

# 6 Customer

## 6.1 C15—Average duration of an unplanned interruption—water (minutes)

### 6.1.1 Introduction

This indicator reports the average time (in minutes) that a customer is without a water supply due to an unforeseen interruption that requires attention by the utility. It also includes instances in which scheduled (planned) interruptions exceed the time limit originally notified by the utility. It is a partial indicator of customer service and the condition of the water network, and of how effectively the network is being operated managed.

The average duration is influenced by the scale of the event that causes the interruption, the location of the interruption (its proximity to the utility's repair crews and, for example, the depth or location of a pipe that has burst), the utility's response policy for outlying areas, and the number of maintenance and repair staff at the utility's disposal. A single event affecting a small number of properties for a long duration can have a material effect on this indicator, particularly for smaller utilities, and hence there are often relatively large variations from year to year.

In 2013–14, 19 utilities reported increases, whereas 30 utilities reported decreases. The median value for all utilities decreased from 124 to 113 (Table 6.1).

**Table 6.1 Overview of results: C15 (minutes)**

Size group	Range		Number of utilities with increase/decrease from 2012–13		Median		% change of the median from 2012–13
	High	Low	Increase	Decrease	2012–13	2013–14	
100,000+ connected properties	161 SA Water	91 South East Water	4	8	130 <sup>†</sup>	123 <sup>†</sup>	-7%
50,000–100,000 connected properties	311 Gosford	3 Townsville	2	7	128	100	-22%
20,000–50,000 connected properties	220 Shoalhaven	4 Fitzroy River Water	8	5	104	102	-2%
10,000–20,000 connected properties	240 Gympie	3 Busselton (W)	5	10	132	115	-14%
All size groups (national)	311 Gosford	3 Busselton (W)	19	30	126 <sup>†</sup>	116 <sup>†</sup>	-8%

**Table notes**

<sup>†</sup> As a result of changes to reporting boundaries for SA Water, the 2012–13 average duration of an unplanned interruption uses a connected properties weighted average of Adelaide, Mount Gambier, and Whyalla, while the 2013–14 figure uses whole of SA Water data.

### 6.1.2 Results and analysis

#### 100,000+ group

In this group, three reported increases while eight reported decreases from 2012–13 to 2013–14. The median for the group was 123 minutes, a decrease of 7% from 2012–13. SA Water had the highest result for 2013–14 (161 minutes), while South East Water had the lowest of 91 minutes (Figure 6.1).

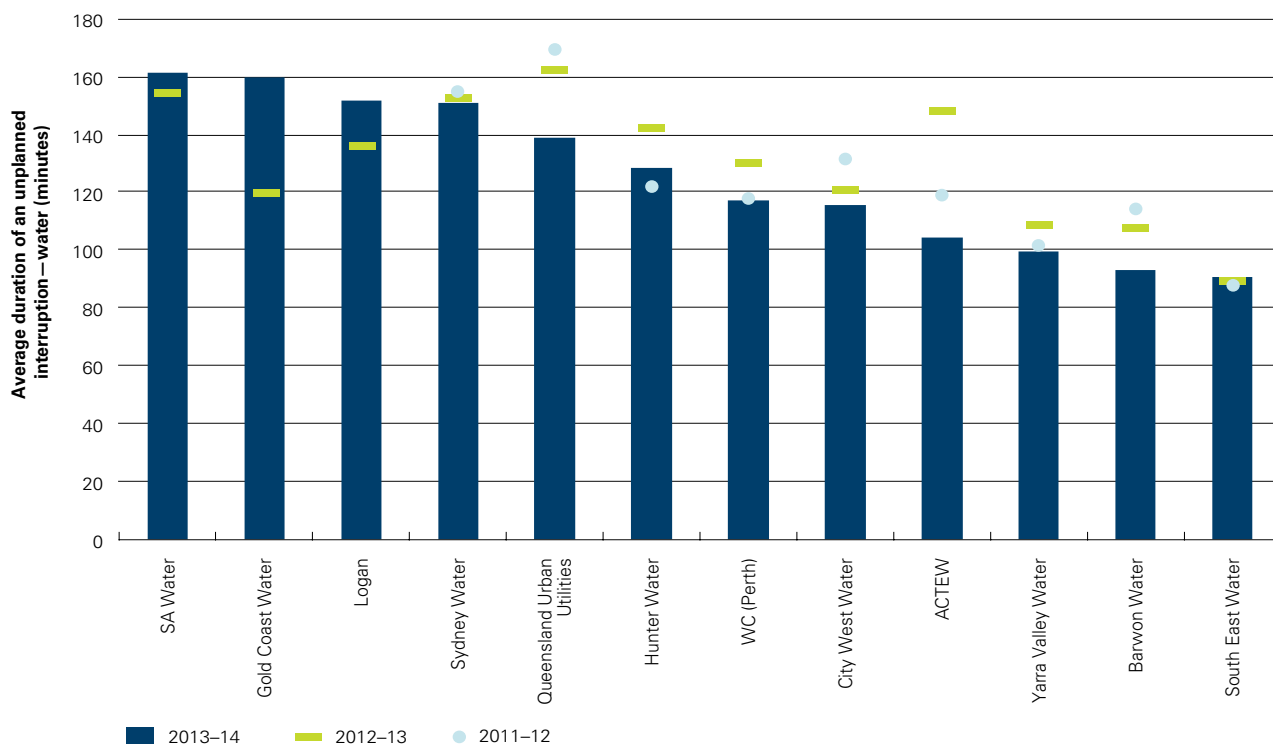


Figure 6.1 C15, 2011-12 to 2013-14 (minutes), for utilities with 100,000+ connected properties

### 50,000-100,000 group

In 2013-14, the median unplanned interruption for this group was 100 minutes, a 22% decrease from that of 2012-13 (128 minutes).

