



Energy Retail Code Version 14

1 January 2020

This version of the code is published to set out amendments scheduled to come into effect on 1 January 2020. The commission regularly reviews the code. Always check our website to ensure you are referring to the correct version.

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Revisions to this Code

| Version No. | Date | Nature of Amendment |
|-------------|---------------|--|
| 2 | February 2006 | <p>Addition of sub-clause 3.3 in relation to bulk hot water billing requirements</p> <p>Amendment to sub-clause 4.2 to clarify requirements for bills based on interval data.</p> |
| 3 | May 2007 | Amendment to sub-clause 24.1(d) and 32(b) and insertion of sub-clause 32(c) in relation to the application of Early Termination Fees. |
| 4 | October 2007 | Amendment to sub-clause 24.1(d) and insertion of sub-clause 24.6. These amendments implement the Commission's Retailer of Last Resort Final Decision: February 2006. |
| 5 | January 2009 | The following clauses have been amended to implement the Commission's Review of Regulatory Instruments Stage 1 Final Decision: 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 14, 19, 20, 22.1, 23, 26, 28, 29 and Appendix 2. |
| 6 | October 2009 | <p>Amendment to clause 8.1 to clarify that retailers may only have regard to relevant default in determining a customer's unsatisfactory credit rating.</p> <p>Amendment to clause 31 in relation to the administrative and hedge book imbalance cost that can apply in early termination fees.</p> <p>The following clauses have been amended to reflect the Commission's Review of Regulatory Instruments Stage 1 Final Decision: 7.4, 12.2(d) and 26.6.</p> |
| 7 | February 2010 | <p>Amendment to clause 4.2(o) to require retailers to include the distributor's name next to the faults and emergency number on a customer's bill.</p> <p>Amendment of clause 26.7 to require retailers to update their information about customers that are registered by the distributors as life support customers on an annual basis.</p> |

| Version No. | Date | Nature of Amendment |
|-------------|---------------|--|
| 8 | April 2011 | <p>To implement the Commission’s Smart Meter Regulatory Review Final Decision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the following clauses have been amended: 4.2, 4.4, 13.2, 13.5, 15.2, 20, 26.4, 27.2 and 34 • clauses 4.7 and 12A have been inserted. |
| 9 | March 2012 | <p>Clause 4.2(h) has been amended to require retailers to include a start index read on smart meter bills. A definition of “index read” has been inserted under clause 34.</p> <p>Clause 12A and the definition of supply capacity control have been amended to allow retailers to offer supply capacity control and load control products for non-credit management purposes.</p> |
| 10 | May 2012 | <p>Clause 11.2 has been amended to prohibit retailers requiring payment as a condition of providing the customer an application form for a Utility Relief Grant.</p> <p>Clause 15.2 has been amended to remove the absolute obligation on retailers to reconnect smart meter customers within two hours. This clause has also been amended to require that retailers pass on to a distributor within one hour a reconnection request by a smart meter customer.</p> |
| 10a | August 2013 | <p>To implement the Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI Tariffs) Order in Council 2013:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the following clauses have been amended: 20, 24.1, 26.4, 31, and • relevant definitions have been inserted. |
| 11 | October 2014 | <p>To harmonise the Energy Retail Code with the National Energy Customer Framework to the extent possible and incorporate the following Essential Services Guidelines into the Energy Retail Code:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electricity Industry Guideline no. 13 – Greenhouse Gas Disclosure on Electricity Customers’ Bills – January 2013; • Guideline no. 19 – Energy Price and Product Disclosure – April 2014; and • Guideline no. 21 – Energy Retailers’ Financial Hardship Policies – April 2014. |
| 11 | January 2015 | <p>Minor amendments to clauses 25, 25A and Schedule 1 to address administrative errors.</p> |
| 11a | February 2018 | <p>To implement the Commission’s fixed benefit code amendments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clause 45A has been amended • clause 47A has been inserted. |

| Version No. | Date | Nature of Amendment |
|--------------------|--------------|--|
| 11b | July 2018 | Amendments to clause 116(1) to revise the minimum disconnection amount. |
| 12 | January 2019 | Applying Code to exempt persons. Inserting new part 3 - assistance for customers anticipating or experiencing payment difficulties |
| 13 | July 2019 | Inserting new part 2A – market integrity Inserting section 45AA Inserting new item 3 of Schedule 3 (Transitional Provisions) Inserting new clause 3G (GST inclusive pricing) Inserting new subclause 25(1)(z) Amendments to clause 46 |
| 14 | January 2020 | Inserting new part 3A – assistance for customers affected by family violence Amendments to Schedule – inserting transitional provisions relating to life support (commencing 2 January 2020). |

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Part 1 Preliminary

Division 1 Introduction and definitions

1 Citation

This Code may be cited as the *Energy Retail Code*.

2 Commencement

This Code comes into operation on 1 January 2020.

3 Definitions

In this Code—

acceptable identification, in relation to:

- (a) a *residential customer*—includes any one of the following:
 - (i) a driver licence (or driver’s licence) issued under the law of a State or Territory, a current passport or another form of photographic identification;
 - (ii) a Pensioner Concession Card or other entitlement card, issued under the law of the Commonwealth or of a State or Territory;
 - (iii) a birth certificate; or
- (b) a *business customer* that is a sole trader or partnership—includes one or more of the forms of identification for a *residential customer* for one or more of the individuals that conduct the business or enterprise concerned; or
- (c) a *business customer* that is a body corporate—means Australian Company Number or Australian Business Number of the body corporate;

additional retail charge - see clause 35A; ***agreed damages term*** means a term or condition of a *customer retail contract* under which a *customer* and a *retailer* have agreed the amount, or a basis for determining the amount, that will be payable by the *customer* to the *retailer* for the *customer's* breach of their *customer retail contract*;

affected customer means any *customer*, including a former *customer*, who is or was a *small customer* and who may be affected by *family violence*;

AMI retail tariff means an AMI tariff within the meaning of paragraph (a) of the definition of AMI tariff in section 46B of the *Electricity Industry Act*;

annual total cost of current plan means the minimum possible amount payable by a *small customer* under the customer’s current *customer retail contract* excluding the value of any one-off gift or sign-up credit, calculated on the basis of the *small customer’s annual usage history* and the tariff, charges and discount rates current at, as relevant, the date a bill or *bill summary* will be issued, the date that a *price change* or *benefit change* becomes effective, or the date immediately prior to this effective date, with all discounts applied including any discount the *customer* receives because the *customer* buys another good or service, and including any amounts deducted,

credited, or received by the *retailer* under a government funded *energy* charge rebate, concession or relief scheme;

annual total cost of deemed best offer means the minimum possible amount payable by the *small customer* under the *deemed best offer* excluding the value of any one-off gift or sign-up credit, calculated on the basis of the *small customer's annual usage history* and the tariff, charges and discount rates of the *deemed best offer* current at, as relevant, the date a bill or *summary bill* will be issued or the date that a *price change* or *benefit change* becomes effective, with all discounts applied (except any discount which applies to a *customer retail contract* because the *customer* buys another good or service) and including any amounts deducted, credited, or received by the *retailer* under a government funded *energy* charge rebate, concession or relief scheme;

annual usage history means the consumption or export of electricity or gas by a *customer* at the *customer's* current premises over the 12 month period preceding, as relevant, the *bill issue date* (or the date of the *bill change alert*, based on *meter* readings. Where the *retailer* does not have 12 months of *meter* readings for the *customer* at the *customer's* current premises, the *retailer* must estimate the *customer's* consumption and export of electricity or gas during a 12 month period having regard to any relevant information that is available to the *retailer* (and must have regard to any *meter* readings obtained during the 12 month period preceding the, as relevant, *bill issue date*, the date a *bill summary* will be issued, or the date of the *bill change alert*);

associate of a *retailer* includes –

- (d) an employee or agent of the *retailer*; and
- (e) a person contracted by the *retailer*; and
- (f) a person who receives or is contracted to receive commissions from the *retailer*;

benefit change means a change to, or the expiry of, a benefit (such as a price discount) provided to a *customer* for a minimum period or a *fixed benefit period* under a *customer retail contract* during the term of that contract (whether or not as a result of a variation of the contract) or under an *exempt person arrangement*;

bill change alert means a notice given under clause 70L;

bill summary means a communication from the *retailer* to the *customer* that:

- (a) informs the *customer* that the *retailer* has issued a new bill; and
- (b) includes the bill due date and the amount due;

bill issue date means the date, included in a bill under clause 25(1)(e), on which the bill is sent by the *retailer* to a *small customer*;

business customer means a *small customer* who is not a *residential customer*;

business day means a day that is not:

- (a) a Saturday or Sunday; or

- (b) a public holiday appointed under the *Public Holidays Act 1993* (Vic);

carry-over customer means a *small customer* who continues consuming *energy* at premises after the *customer's* previously *current customer retail contract* expires or terminates –

- (a) without provision in that contract for the terms and conditions to apply after the expiry or termination for the continued provisions of those services; and
- (b) without applying to a *retailer* for the provision (after that expiry or termination) of those services;

category means an exemption category, as set out in Schedule 8;

Commission means the *Essential Services Commission* under the *Essential Services Commission Act 2001* (Vic);

connection means a physical link between a distribution system and a *customer's* premises to allow the flow of *energy*;

cooling off period—see rule 47(2);

customer means a person:

- (a) to whom *energy* is sold for premises by a *retailer* or *exempt person*; or
- (b) who proposes to purchase *energy* for premises from a *retailer* or *exempt person*;

customer connection service for premises means any or all of the following:

- (a) a service relating to a new *connection* for the premises;
- (b) a service relating to a *connection* alteration for the premises;
- (c) a supply service for the premises, including (but not limited to) the *energisation, de-energisation* or *re-energisation* of the premises;

customer retail contract means a contract between a *small customer* and a *retailer* for the provision of *customer retail services* for particular premises;

customer retail services means the sale of *energy* by a *retailer* to a *customer* at premises;

de-energisation or disconnection of premises means:

- (a) in the case of electricity—the opening of a *connection*; or
- (b) in the case of gas—the closing of a *connection*,

in order to prevent the flow of *energy* to the premises;

deemed best offer means the plan identified in accordance with clause 70P;

deemed best offer check means a comparison between the *customer's annual total cost of current plan* and *annual total cost of deemed best offer*, as set out in clause 70Q;

deemed best offer check result means the amount determined in accordance with the formula set out in clause 70Q;

deemed best offer message means either a *positive deemed best offer message* or a *negative deemed best offer message*;

deemed customer retail arrangement means a deemed contract for the supply and sale of energy arising under section 39 of the *Electricity Industry Act* or section 46 of the *Gas Industry Act*;

designated retailer means:

- (a) in relation to premises and the supply of electricity, the relevant licensee in relation to the supply of electricity from the supply point for the premises determined in accordance with an Order in Council made under section 35 of the *Electricity Industry Act*; and
- (b) in relation to premises and the supply of gas, the specified licensee in relation to the supply of gas from the supply point or ancillary supply point for the premises determined in accordance with an Order in Council made under section 42 of the *Gas Industry Act*;

disconnection—see the definition of *de-energisation*;

disconnection warning notice—see clause 110;

electric bulk hot water means water centrally heated by electricity and delivered to a number of *customer* premises where the *customer's* consumption of hot water is measured with a *meter* and where an *energy* bill is issued by a *retailer*;

electric bulk hot water conversion factor means the conversion factor used by *retailers* to bill *electric bulk hot water customers*. The *electric bulk hot water conversion factor* will have a maximum value of 89kWh per kilolitre. Where *customers* are currently billed using a lower *electric bulk hot water conversion factor*, or a lower *electric bulk hot water conversion factor* for the site is assessed, *retailers* must bill *customers* using the lower *electric bulk hot water conversion factor*;

Electricity Industry Act means the *Electricity Industry Act 2000* (Vic);

e-marketing activity has the meaning given by section 109A of the *Telecommunications Act 1997* of the Commonwealth;

energisation of premises means:

- (a) in the case of electricity—the closing of a *connection*; or
- (b) in the case of gas—the opening of a *connection*,

in order to allow the flow of *energy* to the premises;

energy means electricity or gas or both;

energy fact sheet means the document generated by the *Victorian Retailer Portal website* that contains key information in relation to a *generally available plan*, a *restricted plan* or the *Victorian default offer*.

energy laws includes:

- (a) the national electricity legislation as defined in the *NEL*;
- (b) the national gas legislation as defined in the *NGL*;
- (c) legislation of Victoria (other than the national electricity legislation and the national gas legislation), or any instrument made or issued under or for the purpose of that legislation, that regulates *energy*;
- (d) the *NER* and the *NGR*; and
- (e) instruments made under the *NER* and the *NGR* (including the *Retail Market Procedures*);

energy marketing activity means an activity that is carried on to market, advertise or promote:

- (a) *customer connection services*; or
- (b) *customer retail services*; or
- (c) a supplier or prospective supplier of *customer connection services* or *customer retail services*,

to a *small customer*;

energy ombudsman means the Energy and Water Ombudsman (Victoria) Limited;

explicit informed consent—see clause 3C;

exempt person means a person who is exempt from holding a licence under section 16 of the *Electricity Industry Act* to engage in certain activities as set out in clauses 4 and 5 of the *General Exemption Order* (deemed exemption of retailers and exemption of registered retailers);

exempt person arrangement means an arrangement for the sale of electricity by an *exempt person* to a person as set out in that *exempt person's* exemption category description;

family violence has the meaning given in section 5 of the *Family Violence Protection Act 2008* (Vic);

financially responsible retailer for premises means:

- (a) in the case of electricity—the *retailer* who is the financially responsible Market Participant responsible for the premises under the *NER*; or

- (b) in the case of gas—the *retailer* who is responsible for settling the account for gas withdrawn from the delivery point (however described) associated with the premises under the relevant *Retail Market Procedures*;

fixed benefit period means a period of a *market retail contract* (where the end date of that period is specified or ascertainable at the beginning of that period) during which a benefit to the *customer* (such as a price discount) is available.

flat AMI retail tariff means an AMI tariff where the component rates of that tariff do not vary by reference to:

- (a) the time of day;
- (b) the amount of electricity supplied or sold during the day;
- (c) temperature, whether actual or forecast; or
- (d) other characteristics that vary during the day;

Note:

1. Paragraph (b) does not exclude block tariffs from being flat AMI tariffs; 2. The definition does not exclude from being *flat AMI retail tariffs*, tariffs that vary seasonally.

flexible AMI retail tariff means an *AMI retail tariff* that is not a *flat AMI retail tariff* and that was first made available on or after 24 June 2013;

Functionality Specification has the meaning given to it in the Order in Council dated 12 November 2007, made under section 46D of the *Electricity Industry Act*;

gas bulk hot water means water centrally heated by gas and delivered to a number of *customer* premises where the *customer's* consumption of hot water is measured with a *meter* and where an *energy* bill is issued by a *retailer*;

gas bulk hot water rate means the gas price in cents per litre that is used by a *retailer* to charge *customers* for *energy* in delivering *gas bulk hot water*;

Gas Industry Act means the *Gas Industry Act 2001* (Vic);

General Exemption Order means the Order in Council made under section 17 of the *Electricity Industry Act* and published in Special Gazette 390 on 15 November 2017;

generally available plan means any plan that is available to any *customer* in the relevant distribution zone unless it is classified as a *restricted plan*;

GST has the meaning given in the *GST Act*;

GST Act means the *A New Tax System (Goods and Services Tax) Act 1999* (Cth);

index read in relation to *smart meters* has the meaning given under the Meter Data File Format Specification NEM 12 and NEM 13 published by the Australian Energy Market Operator;

last resort event in respect of a *retailer* means when:

- (a) the *retailer's* retail licence is suspended or revoked;

- (b) the right of the *retailer* to acquire:
 - (i) for electricity, electricity from the wholesale electricity market; and
 - (ii) for gas, gas from a wholesale gas market or a producer,
 is suspended or terminated,

whichever first occurs; or

- (c) in respect of an *exempt person* when that person no longer satisfies the requirements for exemption as set out in Part 2 of the *General Exemption Order* (deemed exemption of retailers and exemption of registered retailers);

life support equipment means any of the following:

- (a) an oxygen concentrator;
- (b) an intermittent peritoneal dialysis machine;
- (c) a kidney dialysis machine;
- (d) a chronic positive airways pressure respirator;
- (e) crigler najjar syndrome phototherapy equipment;
- (f) a ventilator for life support;
- (g) in relation to a particular *customer*—any other equipment (whether fuelled by electricity or gas) that a registered medical practitioner certifies is required for a person residing at the *customer's* premises for life support or otherwise where the *customer* provides a current medical certificate certifying that a person residing at the *customer's* premises has a medical condition which requires continued supply of electricity or gas;

market retail contract means a contract between a *small customer* and a *retailer* which is not a *deemed customer retail arrangement* nor a *standard retail contract*;

meter, in relation to a *customer*, means:

- (a) the device that measures the quantity of *energy* passing through it or records the consumption of *energy* at the *customer's* premises; and
- (b) for *electricity bulk hot water* or *gas bulk hot water*, the device which measures and records the consumption of bulk hot water consumed at the *customer's* premises;

meter type has the meaning given in an Order in Council made under section 7AA of the *Electricity Industry Act* or made under section 7A of the *Gas Industry Act*, as applicable;

metering data has the same meaning as:

- (a) in the case of electricity—in the NER; or

(b) in the case of gas—in the applicable *Retail Market Procedures*;

metering rules:

(a) for electricity—means the applicable *Retail Market Procedures* and Chapter 7 of the *NER*;

(b) for gas—means the applicable *Retail Market Procedures*;

move-in customer means a *small customer* who starts consuming *energy* at premises without first applying to a *retailer* for the provision of *customer retail services*;

negative deemed best offer message means a message which conforms with the form and content requirements set out in clause 70S(4);

NEL means the National Electricity Law set out in the Schedule to the *National Electricity (South Australia) Act 1996* of South Australia;

NEM Representative means a related body corporate (within the meaning of the *Corporations Act 2001* of the Commonwealth) of an electricity *retailer* that is registered with AEMO as a market *customer* under the *NER* and that, directly or indirectly, sells electricity to the *retailer* for on-sale to *customers*;

NER means the National Electricity Rules as in force from time to time under the *NEL*;

NGL means the National Gas Law set out in the Schedule to the *National Gas (South Australia) Act 2008* of South Australia;

NGR means the National Gas Rules as in force from time to time under Chapter 9 of the *NGL*;

offer summary means a statement prepared by a *retailer* pursuant to its obligations under clause 15C;

pay-by date—see clause 26;

payment plan, in relation to a *small customer* (other than a *residential customer* who is receiving assistance under Part 3), means a plan for the *customer* to pay a *retailer*, by periodic instalments in accordance with this Code, any amounts payable by the *customer* for the sale and supply of *energy*;

positive deemed best offer message means a message which conforms with the form and content requirements set out in clause 70S(3); and

Price and Product Information Statement means a statement prepared by a *specified retailer* pursuant to its obligations under section 36A of the *Electricity Industry Act* or under section 43A of the *Gas Industry Act*;

price change means a change to any of the tariffs or charges payable by a *small customer* under a *customer retail contract*;

price comparator means a facility available on a website to assist a *small customer* to compare:

- (a) the tariffs available to a *customer* under a *standing offer*; and
- (b) the tariffs that are generally available to classes of *small customers* under *market retail contracts*,

in accordance with guidelines issued by the *Commission* under section 36A(2) of the *Electricity Industry Act* or section 43A(2) of the *Gas Industry Act*;

re-energisation or reconnection of premises means the *energisation* of the premises after their *de-energisation*;

relevant authority means:

- (a) AEMO; or
- (b) State or federal police; or
- (c) a person or body who has the power under law to direct a distributor to *de-energise* premises;

relevant customer means a *relevant customer* within the meaning of section 36 of the *Electricity Industry Act* or section 43 of the *Gas Industry Act*;

Note:

The term '*relevant customer*' is used in clause 15. Under the *Electricity Industry Act* and the *Gas Industry Act* the term is defined by Orders in Council. As at the date of this Code, '*relevant customers*' are the same as '*small customers*'.

reminder notice—see clause 109;

residential customer means a *customer* who purchases *energy* principally for personal, household or domestic use;

responsible person:

- (a) in the case of electricity—has the same meaning as in the *NER*; or
- (b) in the case of gas—means the person who, under the applicable *Retail Market Procedures*, is responsible for *meter* reading;

restricted plan means a plan specifically targeted to an exclusive individual or group and tailored to the specific circumstances of that *customer* and their need(s), including:

- (a) family and friends plans, including *retailer* staff plans and staff plans for employees of companies with whom the *retailer* has a commercial relationship;
- (b) plans targeted to a specific *customer*, with traits and characteristics that cannot be easily acquired – for example, where the *customer* negotiates a specific plan with a *retailer* based on having multiple sites serviced by the same *retailer*;
- (c) obsolete plans;

- (d) *standing offer* plans that are not readily available to small customers in a particular location but which *retailers* publish to satisfy their financial responsible Market Participant requirements;
- (e) plans for *customers* in residential embedded networks where the retailer acts as the embedded network operator, or provides retail-only plans to an embedded network customer;
- (f) plans restricted to *customers* in a pilot program;
- (g) plans restricted to concession *customers*;
- (h) plans restricted to hardship *customers*;
- (i) ‘save’ plans which are offered by *retailers* in response to a *customer* signaling they intend to switch to another *retailer*;
- (j) ‘win-back’ plans, which are offered by *retailers* after the customer has switched to a new *retailer* to persuade the customer to return.

retail marketer means a *retailer* or an *associate* of a *retailer*;

Retail Market Procedures means:

- (a) in the case of electricity, the *Retail Market Procedures* within the meaning of the *NER*; and
- (b) in the case of gas, the *Retail Market Procedures* within the meaning of the *NGL* and made under the *NGR*;

retailer means a person who holds a retail licence under the *Electricity Industry Act* or the *Gas Industry Act*;

security deposit means an amount of money paid or payable, in accordance with this Code, to a *retailer* as a security against non-payment of a bill;

small commercial/retail customer has the same meaning given in the *General Exemption Order*;

Note:

A *small commercial/retail customer* will also be a *small customer* if its aggregate consumption of electricity purchased from an *exempt person* has not been, or is not likely to be, more than 40 megawatt hours in any calendar year.

small customer means:

- (a) a *domestic or small business customer* under section 3 of the *Electricity Industry Act* or section 3 of the *Gas Industry Act*; and
- (b) a person:
 - (i) who purchases electricity from an *exempt person* principally for personal, household or domestic use; or

- (ii) whose aggregate consumption of electricity purchased from an *exempt person* has not been, or is not likely to be, more than 40 megawatt hours in any calendar year;

Note:

Under the *Electricity Industry Act* and the *Gas Industry Act*, the term '*domestic and small business customer*' is defined by Orders in Council. As at the date of this Code the relevant Orders define a *domestic or small business customer* as (paraphrasing):

- (a) a person who purchases energy principally for personal, household or domestic use at the relevant supply point; or
- (b) in the case of electricity, a person whose aggregate consumption of electricity taken from the relevant supply point has not been, or in the case of a new supply point, is not likely to be, more than 40MWh per year; or
- (c) in the case of gas, a person whose aggregate consumption of gas taken from the relevant supply point has not been, or, in the case of a new supply point, is not likely to be, more than 1000 GJ per year.

small retail customer has the meaning given by section 3 of the *Electricity Industry Act* and by section 3 of the *Gas Industry Act*;

Note:

Small retail customers are defined by Orders in Council made under section 7AA of the *Electricity Industry Act* and section 7A of the *Gas Industry Act*. *Small retail customers* are only relevant for the purpose of Division 2A of Part 2, which replaces Guideline No 19 – Energy Price and Product Disclosure.

smart meter means an interval *meter* that meets the functionality requirements set out in the *Functionality Specification* and:

- (a) is designed to transmit *metering data* to a remote location for data collection; and
- (b) does not, at any time, require the presence of a person at, or near, the *meter* for the purposes of data collection or data verification (whether this occurs manually as a walk-by reading or through the use of a vehicle as a close proximity drive-by reading), including, but not limited to, an interval *meter* that transmits *metering data* via direct dial-up, satellite, the internet, general packet radio service, power line carrier, or any other equivalent technology;

specified retailer has the meaning given by section 3 of the *Electricity Industry Act* and section 3 of the *Gas Industry Act*;

Note:

The term '*specified retailer*' is used in this Code in clause 15B. Under the *Electricity Industry Act* and *Gas Industry Act* it is defined by Orders in Council. As at the date of this Code, the current Orders in Council provide that each retail licensee is a *specified retailer* for the purposes of section 36A of the *Electricity Industry Act* and 43A of the *Gas Industry Act*.

standard retail contract means a *customer retail contract* that arises from the acceptance of a *standing offer*;

standing offer has, in relation to electricity, the same meaning as 'licensee standing offer' in section 3 of the *Electricity Industry Act* and, in relation to gas, the same meaning as 'licensee standing offer' in section 3 of the *Gas Industry Act*;

supply capacity control product means the use, other than the emergency use, of a *smart meter* to temporarily interrupt electricity supply to a *customer*;

telemarketing call has the same meaning as in the *Telecommunications Act 1997* of the Commonwealth.

