6 Customer

6.1 Average duration of an unplanned interruption: water – C15

The average duration (minutes) of an unplanned interruption (C15), is the average time a customer is without water supply due to an unforeseen interruption that requires attention by the utility.

Unplanned interruptions include scheduled interruptions that exceed the time limit given in the original notification. The indicator is a measure of customer service, the condition of the water network and how effectively the network is managed.

The average duration is influenced by the:

- scale of the event causing the interruption
- location of the interruption (for example, the proximity to a repair crew and the depth of the burst pipe)
- utility's response policy for outlying areas
- number of maintenance and repair staff at the utility's disposal.

Note that a single event affecting a small number of properties for a long duration can cause large annual variations in this indicator, especially for smaller utilities.

Data on the average duration of an unplanned interruption (water supply) for all active utilities reporting in 2022–23 is presented in Table A10, Appendix A.

6.1.1 Key findings

Table 6.1 presents a summary of average duration of unplanned interruptions by utility size group.

Table 6.1 Overview of results: Average duration of an unplanned interruption: water (minutes)

Utility group	Range		No. utilities with increase/decrease from 2021–22		Median		Change in median from 2021–22 (%)
	High	Low	Increase	Decrease	2021–22	2022–23	
Major	231.0	90.1	8	6	137.0	130.4	-5%
	Sydney Water	South East Water					
Large	273.0	61.3	5	6	108.9	96.0	-12%
	Redland City	Cairns					
Medium	422.0	7.4	12	8	95.0	103.8	9%
	Tamworth	Mackay					
Small	456.0	18.8	9	7	105.8	103.5	-2%
	Bega Valley	Livingstone					
All size groups (national)	**456.0**	**7.4**	**34**	**27**	**115.0**	**112.0**	**-3%**
	Bega Valley	**Mackay**					

Note: Median average duration of an unplanned interruption: water (minutes) for each year is calculated for all active utilities that reported data for C15 in that year.

The median average duration of unplanned interruptions decreased by 3% from 115 minutes in 2021–22 to 112 minutes in 2022–23 on a national scale. Bega Valley Shire Council in New South Wales from the Small size group had the longest (456 minutes) and Mackay Regional Council in Queensland in the Medium size group, had the shortest (7.4 minutes) duration of unplanned interruption of all size groups, as they did last year.

Southern Downs Regional Council in the Small utility size group reported the largest decrease (85.1%, from 247.5 minutes in 2021–22 to 36.8 minutes in 2022–23) while Goldenfields Water County Council in the Small utility size group reported the largest increase (227.3%, from 55 minutes in 2021–22 to 180 minutes in 2022–23).

6.1.2 Results and analysis – Major utility group

Figure 6.1 presents a ranked breakdown of the average duration of an unplanned interruption for the Major utility group from 2018–19 to 2022–23. The figure highlights the large year-to-year variation in the indicator for all utilities in the Major size group that can result from a single major mains break.

Sydney Water Corporation reported the highest (231 minutes) and South East Water Corporation reported the lowest (90.1 minutes) average duration of unplanned interruptions in 2022–23. The City of Gold Coast average duration of unplanned interruptions (126.3 minutes) decreased by 20.3% from 2021–22, after a gradual increase from 126 minutes in 2018–19 to 158.5 minutes in 2021–22.

Figure 6.1 illustrate both increases and decreases in the average duration of unplanned interruptions for the Major size group in 2022–23. Notably, Water Corporation – Perth reported an increase of 14.9% compared to 2021–22 following an unchanged condition last year. Yarra Vally Water Corporation, Logan City Council and Barwon Water demonstrated minimal variance, remaining nearly unchanged.