As with 2012-13, results were highly varied. Overall, seven utilities recorded a decrease while two recorded an increase for the 2013-14 year. Gosford recorded the largest unplanned interruption (311 minutes), while Townsville recorded the lowest (3 minutes) (Figure 6.2).

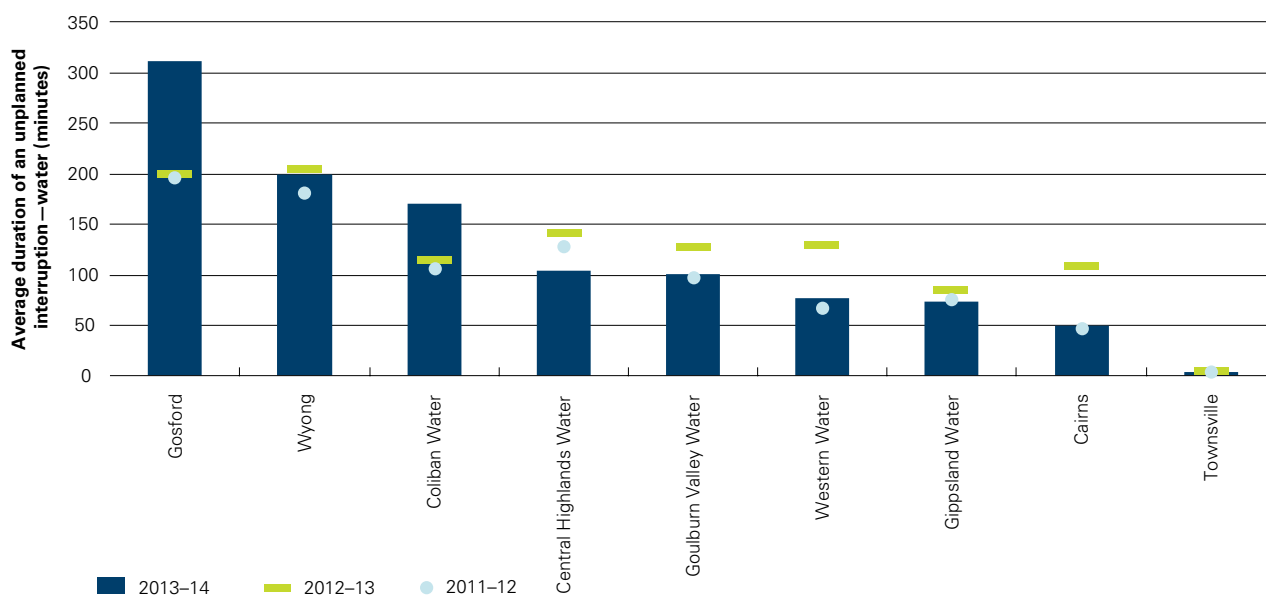


Figure 6.2 C15, 2011-12 to 2013-14 (minutes), for utilities with 50,000-100,000 connected properties

### 20,000–50,000 group

In 2013–14, the median unplanned interruption (102 minutes) for this group varied little from 2012–13 (Table 6.1). Of the group’s 15 utilities, eight recorded an increase while five utilities recorded a decrease. The longest unplanned interruption was recorded by Shoalhaven (220 minutes) and the shortest by Fitzroy River Water (4 minutes).

Variations in the duration of unplanned interruptions between the 2011–12, 2012–13, and 2013–14 years is evident for Riverina Water, Port Macquarie Hastings, Mackay Water, North East Water and Fitzroy River Water (Figure 6.3).

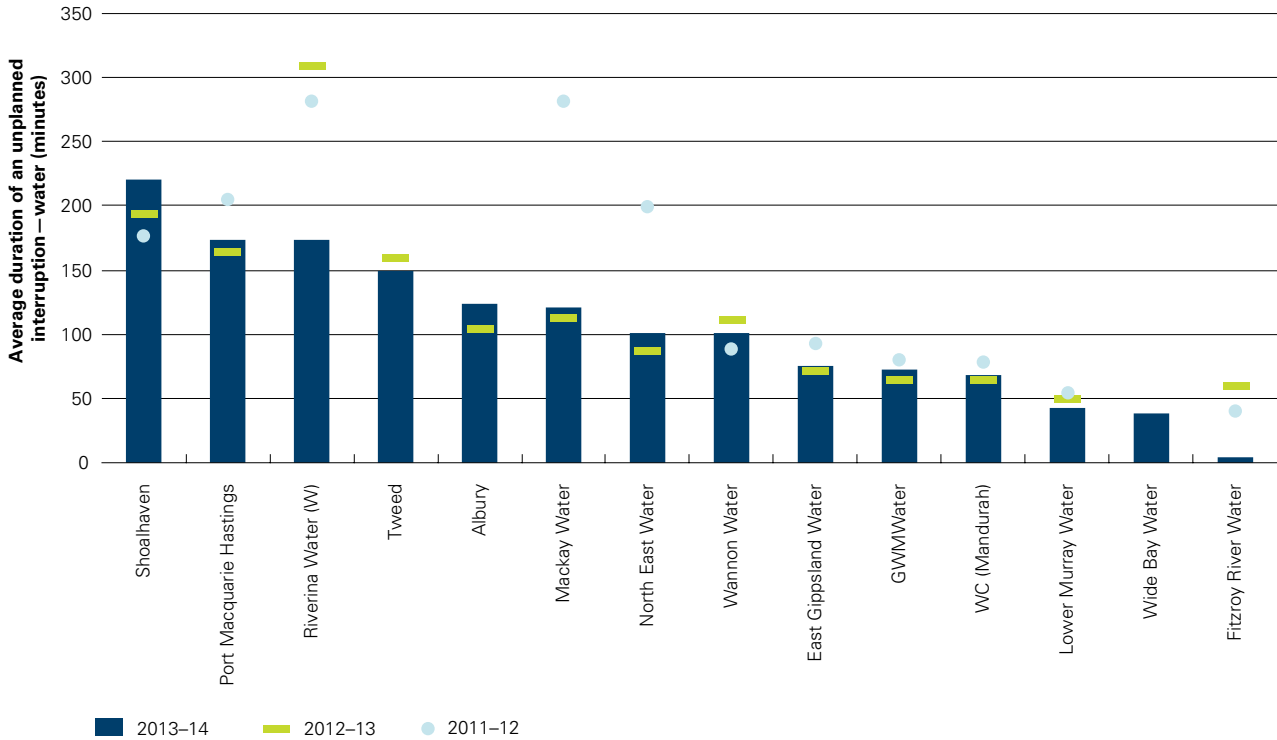


Figure 6.3 C15, 2011–12 to 2013–14 (minutes), for utilities with 20,000–50,000 connected properties