Victorian default offer means any offer to supply or sell electricity that is subject to a regulated price pursuant to the Order made under s 13 of the *Electricity Industry Act* published in Special Gazette No. S 208, on Thursday 30 May 2019.

Victorian Retailer Portal website means the retailer interface for the Victorian Energy Compare website, via which retailers are required to upload information, including for the purposes of generating an *energy fact sheet* for a *generally available plan*, a *restricted plan* or the *Victorian default offer*.

3A Savings and Transitional Provisions

Schedule 3 applies.

3B Purpose and Application

- (1) This Code applies to *small customers* only.
- (2) This Code applies to, and must be complied with by, all *retailers* in accordance with their retail licences, in respect of their activities in relation to *small customers*.
- (3) The provisions in Division 2A of Part 2 and Division 5 of Part 2A of this Code constitute guidelines for the purpose of sections 35C and 36A of the *Electricity Industry Act* and sections 42C and 43A of the *Gas Industry Act*.
- (4) The provisions in Part 3 of this Code constitute guidelines for the purpose of section 44 of the *Electricity Industry Act* and section 48H of the *Gas Industry Act*.
- (5) The following provisions of this Code constitute terms and conditions decided by the *Commission* for the purposes of sections 36(1)(a)(i) and (ii) and 36(1)(b) of the *Electricity Industry Act* and sections 43(1)(a)(i) and (ii) and 43(1)(b) of the *Gas Industry Act*:
 - (a) the provisions in Part 3;
 - (b) clauses 109, 110, 111, 111A, 116(1)(d) (read with the definitions of **disconnection warning period** and **reminder notice period** in clause 108).
- (6) This Code applies to an *exempt person* in one or more *categories* only where a clause states it applies to an *exempt person* in a relevant *category*, and only in respect of that *exempt person's* activities in relation to *small customers*. Unless the context otherwise requires, a reference:
 - (a) to *retailer* in any such clause includes *exempt persons* to the extent they engage in the relevant *category* of activity in relation to *small customers*;

- (b) to *customer* in any such clause includes persons who purchase electricity from an *exempt person*; and
 - (c) to *retailer* or *customer* in other relevant definitions in any such clause are to be interpreted as set out above (except in the definition of *market retail contract*).
- (7) Where a clause applies to an *exempt person* as set out in subclause (6), it applies as a condition of that *exempt person's* exemption under the *General Exemption Order*.

3C Explicit Informed Consent

- (1) *Explicit informed consent* to a transaction is consent given by a *small customer* to a *retailer* where:
- (a) the *retailer*, or a person acting on behalf of the *retailer*, has clearly, fully and adequately disclosed in plain English all matters relevant to the consent of the *customer*, including each specific purpose or use of the consent; and
 - (b) the *customer* gives the consent to the transaction in accordance with subclause (2); and
 - (c) the person is competent to do so; and
 - (d) any requirements prescribed by this Code for the purposes of this subclause have been complied with.
- (2) *Explicit informed consent* requires the consent to be given by the *small customer*:
- (a) in writing signed by the *customer*; or
 - (b) verbally, so long as the verbal consent is evidenced in such a way that it can be verified and made the subject of a record under clause 3D; or
 - (c) by electronic communication generated by the *customer*.
- (3) This clause applies to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:
VD1, VD2, VD7, VR1, VR2, VR3 and VR4.

Note:

This clause reflects the conditions of an *exempt person's* exemption under clause 9 of the *General Exemption Order* (set out in Schedule 9 to this *Energy Retail Code*).

3D Record of explicit informed consent

- (1) A *retailer* must:
- (a) create a record of each *explicit informed consent* required by this Code and provided by a *small customer*; and
 - (b) retain the record for at least 2 years.
- (2) The record must be in such a format and include such information as will enable:

- (a) the *Commission* to verify the *retailer's* compliance with the relevant requirements of this Code relating to *explicit informed consent*; and
 - (b) the *retailer* to answer enquiries from a *small customer* relating to the *customer's explicit informed consent*.
- (3) A *retailer* must, on request by a *small customer* and at no charge, provide the *customer* with access to a copy of the record of any *explicit informed consent* given by the *customer* and then retained by the *retailer*.
- (4) This clause applies to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:
VD1, VD2, VD7, VR1, VR2, VR3 and VR4.

3E No or defective explicit informed consent

- (1) A transaction specified in this Code as requiring *explicit informed consent* between a *retailer* and *small customer* is void if it is established, in accordance with subsection (2) and any applicable provisions of this Code, that *explicit informed consent* as required by this clause was not obtained.
- (2) It is established that the required *explicit informed consent* was not obtained if:
- (a) the *customer* raises the issue with the *retailer* either by asserting that the consent was not obtained or by requesting production of a record of the consent; and
 - (b) the issue is so raised within 12 months after the date of the transaction; and
 - (c) the *retailer*:
 - (i) admits that the consent was not obtained; or
 - (ii) does not produce a satisfactory record of the informed consent as soon as practicable, but within 10 *business days*, after the issue is so raised.
- (3) Subject to subsections (4) and (5), the *retailer* cannot recover any amount for any *energy* supplied as a result of the void transaction.
- (4) If the void transaction did not involve the transfer of the *customer* to the *retailer* from another *retailer*, the *customer* is only liable to pay the *retailer* any charges that would have been payable for the sale and supply of *energy* if the void transaction had not occurred.
- (5) If the void transaction did involve the transfer of the *customer* to the *retailer* (the new *retailer*) from another *retailer* (the original *retailer*):
- (a) the *customer* is (subject to paragraph (b)) liable to pay the original *retailer* all charges for the sale and supply of *energy* as if the void transaction had not occurred and the sale and supply had occurred with the original *retailer* being the *customer's retailer*; and
 - (b) to the extent that the *customer* has paid the new *retailer* charges for the sale and supply of *energy* as a consequence of the void transaction:

- (i) the *customer* is entitled to set off the amount of those payments against any amounts payable under paragraph (a); and
- (ii) the new *retailer* must pay the set off amounts to the original *retailer*; and
- (iii) the original *retailer* is entitled to recover those set off amounts from the new *retailer* in a court of competent jurisdiction; and
- (c) nothing in this section prevents the original *retailer* from proceeding by action for loss or damage suffered because of the void transaction; and
- (d) the *customer* is not liable to the new *retailer* for any loss or damage arising because the transaction is void or arising from payments the new *retailer* has to pay the original *retailer* because the transaction is void.

3F Giving of notices and other documents under this Code

- (1) If this Code requires or permits a notice or other document to be served on a person (whether the expression 'deliver', 'give', 'notify' or 'send' or another expression is used), the notice or other document may be served:
 - (a) on a natural person:
 - (i) by delivering it to the person personally; or
 - (ii) by leaving it at, or by sending it by post, facsimile or similar facility to the last known address of the place of residence or usual place of business of the person; or
 - (iii) by sending it electronically to that person, but, in the case of a *small customer*, only if the *small customer* has given *explicit informed consent* to receiving the notice or other document electronically; or
 - (b) on a body corporate:
 - (i) by leaving it at the registered office or usual place of business of the body corporate with an officer of the body corporate; or
 - (ii) by sending it by post, facsimile or similar facility to its registered office or its usual place of business; or
 - (iii) by sending it electronically to that body corporate or an office of the body corporate.
- (2) This clause applies to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:
VD1, VD2, VD3, VD6, VD7, VR1, VR2, VR3 and VR4.