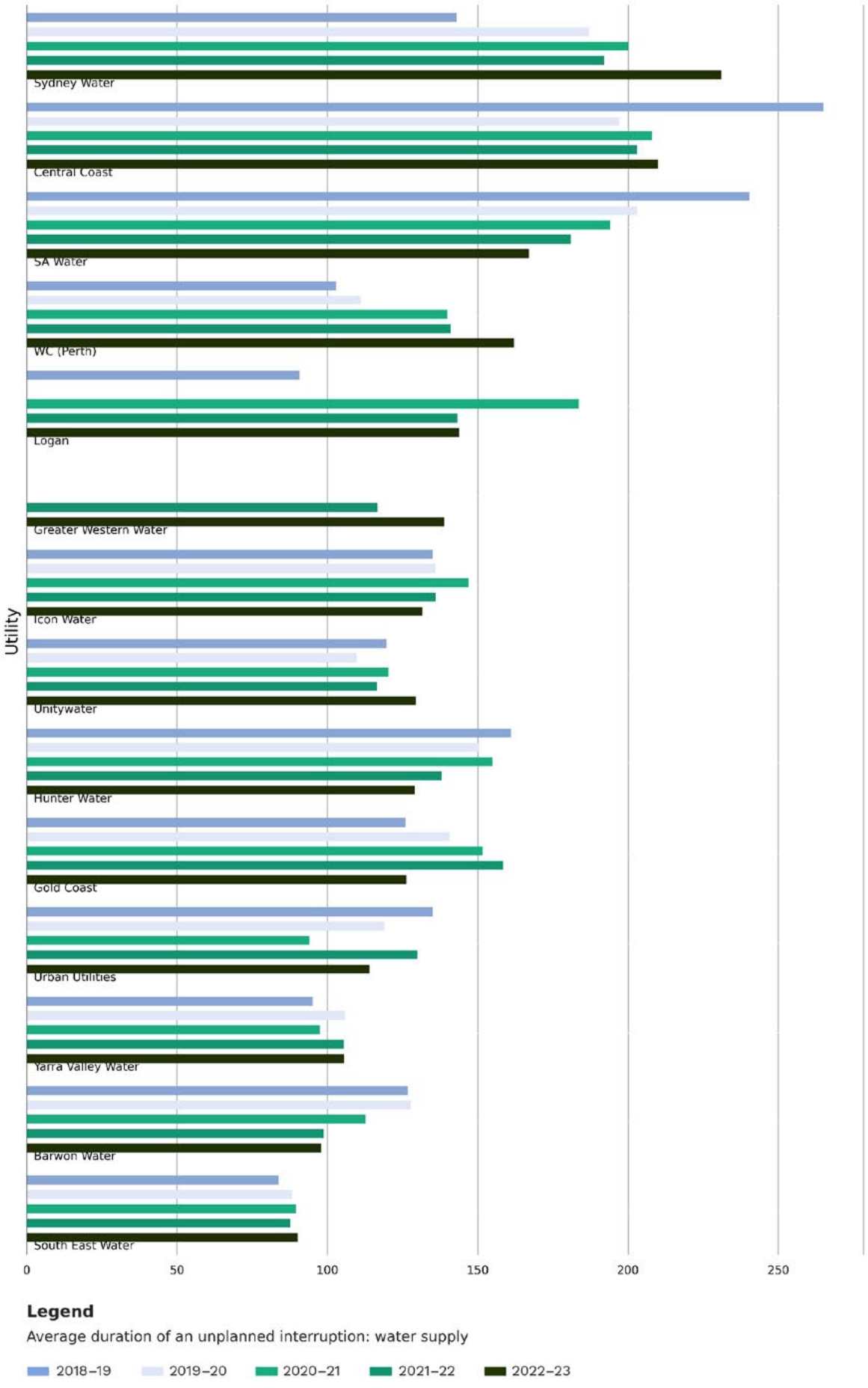

Figure 6.1 Average duration of an unplanned interruption: water (minutes) – Major utility group

6.2 Number of water and sewerage complaints per 1,000 properties – C13

The total number of water and sewerage complaints per 1,000 properties (C13) is a measure of a utility's customer satisfaction and operational performance. A complaint can be a written or verbal expression of dissatisfaction made about an action, a proposed action or a failure to act by the water utility, its employees or contractors.

Complaints from different customers about the same issue are counted as separate complaints.

Total water and sewerage complaints data for all active utilities reporting in 2022–23 is presented in Table A11, Appendix A.

6.2.1 Key findings

Table 6.2 presents a summary of the total water and sewerage complaints by utility size group. Nationally, there was a 14% increase in the median number of complaints from 2021–22, despite the decrease of the median in all size groups. Goulburn Mulwaree Council reported the highest number of complaints per 1,000 properties (97) in the Small size group for 2022–23, while Gympie Regional Council reported the lowest number (0.13) in the same utility size group.