### 10,000–20,000 group

This group also presents significant variations in the duration of unplanned interruptions over different years (Figure 6.4); however, the 2013–14 median for all utilities decreased slightly by 9% from that of 2012–13.

In 2013–14, ten utilities reported a decreases and five reported increases (Table 6.1). The lowest duration was recorded by Busselton (3 minutes), and the highest by Gympie (240 minutes).

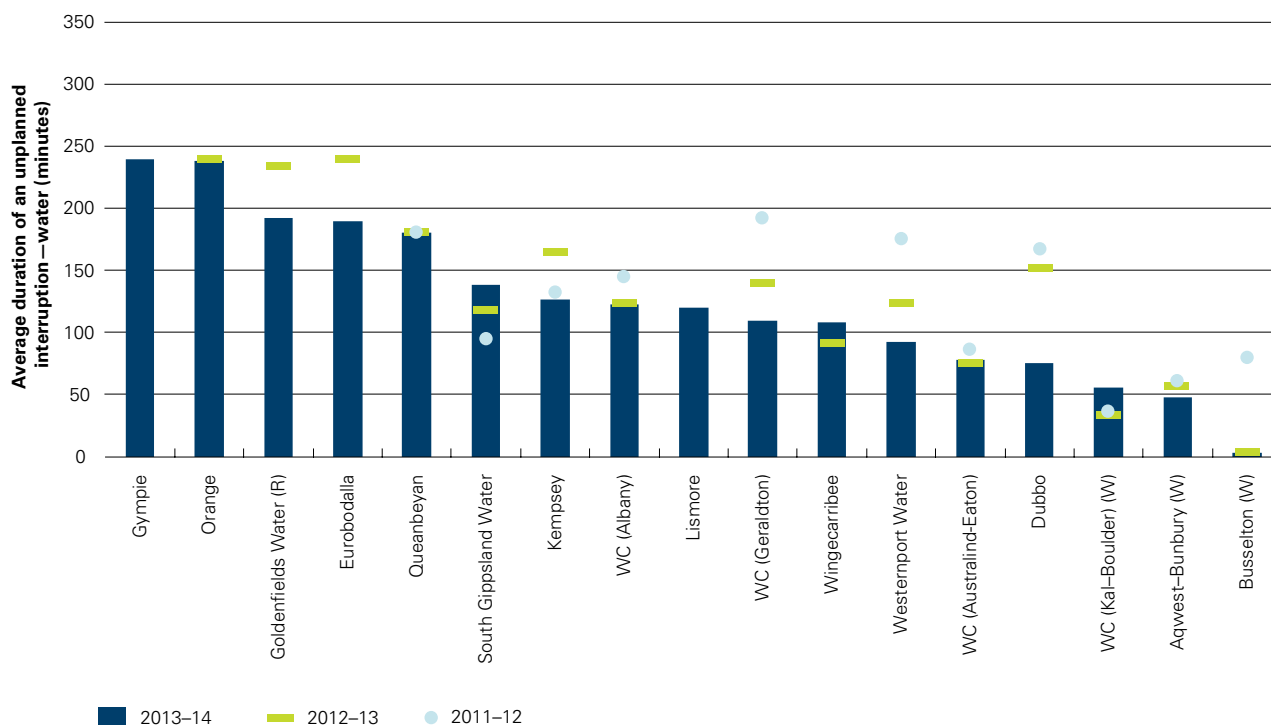


Figure 6.4 C15, 2011–12 to 2013–14 (minutes), for utilities with 10,000–20,000 connected properties

## 6.2 C13—Total water and sewerage complaints (per 1,000 properties)

### 6.2.1 Introduction

This indicator reports the total number of complaints received by a water utility per 1,000 properties. A complaint can be a written or verbal expression of dissatisfaction about an action or proposed action or a failure to act by the water utility, its employees, or contractors. Complaints from different customers arising from the same cause are recorded as separate complaints. The number of complaints is an indicator of the level of customer service and customer satisfaction and is a common performance indicator in many industries.

### 6.2.2 Results and analysis

In 2013–14, the median number of complaints per 1,000 properties (6) decreased by 1 from that of 2012–13 (7). Across the four utility groups, 28 reported decreases and 20 reported increases (Table 6.2).

**Table 6.2 Overview of results: C13 (per 1,000 properties)**

Size group	Range		Number of utilities with increase/decrease from 2012–13		Median		% change in the median from 2012–13
	High	Low	Increase	Decrease	2012–13	2013–14	
100,000+ connected properties	18.1 Gold Coast Water	1.0 WC (Perth)	4	6	4.5 <sup>†</sup>	3.6 <sup>†</sup>	-19%
50,000–100,000 connected properties	49.9 P&W (Darwin)	4.7 Western Water	3	6	9.9	8.3	-17%
20,000–50,000 connected properties	131.8 Mackay Water	0 Coffs Harbour	5	9	6.5	6.0	-8%
10,000–20,000 connected properties	103.0 Wingecarribee	0.7 WC (Australind-Eaton)	8	9	8.2	9.5	-13%
All size groups (national)	131.8 Mackay Water	0 Coffs Harbour	20	28	7.0 <sup>†</sup>	5.8 <sup>†</sup>	-17%

**Table notes**

<sup>†</sup> As a result of changes to reporting boundaries for SA Water, the 2012–13 total water and sewerage complaints uses a connected properties weighted average of Adelaide, Mount Gambier and Whyalla, while the 2013–14 figure uses whole of SA Water data.

