

MEDIA RELEASE

24 September 2025

IPART compromise on water prices allows Sydney Water to support growth

CEO of Urban Taskforce Australia, Tom Forrest, today welcomed the final determination by IPART on the maximum prices for Greater Sydney water users for the period 2025-30, saying the outcome represented a fair compromise between what Sydney Water called for and the need to limit price rises for water customers.

When IPART released its draft recommendations in June this year, Urban Taskforce Australia was concerned that short-term cost of living considerations would undermine Sydney Water's capacity to deliver the water and wastewater infrastructure needed to support growth in housing supply in Western and Southwestern Sydney.

The final determination will see a typical Sydney household bill rise from \$1,220 in 2024-25 to approximately \$1,388 in 2025-26, increasing to around \$1,695 by 2029-30. While it is not what Sydney Water asked for, they will need to find operational efficiencies to support Sydney's growth. The compromise outcome now allows Sydney Water to get on with the job.

Beside planning reform, infrastructure delivery like roads and water are critical to servicing greenfield development.

The reintroduction of infrastructure contributions (DSPs) in 2023 shifted much of the cost of water infrastructure onto new home buyers. This IPART determination shifts that dial back in favour of a broad-based approach to supporting the cost of servicing a growing Sydney.

All of Sydney, indeed all of NSW and the nation benefit from the economic powerhouse that is Western Sydney. It is simply unfair for those living and working in Western Sydney to be increasingly hit with a raft of Government fees, taxes and charges for infrastructure to support new housing.

Those in established suburbs like those in the Eastern Suburbs and North Shore benefitted from the Government funding core and trunk infrastructure. It is only fair that they contribute to supporting Sydney's growth today.

Recent analysis by the Centre for International Economics (CIE) found that NSW leads the way when it comes to housing taxes – **with up to \$576,000, or almost half, of the cost of a new house and land package in Sydney is made up of government taxes, regulatory costs and charges.**

This final IPART report now allows Sydney Water to prioritise its spend and demonstrate its capacity to deliver on the Minns Government's housing targets.

Sydney Water needs to demonstrate to the Government its bona fides and then make a pitch for further infrastructure support.

The States have significant fiscal challenges, and here is where we need the Commonwealth to step up to the plate and support the States fund housing-enabling infrastructure.

End.

*The comments and material above can be attributed to **Tom Forrest**, CEO, Urban Taskforce.*

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