3G GST inclusive pricing

- (1) Except where expressly provided to the contrary in this Code, where a *retailer* in a communication (whether oral or written and including, without limitation, a bill, *bill summary*, *bill change alert*, offer, advertisement, notice or information statement) to

a *customer* refers to an amount in respect of which *GST* is or would be payable the *retailer* must:

- (a) identify that amount inclusive of *GST*; and
 - (b) specify that the amount is inclusive of *GST*.
- (2) Any communication described in subclause (1) must not state an amount described in subclause (1) exclusive of *GST* except:
- (a) where required to comply with the *GST Act*; or
 - (b) where expressly permitted in this Code.
- (3) Subclause (2) does not limit the *retailer's* obligations under subclause (1)— if the *retailer* is required to state an amount as exclusive of *GST*, it must also state that amount inclusive of *GST*.

Division 2 [Not used]

4 [Not used]

5 [Not used]

Division 3 [Not used]

6 [Not used]

7 [Not used]

8 [Not used]

9 [Not used]

10 [Not used]

11 [Not used]

Part 2 Customer retail contracts

Division 1 Standard retail contracts - terms and conditions generally

12 Model terms and conditions for standard retail contracts

- (1) Model terms and conditions for a *standard retail contract* are set out in Schedule 1.
- (2) A statement in Schedule 1 that is underlined and in square brackets indicates that a required alteration must be made by omitting the statement and substituting the matter referred to in the statement.
- (3) The model terms and conditions set out in Schedule 1, as varied to incorporate any permitted alterations or required alterations, are approved by the *Commission* for the purpose of section 35(1)(b) of the *Electricity Industry Act* and section 42(1)(b) of the *Gas Industry Act*.

Note:

Where a *retailer* adopts the model terms, varied only to incorporate any permitted alterations or required alterations, the *retailer* is not required to submit the model terms for approval by the *Commission* under section 35(1)(b) of the *Electricity Industry Act* or section 42(1)(b) of the *Gas Industry Act*.

- (3A) Each provision of the model terms and conditions set out in Schedule 1, as varied to incorporate any permitted alterations or required alterations:
 - (a) is a term or condition decided by the *Commission* for the purpose of section 36(1) of the *Electricity Industry Act* and section 43(1) of the *Gas Industry Act* in relation to *relevant customers* who purchase *energy* under a *standard retail contract*; and
 - (b) the terms and conditions of the contract must not be inconsistent with the provision; and
 - (c) the terms and conditions of the contract may supplement or augment the operation of the provision; and
 - (d) the terms and conditions of the contract must not diminish the operation of the provision; and
 - (e) the provision prevails to the extent of any inconsistency with any other term or condition of the contract.
- (4) Permitted alterations are:
 - (a) alterations specifying details relating to identity and contact details of the *retailer*; and
 - (b) minor alterations that do not change the substantive effect of the model terms and conditions; and
 - (c) alterations of a kind specified or referred to in this Code; and

- (d) alterations that are expressed to apply only to the operation of the model terms and conditions in jurisdictions other than Victoria.
- (5) Required alterations are:
 - (a) alterations that this Code requires to be made to the *retailer's* form of *standard retail contract* in relation to matters relating to specific jurisdictions; and
 - (b) alterations of a kind specified or referred to in this Code.
- (6) In this clause **alterations** includes omissions and additions.

13 Application of provisions of this Code to standard retail contracts

- (1) Other provisions of this Code apply to *standard retail contracts* to the extent provided by those provisions.

Note:

For example, clause 70 makes provision for the termination of a *standard retail contract*.

- (2) If a clause provides that a provision of this Code applies in relation to *standard retail contracts* or that the clause is a minimum requirement in relation to *standard retail contracts*:
 - (a) the provision is a term or condition decided by the *Commission* for the purpose of section 36(1) of the *Electricity Industry Act* and section 43(1) of the *Gas Industry Act* in relation to *relevant customers* who purchase *energy* under a *standard retail contract*; and
 - (b) the terms and conditions of the contract must not be inconsistent with the provision; and
 - (c) the terms and conditions of the contract may supplement or augment the operation of the provision; and
 - (d) the terms and conditions of the contract must not diminish the operation of the provision; and
 - (e) the provision prevails to the extent of any inconsistency with any other term or condition of the contract.

Division 2 Market retail contracts—terms and conditions generally

14 Terms and conditions of market retail contracts

- (1) The terms and conditions of a *market retail contract* are as agreed between the *retailer* and the *small customer*, except as provided by this Code.
- (2) Nothing in this Code prevents the inclusion in a *market retail contract* of a term or condition that is the same or substantially the same as a term or condition of *standard retail contracts* that is not otherwise applicable to *market retail contracts*.

15 Application of provisions of this Code to market retail contracts

- (1) Other provisions of this Code apply to *market retail contracts*, to the extent provided by those provisions.
- (2) If a clause provides that a provision of this Code applies in relation to *market retail contracts* or that the clause is a minimum requirement in relation to *market retail contracts*:
 - (a) the provision is a term or condition decided by the *Commission* for the purpose of section 36(1) of the *Electricity Industry Act* and section 43(1) of the *Gas Industry Act* in relation to *relevant customers* who purchase *energy* under a *market retail contract*; and
 - (b) the terms and conditions of the contract must not be inconsistent with the provision; and
 - (c) the terms and conditions of the contract may supplement or augment the operation of the provision; and
 - (d) the terms and conditions of the contract must not diminish the operation of the provision; and
 - (e) the provision prevails to the extent of any inconsistency with any other term or condition of the contract.

Division 2A Standing offer tariffs

15A Internet publication of standing offer tariffs

- (1) *A retailer* must:
 - (a) publish on its internet site details of its *standing offers* in the manner set out in Schedule 4; and
 - (b) input onto the internet site nominated by the Minister each of its electricity *standing offers* including all details as required by that internet site; and
 - (c) input onto the *Commission's* YourChoice website each of its gas *standing offers* including all details as required by that internet site.
- (2) The home page of the *retailer's* principal internet site must have a link that allows a person to access the *retailer's standing offer* easily and logically.
- (3) An *energy fact sheet* must be published by a *retailer* on its internet site in satisfaction of the requirement set out in clause 15A(1)(a).

15B [Not Used]

15C [Not Used]

15D [Not Used]

15E [Not Used]

15F [Not Used]

Division 3 Customer retail contracts—pre-contractual procedures and obligation to supply

16 Pre-contractual duty of retailers

- (1) This clause applies where a *retailer* is contacted by a *small customer* who is seeking to purchase *energy* for premises.
- (2) If the *retailer* is the *designated retailer* for the premises, the *retailer*:
 - (a) may elect to offer the *customer* a *market retail contract*; and
 - (b) must advise the *customer* of the availability of the *retailer's standing offer*.
- (3) If the *retailer* is not the *designated retailer* for the premises and the *retailer* does not elect to offer the *customer* (whether at the request of the *customer* or of its own initiative) a *market retail contract*, the *retailer*:
 - (a) must refer the *customer* to the distributor for the premises concerned; and
 - (b) must inform the *small customer* that the distributor will be able to advise the *customer* which *retailer* has an obligation to make a *standing offer* that is applicable to the *customer*.
- (4) A *retailer* must obtain the *explicit informed consent* of a *small customer* for the entry by the *customer* into a *market retail contract* with the *retailer*.

17 Exempt Persons and obligations to sell electricity

- (1) This clause applies to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:
VD1, VD2, VD3, VD6, VD7, VR1, VR2, VR3 and VR4.
- (2) An *exempt person* cannot refuse to sell electricity to a person within the relevant exemption *category* description except:
 - (a) in accordance with the *disconnection* provisions in clauses 111 to 115; and
 - (b) where the *customer's* premises has been disconnected by the *exempt person* for a reason other than failure to pay a bill and the matter leading to the *disconnection* has not been rectified. The *exempt person* must reconnect the premises and offer to sell electricity once the matter is rectified.