**100,000+ group**

In this group, four utilities reported increases in the number of complaints and six reported decreases in 2013–14 compared with 2012–13. Gold Coast record the highest number of complaints per 1,000 properties (18).

Significant variation between the years in the number of complaints is evident for some utilities, particularly Yarra Valley Water (down 43%) and Barwon water (down 50%) between 2012–13 and 2013–14. Water Corporation (Perth) reported the lowest number of complaints (1), as shown in Figure 6.5.

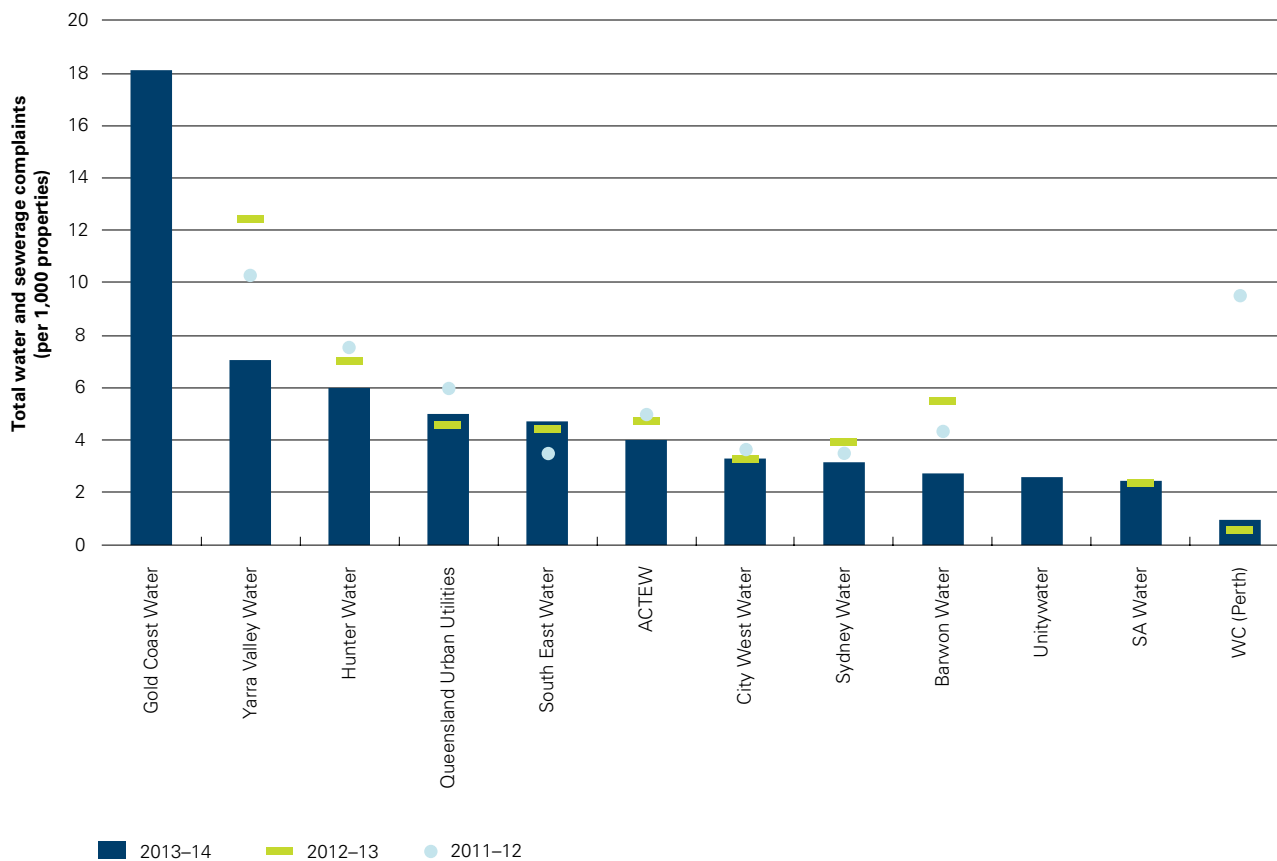


Figure 6.5 C13, 2011–12 to 2013–14 (per 1,000 properties), for utilities with 100,000+ connected properties

### 50,000–100,000 group

This group recorded an overall decrease of 17% in the median number of complaints per 1,000 properties for 2013–14 (8) compared with 2012–13 (10). Power and Water (Darwin) recorded the highest number of complaints (50), and Western Water the lowest (5).

Figure 6.6 overleaf shows that variability in complaints is minimal, with the exception of the Power and Water (Darwin) and Wyong.