Table 6.2 Overview of results: Number of water and sewerage complaints per 1,000 properties (complaints/1,000 properties)

Utility group	Range		No. utilities with increase/decrease from 2021–21		Median		Change in median from 2021–21 (%)
	High	Low	Increase	Decrease	2021–21	2022–23	
Major	16.12	0.55	7	8	4.33	3.94	-9%
	Icon Water	WC (Perth)					
Large	9.05	0.29	7	5	4.44	3.01	-32%
	Goulburn Valley Water	Townsville					
Medium	90.00	0.19	9	11	12.00	9.00	-25%
	Clarence Valley	Gladstone					
Small	97.00	0.13	9	13	10.40	6.00	-42%
	Goulburn Mulwaree	Gympie					
All size groups (national)	**97.00**	**0.13**	**32**	**37**	**5.68**	**6.45**	**14%**
	Goulburn Mulwaree	**Gympie**					

Note: The median number of water and sewerage complaints per 1,000 properties for each year is calculated for all active and non-bulk reporting utilities that provide both reticulated water supply and wastewater services in that year.

6.2.2 Results and analysis – Major utility group

Figure 6.2 shows a ranked breakdown of the total water and sewerage complaints per 1,000 properties from 2018–19 to 2022–23 for the Major utility group.

In this group, Icon Water Limited in the Australian Capital Territory reported the highest number of water and sewerage complaints per 1,000 properties (16.12). Water Corporation – Perth in Western Australia reported the lowest number (0.55) of total complaints per 1,000 properties for 2022–23, while also reporting the highest increase (57.1%) from 2021–22. Barwon Water in Victoria reported the lowest increase (0.1%) in the total water and sewerage complaints per 1,000 properties from 2021–22.