18 Pre-contractual request to designated retailer for sale of energy (SRC)

- (1) A *small customer* who wishes to purchase *energy* for premises under a *standard retail contract* may make a request to the *designated retailer* for the premises for the sale of *energy* in accordance with the *retailer's standing offer*.
- (2) The request may be made by telephone or in writing.
- (3) The *small customer* must:
 - (a) provide the *customer's* name and *acceptable identification*; and
 - (b) provide contact details for billing purposes; and
 - (c) ensure that there is safe and unhindered access to the *meter* at the premises.
- (4) [Not used]
- (5) The *designated retailer* may include in the charges under the *standard retail contract* any outstanding amounts owed by the *small customer* to the *retailer* from an unpaid account (excluding unpaid amounts for premises for which the *customer* has an ongoing *customer retail contract*).
- (6) The *designated retailer* is not entitled to refuse to sell *energy* to a *small customer* who is a *residential customer* on the ground that the *customer* owes the *retailer* the outstanding amounts referred to in subclause (5).
- (7) Where:
 - (a) a *retailer* has arranged for the *de-energisation* of a *small customer's* premises (other than where the *retailer* has arranged for *de-energisation* due to failure to pay a bill under clause 111 or 111A); and
 - (b) the *customer* has not within 10 *business days* of *de-energisation* rectified the matter that gave rise to the *de-energisation*,

the *retailer* may decline to enter into a *customer retail contract* with the *customer* and to arrange for *energisation* of the premises until the matter that gave rise to the *de-energisation* has been rectified.

19 Responsibilities of designated retailer in response to request for sale of energy (SRC)

- (1) A *designated retailer* must, as soon as practicable, provide a *small customer* requesting the sale of *energy* under the *retailer's standing offer* with the following information:
 - (a) a description of the *retailer's standard retail contract* that is formed as a result of the *customer* accepting the *standing offer* and how copies of the contract may be obtained;
 - (b) a description of the *retailer's* and *customer's* respective rights and obligations concerning the sale of *energy* under the *Electricity Industry Act* or *Gas Industry Act*, as applicable, and this Code, including the *retailer's* standard complaints and dispute resolution procedures;

- (c) information about the availability of government funded *energy* charge rebate, concession or relief schemes;
 - (d) information in community languages about the availability of interpreter services for the languages concerned and telephone numbers for the services.
- (2) The *retailer* must, as soon as practicable (but not later than the end of the next *business day*) after the request for the sale of *energy* is properly made (as referred to in subclause (3)), forward relevant details of the *customer* to the distributor for the premises concerned, for the purpose of:
- (a) updating the distributor's records, if the premises are *energised*; or
 - (b) arranging for the *energisation* of the premises by the distributor, if the premises are not *energised*.
- (3) A request for the sale of *energy* is properly made when:
- (a) the request has been received by the *retailer*; and
 - (b) the *small customer* has complied with the requirements under clause 18(3); and
 - (c) the *small customer* is otherwise entitled to receive the sale of *energy* in accordance with the *standard retail contract*.

Division 4 Customer retail contracts—billing

20 Basis for bills (SRC, MRC and EPA)

- (1) A *retailer* must base a *small customer's* bill for the *customer's* consumption of:
- (a) electricity:
 - (i) on *metering data* provided for the relevant *meter* at the *customer's* premises provided by the *responsible person* and determined in accordance with the *metering rules*; or
 - (ii) on an estimation of the *customer's* consumption of *energy*, as provided by clause 21; or
 - (iii) on any other method agreed by the *retailer* and the *small customer*, if the *retailer* has obtained the *explicit informed consent* of the *customer*.
 - (b) gas:
 - (i) on an actual reading of the relevant *meter* at the *customer's* premises provided by the *responsible person* and determined in accordance with the *metering rules*; or
 - (ii) on *metering data* provided for the relevant *meter* at the *customer's* premises provided by the *responsible person* and determined in accordance with the *metering rules*; or

- (iii) on an estimation of the *customer's* consumption of *energy*, as provided by clause 21; or
 - (iv) on any other method agreed by the *retailer* and the *small customer*, if the *retailer* has obtained the *explicit informed consent* of the *customer*.
- (2) The *retailer* must use its best endeavours to ensure that actual readings of the *meter* are carried out as frequently as is required to prepare its bills consistently with the *metering rules* and in any event at least once every 12 months.
- (3) Despite subclauses (1) and (2), if there is no *meter* in respect of the *customer's* premises, the *retailer* must base the *customer's* bill on *energy* data that is calculated in accordance with applicable *energy laws*.
- (4) **Application of this clause to standard retail contracts**
This clause applies in relation to *standard retail contracts*.
- (5) **Application of this clause to market retail contracts**
This clause applies in relation to *market retail contracts*.
- (6) **Application of this clause to exempt persons**
 - (a) Subclauses (1)(a), (2) and (3) of this clause apply to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:
VD1, VD2, VD3, VD7, VR1, VR2, VR3 and VR4;
 - (b) Subclause (3) of this clause also applies to *exempt persons* in the following *category*:
VD6.

20A Bulk Hot Water Charging

- (1) A *retailer* must issue bills to a *customer* for the charging of the *energy* used in the delivery of bulk hot water in accordance with Schedule 6.
- (2) Where a *retailer* charges for *energy* in delivering either *gas bulk hot water* or *electric bulk hot water* to a *relevant customer*, the *retailer* must include at least the following information (as applicable) in the *relevant customer's* bill:
 - (a) the relevant *gas bulk hot water rate* applicable to the *relevant customer* in cents per litre;
 - (b) the relevant electricity rate(s) being charged to the *relevant customer* for the electricity consumed in the *electric bulk hot water* unit in cents per kWh;
 - (c) the relevant *electric bulk hot water conversion factor* for *electric bulk hot water* in kWh/kilolitre;
 - (d) the total amount of *gas bulk hot water* or *electric bulk hot water* in kilolitres or litres consumed in each period or class of period in respect of which the

relevant *gas bulk hot water rate* or electricity tariffs apply to the *relevant customer* and, if the *customer's meter* measures and records consumption data only on the accumulation basis, the dates and total amounts of the immediately previous and current *meter* readings or estimates;

- (e) the deemed *energy* used for *electric bulk hot water* (in kWh); and
- (f) separately identified charges for *gas bulk hot water* or *electric bulk hot water* on the *customer's* bill.

21 Estimation as basis for bills (SRC, MRC and EPA)

- (1) A *retailer* may only base a *small customer's* bill on an estimation of the *customer's* consumption of *energy* where:
 - (a) the *customer* gives their *explicit informed consent* to the use of estimation by the *retailer*; or
 - (b) the *retailer* is not able to reasonably or reliably base the bill on an actual *meter* reading; or
 - (c) *metering data* is not provided to the *retailer* by the *responsible person*.
- (2) Where estimations are permitted to be used as the basis for a *small customer's* bill, the estimations must be based on:
 - (a) the *customer's* reading of the relevant *meter* (which may be a customer read estimate, as defined in subclause (3A)); or
 - (b) historical *metering data* for the *customer* reasonably available to the *retailer*; or
 - (c) the average usage of *energy* by a comparable *customer* over the corresponding period, if there is no historical *metering data* for the *customer*.
- (2A) Despite clauses 20, 21(1), 21(2) and 25(1)(i), in the case of a *smart meter*, if a *retailer* is not able to reasonably or reliably base a bill on actual *metering data* collected from the *customer's smart meter* for each trading interval, the *retailer* may provide the *customer* with a bill that is either:
 - (a) prepared using estimated and/or substituted *metering data* in accordance with applicable *energy laws*; or
 - (b) if estimated and/or substituted *metering data* is not available, prepared based on the *customer's* historical billing or *metering data* or, where the *retailer* does not have the *customer's* historical billing or *metering data*, the average usage of *energy* by a comparable *customer* over the corresponding period covered by the estimated bill.
- (3) Subject to clause 25(1)(i), the *retailer* must inform the *small customer*, on the bill, that the bill is based on an estimation, and (if applicable) that the estimation is based on the *customer's* reading of the relevant *meter* under subclause (2)(a).
- (3A) If:

- (a) a *small customer* receives a bill based on an estimate, other than a *customer's* reading of the relevant *meter*; and
- (b) where the bill under paragraph (a) is for the supply of electricity, the consumption of electricity at the *customer's* premises is not recorded by an interval *meter*, being a *meter* that records consumption derived from interval *metering* data,

the *small customer* may request an adjusted bill based on the *customer's* reading of the relevant *meter* (a **customer read estimate**) by providing the *retailer* with the customer read estimate before the due date for payment of the bill under paragraph (a).

