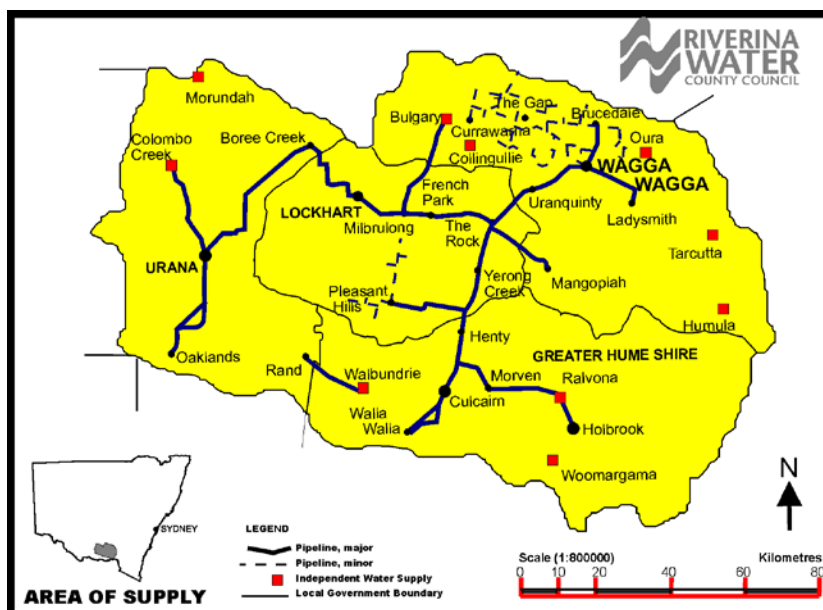
ABOUT RIVERINA WATER COUNTY COUNCIL

The formation of the larger electricity distributors in 1995 precipitated a review of water supply administration. As a result, Riverina Water County Council was formed on 2nd May 1997, specifically for the purpose of water supply and operates under the provisions of the Local Government Act 1993.

Drinking quality water is supplied to all customers continuing a tradition of over sixty years of high service standards by a leading and innovative utility service organisation.

The County District covers an area of approximately 15,400 square kilometres and contains a population of approximately 67,000 people. An estimated 60,000 people are provided with water through some 26,000 service connections. The location and development of groundwater sources has been utilised over the last thirty years, and bore water now supplies three quarters of our production.

The following diagram shows the area Riverina Water supplies.



AUTHORITY TO ACT

Riverina Water County Council is constituted under the Local Government Act 1993.

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE AND RESOURCES

Riverina Water County Council is governed by a body of nine Councillors. Council members consist of 5 elected members from Wagga Wagga City Council and one each from Lockhart and Urana Shire Councils, and two from Greater Hume Shire.

Council meetings are held at 1.30pm on the fourth Wednesday of February, April, June, August, October & December (Bi-monthly), in the Council Meeting Room.

The role of Councillors, as members of the body politic, is to:

- Provide a civic leadership role in guiding the development of the Business Strategic Plan for Council.
- Direct and control the affairs of the Council in accordance with the Local Government Act and other applicable legislation.
- To participate in the allocation of Council's resources for the benefit of the area.
- To play a key role in the creation and review of Council's policies, objectives and criteria relating to the exercise of the Council's regulatory functions.
- To review and monitor the performance of Council and its delivery of services, delivery and operational plans and revenue policies.

The role of the Chairperson is to:

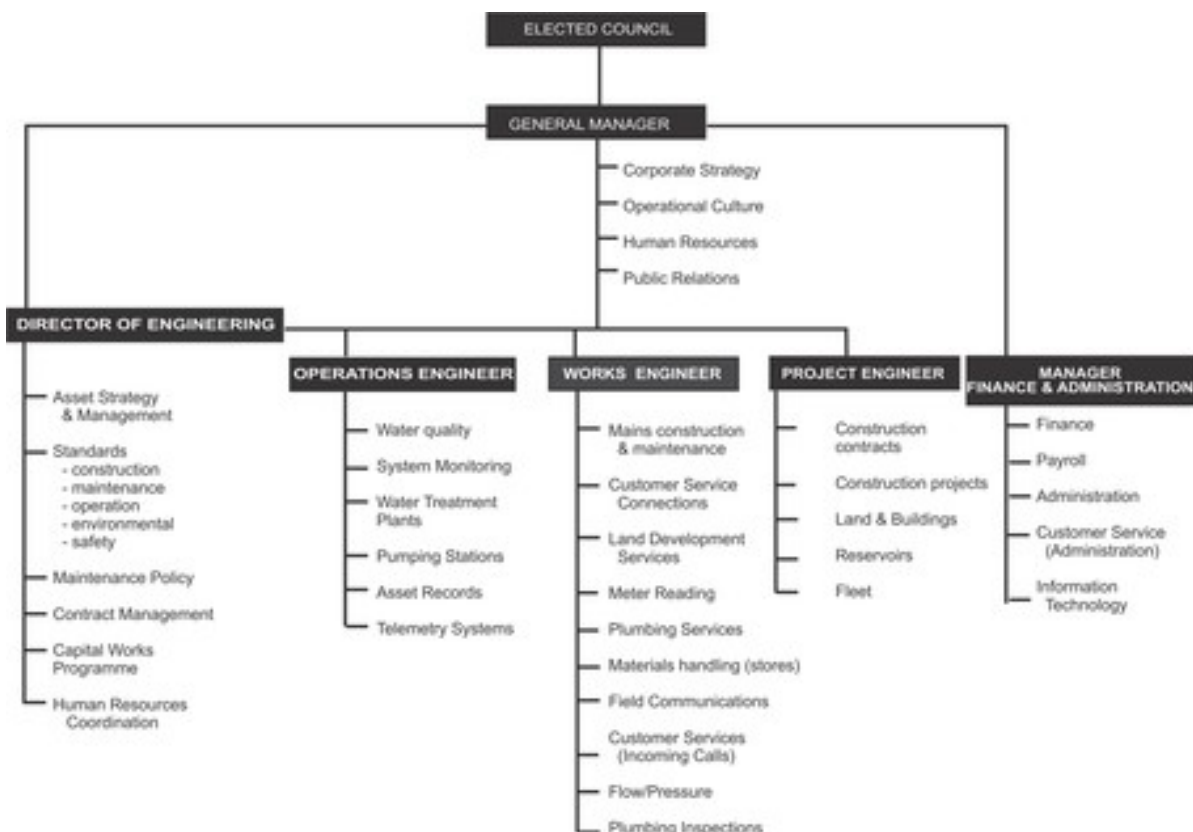
- Exercise in cases of necessity, the policy making function of the governing body of the Council between meetings of the Council.
- To exercise such other functions of the Council as the Council determines.
- To preside at meetings of the Council.
- To carry out the civic and ceremonial functions of the Office.