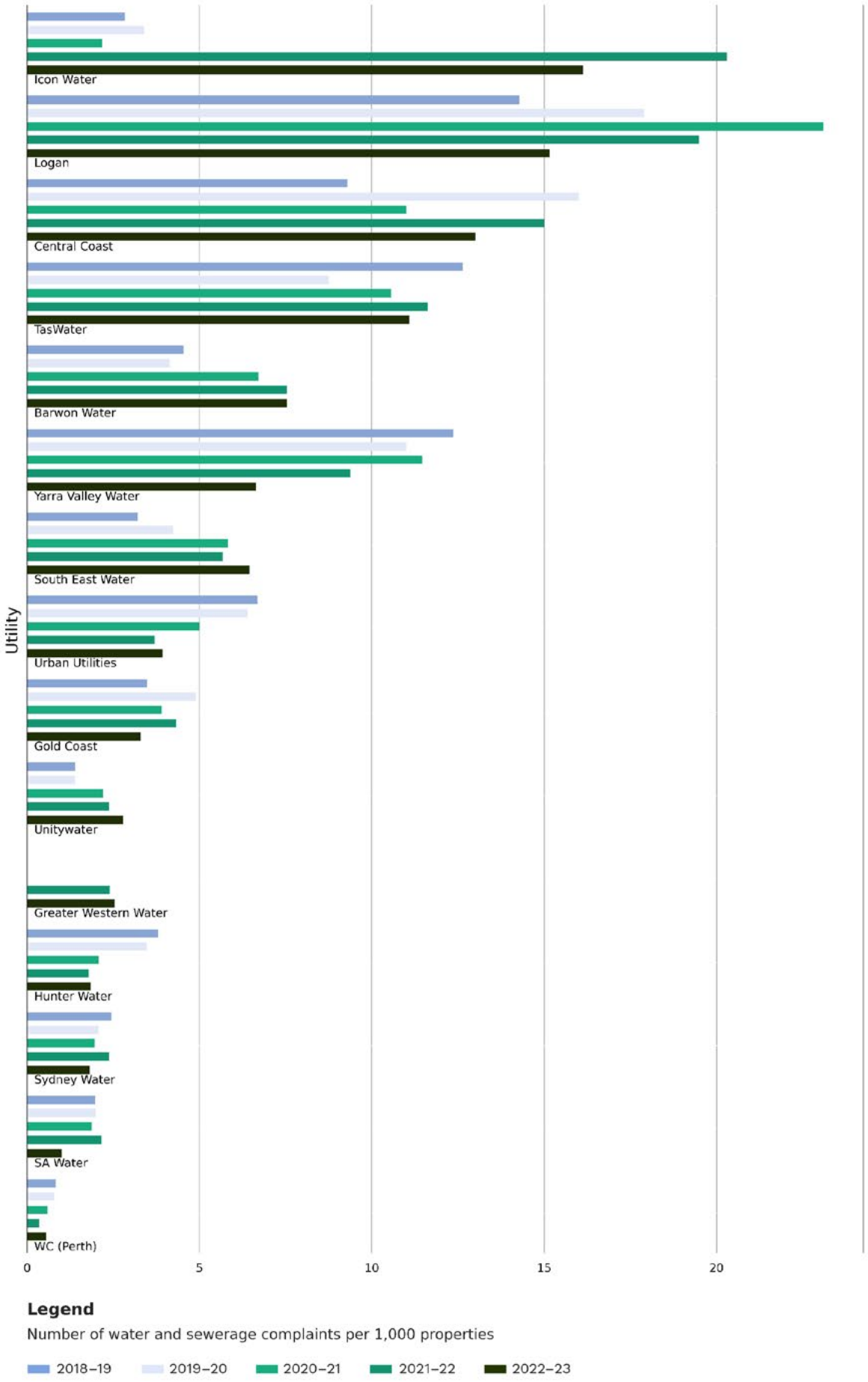

Figure 6.2 Total complaints: water and sewerage (per 1,000 properties) – Major utility group

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

The percentage of calls answered by an operator within 30 seconds (C14) measures the number of calls answered within 30 seconds after the 'operator' option is selected. It is a measure of the efficiency of a utility's customer service centre and is affected by:

- the ratio of customer service staff to customers
- severe events, such as storms or floods, that result in a large increase in customer calls.

Data on the percentage of calls answered by an operator within 30 seconds for all active utilities reporting in 2022–23 are presented in Appendix A, Table A12.

Table 6.3 Overview of results: Percentage of calls answered within 30 seconds (%)

Utility group	Range		No. utilities with increase/decrease from 2021–22		Median		Change in median from 2021–22 (%)
	High	Low	Increase	Decrease	2021–22	2022–23	
Major	94.4	16.1	2	9	65.3	57.8	-11%
	Logan	WC (Perth)					
Large	97.3	59.0	3	4	77.6	74.2	-4%
	Townsville	Shoalhaven					
Medium	99.7	0	6	9	78.0	75.0	-4%
	East Gippsland Water	Tamworth					
Small	98.1	37.0	4	2	78.5	77.0	-2%
	Busselton (W)	Western Downs					
All size groups (national)	**99.7**	**16.1**	**15**	**24**	**75.0**	**74.2**	**-1%**
	East Gippsland Water	**WC (Perth)**					

Note: Median percentage of calls answered by an operator within 30 seconds for each year is calculated for all active utilities reporting data in that year.

6.3.1 Key findings

Nationally, the median percentage of calls answered within 30 seconds for 2022–23 decreased by 1% compared to 2021–22. Across all size groups, there was a decrease, with the Major size group reporting the highest percentage decline of 11% compared to 2021–22.

Among all utility size groups, East Gippsland Water in Victoria (Medium size group) answered 99.7% of the calls within 30 seconds while Water Corporation – Perth in the Major size group answered the lowest percentage of the calls within 30 seconds (16.1%).

6.3.2 Results and analysis – Major utility group

Figure 6.3 shows a ranked breakdown of the percentage of calls answered by an operator within 30 seconds from 2018–19 to 2022–23 for the Major utility group.

Compared with 2021–22, most of the utilities in the Major utility size group reported a decrease in the percentage of the calls answered within 30 seconds while City of Gold Coast and Sydney Water Corporation remained unchanged. In this size group, Logan City Council had the best performance, answering 94.4% of calls within 30 seconds while Water Corporation – Perth showed the lowest performance, answering 16.1% of calls within 30 seconds.