(3B) On each occasion when the conditions in subclauses (3A)(a) and, as applicable, (b) are met, the *retailer* must inform the *small customer* in writing:

- (a) that the *customer* may request an adjusted bill in accordance with subclause (3A); and
- (b) of any changes to the *customer's* payment obligations if the *customer* makes such a request; and
- (c) how the *customer* can obtain the information under subclause (3C).

(3C) A *retailer* must make available to *small customers* at no charge and in clear, simple and concise language for the purposes of subclause (3A):

- (a) guidance on how to read the *customer's meter*; and
- (b) the types of information the *customer* is required to provide when lodging the customer read estimate; and
- (c) instructions on the methods by which the *customer* can lodge the customer read estimate.

(3D) Where:

- (a) a *small customer* requests an adjustment to a bill based on an estimate in the circumstances set out in subclause (3A) by providing the *retailer* with a customer read estimate; and
- (b) the *retailer* receives the customer read estimate before the due date for payment of the bill; and
- (c) the customer read estimate is provided in accordance with the guidance and requirements provided by the *retailer* under subclause (3C),

the *retailer* must, promptly and at no extra charge, provide the *small customer* with an adjusted bill based on the customer read estimate.

(3E) If:

- (a) the customer read estimate was received on or after the due date for the payment of the bill;

- (b) the customer read estimate is not provided in accordance with the guidance and requirements provided by the *retailer* under subclause (3C),

the *retailer* may reject the customer read estimate and, if it does so, must promptly notify the *small customer* in writing of the specific reasons for its decision.

Note:

For example, specific reasons that a *retailer* might provide for rejecting a customer read estimate for the purposes of subclause (3E)(b) include:

- the number value of the customer read estimate provided for cumulative *energy* consumed is smaller than a previous actual read of the *meter*; or
- where the customer read estimate is provided in the form of a photograph of the *meter*, that the *meter* display is not clearly visible or the photograph does not show the correct *meter* installed at the *small customer's* premises.

- (3F) The *retailer* must set out a process under its standard complaints and dispute resolution procedures for a *small customer* to attempt to rectify a customer read estimate that is not accepted under subclause (3E)(b).
- (3G) If the *retailer* does not accept the customer read estimate under subclause (3E), the *retailer* must inform the *small customer* in the same notice required to be provided under that subclause, that the *customer* may:
- (a) lodge a dispute with the *energy ombudsman* where the *customer* is not satisfied with the *retailer's* decision after the *customer* has followed the process under subclause (3F); and
 - (b) separately, request the *retailer* to review the bill under clause 29.
- (3H) If under subclause (3B)(b) a *retailer* has advised a *small customer* of changes to the *customer's* payment obligations, and those changes include a new date for payment of the *customer's* bill, any benefits provided under the *retailer's* contract with the *customer* for payments made by the due date must be applied with respect to the new date for payment.
- (4) Without affecting clause 20(2), if the *retailer* has issued the *small customer* with a bill based on an estimation and the *retailer* subsequently issues the *customer* with a bill that is based on an actual *meter* reading or on *metering data*:
- (a) the *retailer* must include an adjustment on the later bill to take account of any overcharging of the *customer* that has occurred; and
 - (b) unless the actual *meter* reading or *metering data* could not be obtained as a result of an act or omission by the *customer*, the *retailer* must, if requested to do so by the *customer*, offer the *customer* time to pay any undercharged amount by agreed instalments, over a period being no longer than:
 - (i) the period during which an actual *meter* reading or *metering data* was not obtained, where that period is less than 12 months; or
 - (ii) in any other case, 12 months.

(5) Where an attempt to read the *small customer's meter* is unsuccessful due to an act or omission of the *customer*, and the *customer* subsequently requests a *retailer* to replace an estimated bill with a bill based on an actual *meter* reading, the *retailer* must comply with that request but may pass through to that *small customer* any costs it incurs in doing so.

(6) **Application of this clause to standard retail contracts**

This clause applies in relation to *standard retail contracts*.

(7) **Application of this clause to market retail contracts**

This clause applies in relation to *market retail contracts*, but only to the extent (if any) a contract provides for estimation as the basis for the *small customer's* bill.

(8) **Application of this clause to exempt persons**

This clause applies to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:

VD1, VD2, VD3, VD7, VR1, VR2, VR3 and VR4.

22 Proportionate billing (SRC, MRC and EPA)

(1) If a *small customer's* bill covers a period other than the *customer's* usual billing cycle or a period during which the *customer's* tariff changes, the *retailer* must charge in proportion to the relevant periods and clearly show relevant details on the bill.

(2) **Application of this clause to standard retail contracts**

This clause applies in relation to *standard retail contracts*.

(3) **Application of this clause to market retail contracts**

This clause applies in relation to *market retail contracts*.

(4) **Application of this clause to exempt persons**

This clause applies to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:

VD1, VD2, VD7, VR1, VR2, VR3 and VR4.

23 Bill smoothing (SRC and EPA)

(1) Despite clauses 20 and 21, a *retailer* may, in respect of any 12 month period, provide a *small customer* with bills based on an estimation under a bill smoothing arrangement if and only if:

(a) the amount payable under each bill is initially the same and is set on the basis of the *retailer's* initial estimate of the amount of *energy* the *customer* will consume over the 12 month period; and

(b) that initial estimate is based on the *customer's* historical billing data or, where the *retailer* does not have that data, average usage of *energy* by a comparable *customer* calculated over the 12 month period; and

- (c) in the seventh month:
- (i) the *retailer* re-estimates the amount of *energy* the *customer* will consume over the 12 month period, taking into account any actual *meter* readings or actual *metering data* and relevant seasonal factors; and
 - (ii) if there is a difference between the initial estimate and the re-estimate of greater than 10 per cent, the amount payable under each of the remaining bills in the 12 month period is to be reset to reflect that difference; and
- (d) at the end of the 12 month period, the *meter* is read or *metering data* is obtained and any undercharging or overcharging is adjusted under clause 30 or 31.
- (2) The *explicit informed consent* of the *small customer* is required for the *retailer's* billing on the basis referred to in subclause (1)(1).
- (3) **Application of this clause to standard retail contracts**
- This clause applies in relation to *standard retail contracts*.
- (4) **Application of this clause to market retail contracts**
- This clause does not apply in relation to *market retail contracts*, but this subclause does not prevent a *retailer* from including bill smoothing arrangements in a *market retail contract*.
- (5) **Application of this clause to exempt persons**
- This clause applies to *exempt persons* who choose to offer a bill smoothing arrangement to a *small customer* in the following *categories*:
- VD1, VD2, VD7, VR1, VR2, VR3 and VR4.

24 Frequency of bills (SRC and EPA)

- (1) A *retailer* must issue bills to a *small customer*:
- (a) subject to paragraph (b), at least once every 3 months; and
 - (b) in the case of gas, at least once every 2 months in relation to the period up to 31 December 2014.
- (2) A *retailer* and a *small customer* may agree to a billing cycle with a regular recurrent period that differs from the *retailer's* usual recurrent period where the *retailer* obtains the *explicit informed consent* of the *small customer*. Under the agreement the *retailer* may impose an *additional retail charge* on the *customer* for making the different billing cycle available.
- (3) **Application of this clause to standard retail contracts**
- This clause applies in relation to *standard retail contracts*.

(4) Application of this clause to market retail contracts

This clause does not apply in relation to *market retail contracts*.

(5) Application of this clause to exempt persons

Subclause (1)(a) of this clause applies to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:

VD1, VD2, VD7, VR1, VR2, VR3 and VR4.