The General Manager is the principal officer of Riverina Water County Council. The General Manager is generally responsible for the efficient and effective operation of the organisation and for ensuring the implementation, without undue delay, of decisions of the council.

The General Manager has the following particular functions:

- To assist the Council in connection with the development and implementation of the Strategic Business Plan and the Council’s resourcing strategy, the delivery program and operational plan and the preparation of its annual report.
- The day-to-day management of the Council.
- To exercise such of the functions of the Council as are delegated by the Council to the General Manager.
- To appoint staff in accordance with an organisation structure and resources approved by the Council.
- To direct and dismiss staff.
- To implement the Council’s equal employment opportunity management plan.
- Other functions as may be conferred or imposed on the General Manager by or under the Local Government Act or any other Act.

The following diagram shows Riverina Water’s organisational structure.



EFFECTS ON MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

In exercising its statutory functions, Riverina Water may affect members of the public in its operations including, but not restricted to:

- The replacement / construction of water delivery infrastructure.
- The acquisition of land.
- Inspection of customer's premises to ensure compliance with relevant safety and regulatory standards.
- The issuing of accounts and related services.

Members of the public are most welcome to attend Council meetings and, with prior notice, are also able to address Council in the Public Access section of the meeting.

NATURE OF DOCUMENTS HELD BY RIVERINA WATER

Riverina Water holds many files, documents and instruction manuals concerning its operations. A number of publications are available free of charge by visiting Council's website

www.rwcc.nsw.gov.au.

Riverina Water holds the following documents:

- Policy documents
- Council business papers and minutes
- Plans
- Financial reports
- Press releases
- Fact sheets
- Customer bulletins
- Procedure manuals
- Specifications
- Reports
- Maps, plans and diagrams
- Publications, and
- Various other business documents.

ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS, PROCEDURES AND CONTACT POINTS

In many instances, customer information relating to a person's own account, or information that is already publicly available may be provided or access given to documents by simply making a request either in person, by telephone, fax, mail or e-mail.

Under the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009*, Council must release information unless there is an overriding public interest against disclosure. There are four ways in which government information will be available:

- **Mandatory release:** This generally includes information found on Council's website. Such as the Council's policy documents, current publication guide, disclosure log and register of government contracts.
- **Proactive release:** These are additional documents that are made available to the public on Council's website.
- **Informal request:** This is for specific information. Under the GIPA Act Council can choose to release information without the need for a formal access application. Access via this path may be subject to reasonable conditions such as photocopying charges. Please complete an [Informal \(General\) Request Application Form](#) and submit to Council.
- **Formal access application:** If you haven't been able to obtain the information you need through any other form of access, you can submit a formal access application. Unlike the informal request you have a legally enforceable right to be provided with access unless there is an overriding public interest against disclosure of the information. An application fee and processing charges may apply. Please complete a [Formal GIPA Application Form](#) and submit to Council with the \$30 application fee. Further information about fees and charges can be found on the website for the Office of the Information Commissioner:
<http://www.ipc.nsw.gov.au/>

How do I get information from Riverina Water?

- Search Council's website to see if it is already available.
- Contact Riverina Water and ask for the information. Council will decide whether the information you want:
 - Is open access or mandatory release information that is readily available. If it is, we will tell you where and how you can get the information.
 - Should be made available as part of a proactive release of information.
 - Can be disclosed to you through informal release for example where no third party information is involved.
 - Requires a formal access application, for example because consultation with a third party is required.

If making a formal application, access to documents can be obtained by making a request in writing to the Right to Information Officer. You are required to supply all relevant details and include the

application fee. Applications may be lodged in person, faxed or posted to Riverina Water. Council's Administration Office is available during business hours of 8:30am to 4pm.

The Administration Office may be contacted in the following ways:

By mail:

Access to Information

Riverina Water County Council

PO Box 456

Wagga Wagga NSW 2650

By fax: 02 6921 2241

By email: admin@rwcc.nsw.gov.au

If you require any other advice or assistance about access to information you may contact the Information and Privacy Commission by the following means:

Telephone: 1800 472 679 (free call)

Email: ipcinfo@ipc.nsw.gov.au

Postal Address: GPO Box 7011, SYDNEY NSW 2001

Web: <http://www.ipc.nsw.gov.au/>