



Australian Government

Department of Infrastructure, Transport,
Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts



Community Bulletin

INDIAN OCEAN TERRITORIES

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Relevant: Indian Ocean Territories residents

Topic: Public Feedback on the Draft Indian Ocean Territories Water Hardship Policy

The Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts (the department) wants to hear your views on its proposed Financial Hardship Policy for water services in the Indian Ocean Territories.

The Australian Government, through the department, provides funding to WA agencies to deliver services to Christmas Island (CI) and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands (CKI) – including water services provided by Water Corporation.

Once finalised, the new policy will support customers of Water Corporation who are experiencing financial hardship – an important measure to assist eligible residents, usually home-owners or tenants, who are undergoing more than short-term financial disadvantage and struggling to pay water bills.

We are asking Water Corporation customers to provide feedback on the draft policy to help inform and shape how it can best meet the needs of the community.

Feedback will be open for a two-week period, from 4 to 18 August 2025, and we encourage Water Corporation customers to share their thoughts on this important document.

A link to the draft policy is available here: [Territories publications | Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts](#)

Responses, feedback and questions can be sent to: IOTSDA@infrastructure.gov.au

The department is required to develop a Financial Hardship Policy under Western Australian law, as part of the current process to progress water licensing in the IOT. The department must apply to become a member of an approved water services ombudsman scheme – operated by the Energy and Water Ombudsman (Western Australia) Limited. All members of the scheme need to have an approved Financial Hardship Policy for water services in place. This policy will be in addition to assistance that may be available to customers experiencing short-term payment difficulties.

The department's membership of the Energy and Water Ombudsman will mean Water Corporation customers in the IOT will have more guidance on processes for significant overdue debts for water services – including debts greater than 60 days – as well as providing customers an independent means of lodging a complaint about Water Corporation and the management of overdue charges.

Want to know more?

ERA website: [Financial Hardship Policy Guidelines for Water Services](#)

ERA: [Financial Hardship and Assistance](#)

Adam Stankevicius, Assistant Secretary, Indian Ocean Territories Branch