

Consumer experience and protection for water services:
is the right information available?

Te wheako kiritaki me te tiakitanga mō ngā ratonga wai: āe rānei kei te wātea ngā pārongo tika?

October 2026



We are seeking your feedback Kei te rāpu mātou i ō koutou whakaaro

There is already information available about consumer experience and protection through our information disclosure requirements and other sources.

However, some of that information may be collected for different purposes, reported in different ways, or not be readily available to stakeholders. In some cases, that information may also be difficult to compare across suppliers or over time.

We want to understand whether the current information provides enough visibility of consumer experience and protection issues, or whether additional information would improve understanding of:



→ how consumers experience interactions with suppliers, and



→ whether their interests are being adequately protected.

What is information disclosure? He aha ia te whākinga mōhiohio?

Information disclosure is the “ground floor” regulatory tool for water services. It helps consumers, suppliers, regulators and other stakeholders understand how regulated water service suppliers are performing and how performance changes over time.



What do we mean by consumer experience and protection? He aha oti tēnei mea te wheako kiritaki me te tiakitanga

Consumer experience and protection focuses on the experiences consumers, including vulnerable consumers, have when interacting with their supplier. This can include things like:

Consumer information and engagement Pārongo kiritaki me te whitiwhiti kōrero	How suppliers communicate and engage with consumers.	
Complaints information Pārongo amuamu	The types of concerns consumers raise and how complaints are collected and reported.	
Complaint handling, dispute resolution and redress Te whakahaere amuamu, te whakatau tohe me te whakaea	What happens after a complaint is raised and the options available when concerns remain unresolved.	
Billing and charging Te whakarite nama, utu hoki	How consumers experience billing and charging arrangements, including how information is communicated and understood.	
Vulnerable consumers Kiritaki noho whakaraerae	How suppliers identify and support vulnerable consumers, including consumers experiencing hardship.	

We have not formed a view on whether new information disclosure requirements are needed. We are first seeking feedback on:

- 1** whether we have identified the right areas of focus
- 2** whether the information currently available is sufficient, and
- 3** whether additional information would improve understanding.

Who is the Commerce Commission? Ko wai rā te Komihana Tauhokohoko?

We are the economic regulator for water services and have complementary consumer protection powers for those services. In our role we currently only regulate water supply and wastewater services provided by decision making local government water service suppliers (regulated suppliers).

Who is your regulated supplier? Ko wai rā tō kaituku waeture?

Your regulated supplier is responsible for delivering water services to your community and is subject to economic regulation. This could be your:

- territorial authority (like your local district, unitary or city council)
- water organisation, such as council-owned organisations (like Watercare and Tiaki Wai), or
- regional council (if they provide any regulated water services).

Want to know more? Kei te hiahia rānei ki ētahi kōrero anō?

The discussion paper associated with this factsheet can be found on our [website](#). Submissions on our discussion paper close **26 November 2026**.

Our [Introducing Economic Regulation and Consumer Protection for Water Services in Aotearoa New Zealand](#) also provides an overview of our role.

If you have questions about water economic regulation and consumer protection, you can also contact us at wai@comcom.govt.nz. You can join our email list for our **Commission-wide updates**, including our newsletter or any of our industry-specific updates. You can also join our email list for **Commission media releases**.