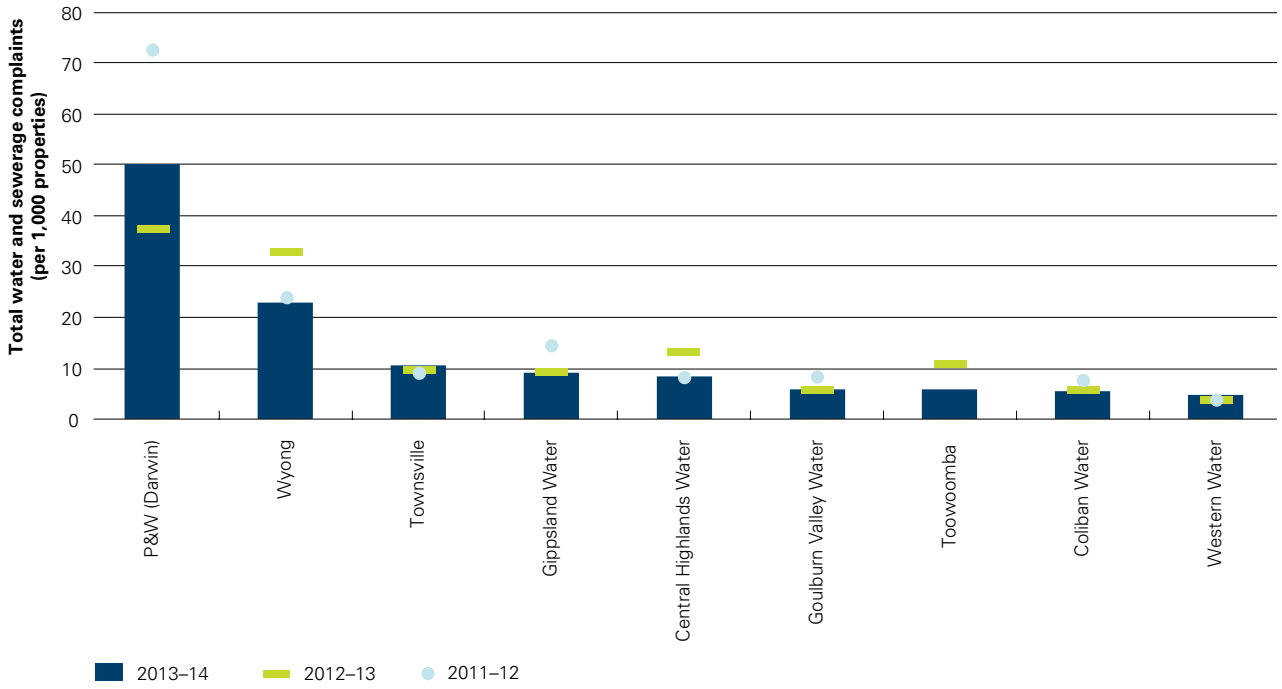


Figure 6.6 C13, 2011-12 to 2013-14 (per 1,000 properties), for utilities with 50,000-100,000 connected properties

### 20,000-50,000 group

Within this group, Mackay Water recorded the highest number of complaints (132) per 1,000 properties (Table 6.2). Clarence Valley Council recorded the largest increase, recording 101 complaints per 1,000 properties in 2013-14 compared with 53 in 2012-13 (Figure 6.7).

The 2013-14 year continued the trend of previous years, with five utilities reporting increases in the number of complaints and nine reporting decreases (Table 6.2).

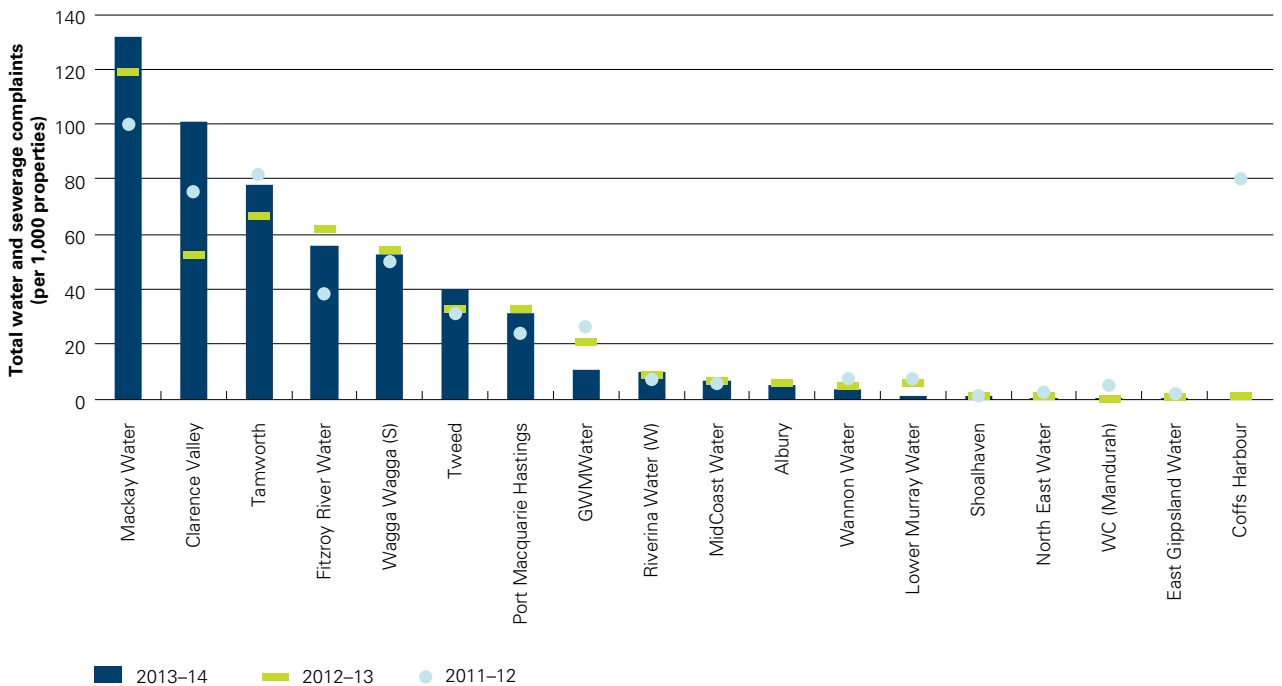


Figure 6.7 C13, 2011-12 to 2013-14 (per 1,000 properties), for utilities with 20,000-50,000 connected properties

## 10,000–20,000 group

In 2013–14, 50% of utilities within this group reported less than 5 complaints per 1,000 properties for the 2013–14 period.

As with 2012–13, the three utilities reporting the highest number of complaints per 1,000 properties were Wingecarribee (103), Orange (92), and Bathurst (82). The number of complaints received by Goldenfields and Power and Water (Alice Springs) both decreased by 84%, while Lismore recorded an increase from 4 (per 1,000 properties) in 2013–13 to 19 in 2013–14 (Figure 6.8).