Water Corporation – Perth also reported the largest decrease (53.5%), and Central Coast Council in New South Wales reported the highest increase (19.2%) in the percentage of calls answered by an operator within 30 seconds from 2021–22 to 2022–23.

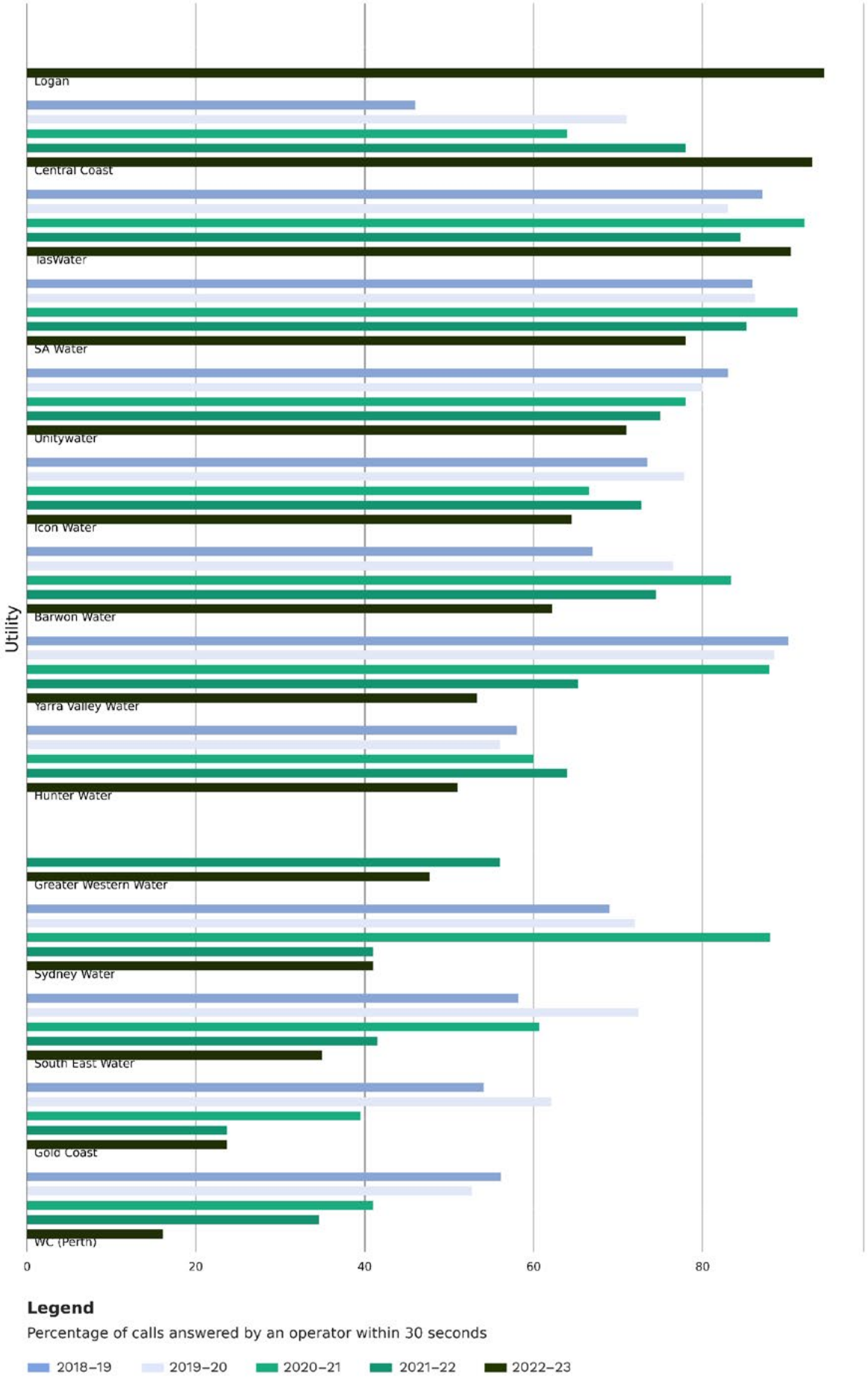

Figure 6.3 Percentage of calls answered by an operator within 30 seconds – Major utility group