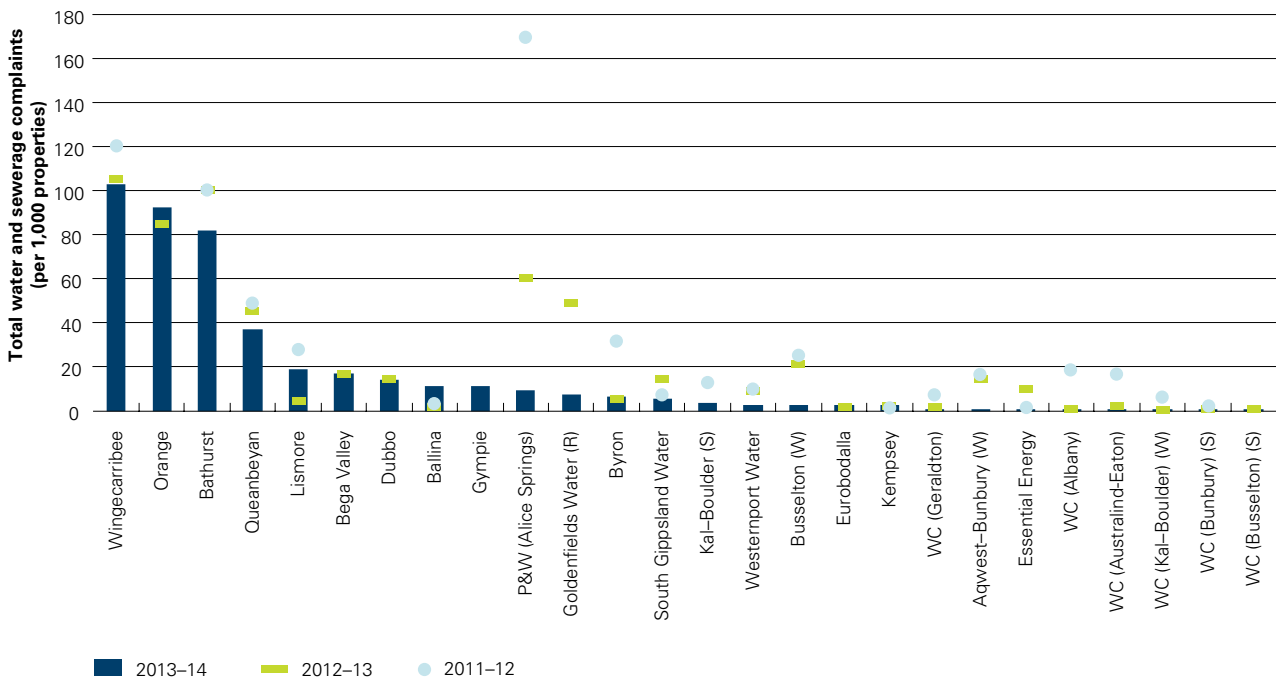


Figure 6.8 C13, 2011–12 to 2013–14 (per 1,000 properties), for utilities with 10,000–20,000 connected properties

## 6.3 C14—Percentage of calls answered by an operator within 30 seconds

### 6.3.1 Introduction

Where utilities use interactive voice response systems, this indicator measures the number of calls answered within 30 seconds after the ‘operator’ option is selected. It gives an indication of the efficiency of the utility’s customer service centre, and is affected by the ratio of customer service staff to customers, particularly when severe events such as storms or floods result in a large increase in customer calls.

In 2013–14, 19 utilities recorded an increase in the percentage of calls answered by an operator within 30 seconds while 15 utilities recorded a decrease; overall, however, there was no change in the median between 2012–13 and 2013–14 (Table 6.3).



**Table 6.3 Overview of results: C14 (%)**

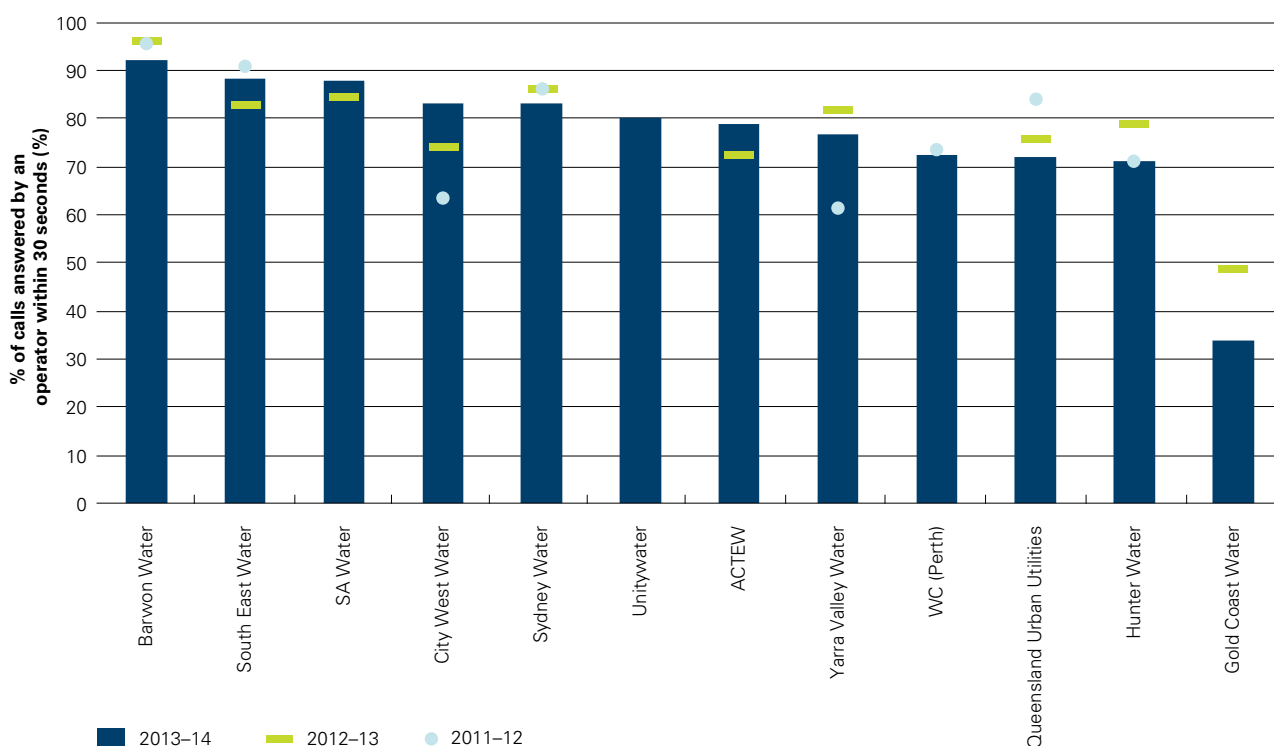
Size group	Range		Number of utilities with increase/decrease from 2012–13		Median		% change in the median from 2012–13
	High	Low	Increase	Decrease	2012–13	2013–14	
100,000+ connected properties	92	34	4	7	79 <sup>†</sup>	79 <sup>†</sup>	<1%
	Barwon Water	Gold Coast Water					
50,000–100,000 connected properties	99	33	7	1	84	84	<1%
	Goulburn Valley Water	Wyong					
20,000–50,000 connected properties	100	44	4	5	96	94	-2%
	Wagga Wagga (S)	Mackay Water					
10,000–20,000 connected properties	100	48	4	2	80	80	-1%
	Kal-Boulder (S)	Kempsey					
All size group (national)	100	33	19	15	84 <sup>†</sup>	84 <sup>†</sup>	<1%
	Multiple utilities	Wyong					

**Table notes**

<sup>†</sup> As a result of changes to reporting boundaries for SA Water, the 2012–13 Percentage of calls answered by an operator within 30 seconds uses Adelaide data while the 2013–14 figure uses whole of SA Water data.

**6.3.2 Results and analysis****100,000+ group**

This group recorded a minimal change in the percentage of calls answered by an operator within 30 seconds for the 2012–13 and 2013–14 reporting years. The median increased by less than 1%, with the highest percentage reported by Barwon Water (92) and the lowest by Gold Coast Water (34) (Figure 6.9).

**Figure 6.9 C14, 2011–12 to 2013–14, for utilities with 100,000+ connected properties**

## 50,000–100,000 group

This group also recorded minimal variation in the percentage of calls answered by an operator within 30 seconds (Figure 6.10). Overall, there was no change in the median percentage between 2012–13 and 2013–14. The highest percentage was recorded by Goulburn Valley Water (99) and the lowest by Wyong (33).

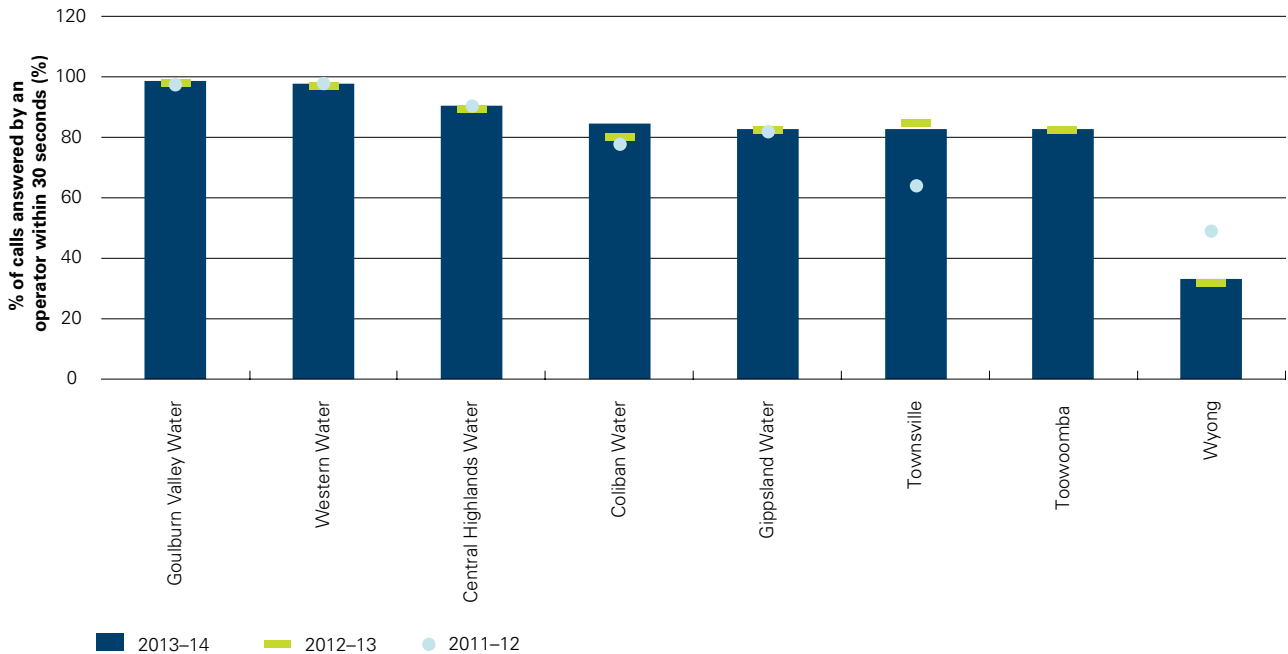


Figure 6.10 C14, 2011–12 to 2013–14, for utilities with 50,000–100,000 connected properties

## 20,000–50,000 group

In 2013–14, eight utilities within this group reported results between 85% and 100% for the percentage of calls answered by an operator within 30 seconds (Figure 6.11). The highest percentages were reported by Wagga Wagga and East Gippsland Water (100%). Although Mackay Water recorded the lowest result (44%), this also represented an increase of 30% from its 2012–13 result.

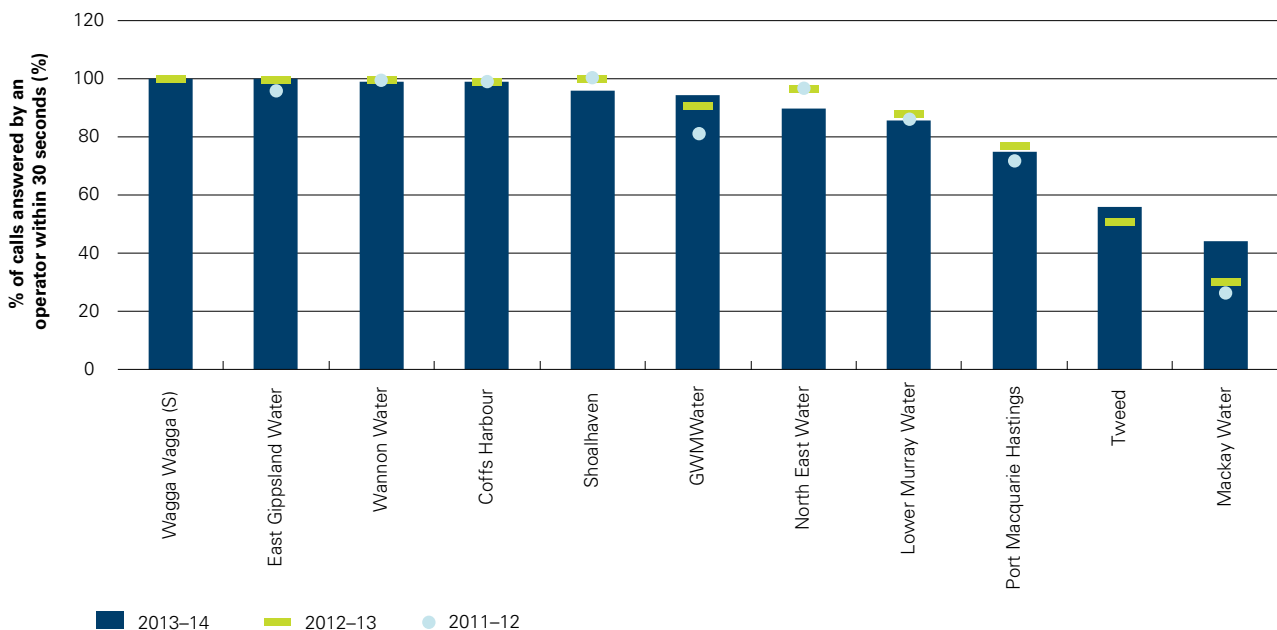


Figure 6.11 C14, 2011–12 to 2013–14, for utilities with 20,000–50,000 connected properties

### 10,000–20,000 group

In the 2013–14 period, the majority of utilities in this group answered at least 78% of calls within 30 seconds.

There was minimal variation between the 2012–13 and 2013–14 years (Figure 6.12). Wingecarribee recorded the largest increase (20%) between the two reporting years. Overall, the median percentage was unchanged.

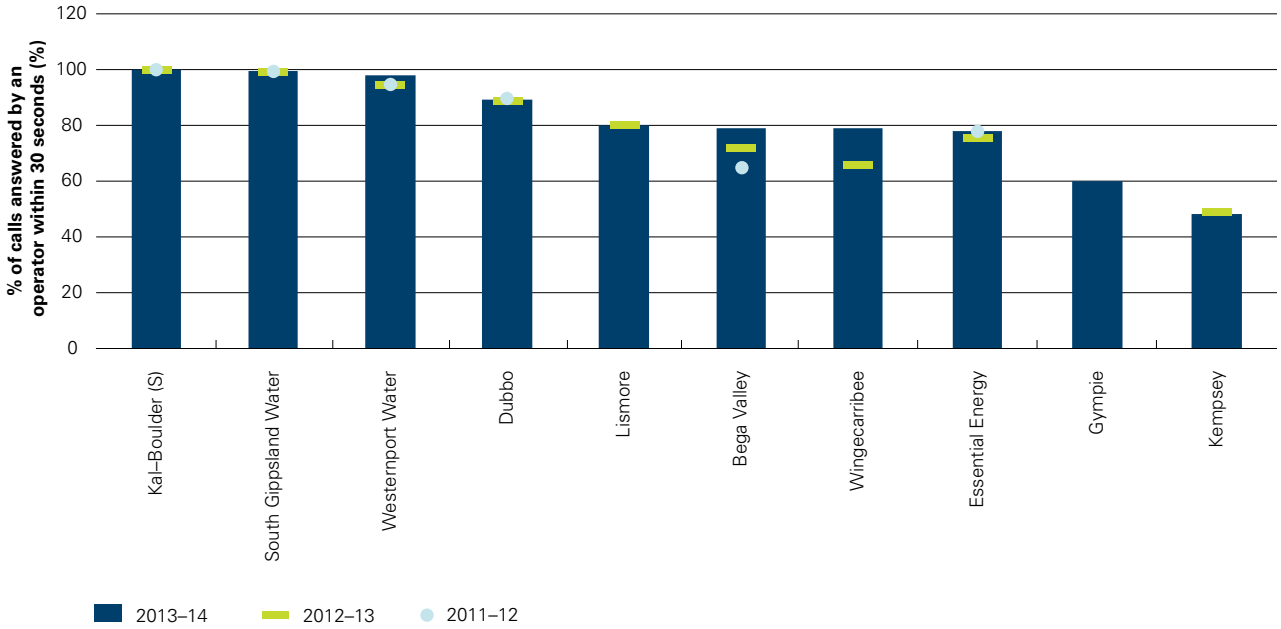


Figure 6.12 C14, 2011–12 to 2013–14, for utilities with 10,000–50,000 connected properties