25 Contents of bills (SRC, MRC and EPA)

(1) A *retailer* must prepare a bill so that a *small customer* can easily verify that the bill conforms to their *customer retail contract* and must include the following particulars in a bill for a *small customer*:

- (a) the *customer's* name and account number;
- (b) the address of the *customer's* premises for the sale of *energy* and the *customer's* mailing address (if different);
- (c) the *meter* identifier;
- (d) the billing period;
- (e) the *pay-by date* for the bill and the *bill issue date*;
- (f) the total amount payable by the *customer*, including amounts of any arrears or credits;
- (g) tariffs and charges applicable to the *customer*;
- (h) the basis on which tariffs and charges are calculated;
- (i) whether the bill was issued as a result of a *meter* reading or:
 - (i) in the case of a *meter* other than a *smart meter* or interval *meter*, an estimation; or
 - (ii) in the case of a *smart meter* or interval *meter*, an accumulated total of at least 48 hours of trading intervals are not billed on the basis of actual interval *metering data*; and,
 if issued as a result of a *meter* reading, the date of the *meter* reading;
- (j) subject to subclause (y), the values of *meter* readings (or, if applicable, estimations) at the start and end of the billing period;
- (k) particulars of the average daily consumption during the billing period, including the average daily cost for each *smart meter* tariff component of the billing period;
- (l) if a bill was issued by the same *retailer* for the corresponding billing period during the previous year, particulars of the average daily consumption during that previous billing period;

- (m) the estimated date of the next scheduled *meter* reading (if applicable);
- (n) details of consumption or estimated consumption of *energy*;
- (nn) in the case of *customers* with a *smart meter* and to the extent the data is available, consumption for each monthly period over the past 12 months to be presented in graph format;
- (o) for electricity bills, bill benchmarking information to the extent required by section 40R of the *Electricity Industry Act*;
- (p) any amount deducted, credited or received under a government funded *energy* charge rebate, concession or relief scheme or under a *payment plan*;
- (q) if the *customer* has provided a *security deposit*, the amount of that deposit;
- (r) details of the available payment methods;
- (s) reference to the availability of government funded *energy* charge rebate, concession or relief schemes;
- (t) a telephone number for account enquiries, the charge for which is no more than the cost of a local call;
- (u) a telephone number for complaints (which may be the same as that for account enquiries), the charge for which is no more than the cost of a local call;
- (v) a separate 24 hour telephone number for fault enquiries and emergencies, the charge for which is no more than the cost of a local call, being the telephone number for the distributor and giving the name of the distributor;
- (w) contact details of interpreter services in community languages;
- (x) any proportionate billing information in accordance with clause 22;
- (y) if a *customer's* bill is derived from interval data from a *smart meter*:
 - (i) the *index read* at the end of the billing period; and
 - (ii) the *index read* at the start of the billing period; and
 - (iii) the actual tariffs; and
 - (iv) the total amount of electricity (in kWh) consumed in each period or class of period in respect of which a relevant tariff applies to a *customer*;
- (z) clear and simple information about the *price comparator* and how to access it, including a hyperlink on electronic bills.

Note:

Additional obligations in relation to the provision of metering information to *customers* are contained in the Electricity Metering Code and the Gas Distribution System Code.

(2) The *retailer* must include amounts billed for goods and services (other than the sale and supply of *energy*) in a separate bill or as a separate item in an *energy* bill.

(3) **Application of this clause to standard retail contracts**

This clause applies in relation to *standard retail contracts*.

(4) **Application of this clause to market retail contracts**

This clause applies in relation to *market retail contracts*, except with respect to subclause 25(1)(nn).

(5) **Application of this clause to exempt persons**

This clause, except for subclauses (1)(k), (l), (m), (o), (p), (v), (w) and (z) applies to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:

VD1, VD2, VD3, VD7, VR1, VR2, VR3 and VR4, except:

(a) subclauses (1)(a), (b), (c), (i), (j), (n), (x), (y) do not apply to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:

VD3;

(b) subclause (nn) does not apply to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:

VD2, VD3, VD7, VR2, VR3 and VR4.

(c) subclause (q) does not apply to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:

VD2, VD3, VR2, VR3 and VR4.

(d) subclause (s) does not apply to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:

VD1, VD3, VD7, VR1.

25A Greenhouse Gas Disclosure on electricity customers' bills

(1) In this clause:

co-efficient means:

(a) for 2002 – 1.39 tonnes CO₂e/MWh; and

(b) for each subsequent calendar year – a figure to be calculated by the Department and supplied to the relevant *retailer* by the *Commission*. The figure is to be derived from relevant data in the then latest National Greenhouse Gas Inventory published by the Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency (a Commonwealth Government department) and other relevant documents so as to reflect average greenhouse gas intensity of electricity sold in Victoria (in the absence of which the previous year's figure applies).

Department means the department with primary responsibility for the supporting Minister administering the *Electricity Industry Act*.

disclosable emissions means the number of tonnes for the period calculated by applying the formula:

co-efficient x (MWh of electricity – MWh of *green power*)

(and where the period encompasses two calendar years the formula is to be applied using the *co-efficient* which is current at the end of the period).

green power means electricity which is accredited as “Green Power” under the national Green Power Accreditation Program managed by the National GreenPower Steering Group.

- (2) In accordance with section 40R of the *Electricity Industry Act*, a *retailer* must:
 - (a) include in each bill issued to a *customer* for the supply or sale of electricity the information concerning greenhouse gas emissions connected with the generation of the electricity so supplied or electricity generation in general that the *Commission* specifies for this purpose in subclause 25A(3); or
 - (b) provide bill benchmarking information to a *residential customer*.
- (3) If a *retailer* decides to include greenhouse gas information in a *customer’s* electricity bill the following information must be included:
 - (a) the amount of *disclosable emissions* associated with the amount of electricity to which the bill relates;
 - (b) to the extent that data is available as to the amount of electricity, the amount of *disclosable emissions* associated with the amount of electricity to which each previous bill related within the past 12 months;
 - (c) a graphical representation of the data referred to in paragraphs (a) and (b), with adequate explanation of the graph;
 - (d) the website address: www.switchon.vic.gov.au.
- (4) A *retailer* must present the information set out in subclause (3) and any associated information on greenhouse gas emissions, including the format of the graph, in a manner approved by the *Commission*. The *Commission* will consult with the Department before giving or refusing its approval.
- (4A) Schedule 7 contains three examples of narrative and graphical formats which will best meet the regulatory objective if the disclosure is shown on the front of the *customer* bill. Adoption of one of these formats (or another format) nonetheless requires formal approval under subclause (4).
- (5) The Department will use best endeavours to calculate the *co-efficient* for a calendar year by the end of October in the preceding calendar year, and will supply it to the *Commission* promptly after its calculation. The *Commission* will advise the *retailers* of the *co-efficient* and publish it on the *Commission’s* website upon receiving it from the Department.
- (6) The Department will advise the *Commission* about environmental policy issues in relation to the implementation of this clause 25A.

- (7) A *retailer* must handle a complaint by a *customer* relating to the subject-matter of this clause 25A in the same manner as it is obliged to handle complaints or resolve disputes in relation to bills generally under its retail licence and under the terms of its retail contract with the *customer*.
- (8) If a *retailer* has a complaint about a *Commission* or the Department decision taken under or pursuant to this clause 25A, or it has an unresolved *customer* complaint which properly relates to such a *Commission* or the Department decision, it must:
- (a) attempt to resolve the matter with the Department if the matter relates to a the Department decision; or
 - (b) raise the matter with the *Commission* if the *retailer* is unsuccessful in resolving the matter with the Department or if the matter relates to a decision made by the *Commission*.

Note:

Neither the *Commission* nor this Code can bind the Department in the discharge of its functions. However, subclauses (5) and (6) have been included following consultation with the Department to properly inform *retailers* and *customers* of the role which the Department proposes to undertake in the scheme for increasing *customer* awareness through electricity bills which is set out in this Code.

26 Pay-by date (SRC and EPA)

- (1) The *pay-by date* for a bill must not be earlier than 13 *business days* from the *bill issue date*.

(2) Application of this clause to standard retail contracts

This clause applies in relation to *standard retail contracts*.

(3) Application of this clause to market retail contracts

This clause does not apply in relation to *market retail contracts*.

(4) Application of this clause to exempt persons

This clause applies to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:

VD1, VD2, VD7, VR1, VR2, VR3 and VR4.

27 Apportionment (SRC and EPA)

- (1) If a bill includes amounts payable for goods and services other than the sale and supply of *energy*, any payment made by a *small customer* in relation to the bill must be applied firstly in satisfaction of the charges for the sale and supply of *energy*, unless:
- (a) the *customer* otherwise directs; or
 - (b) another apportionment arrangement is agreed to by the *customer*.

(2) **Application of this clause to standard retail contracts**

This clause applies in relation to *standard retail contracts*.

(3) **Application of this clause to market retail contracts**

This clause does not apply in relation to *market retail contracts*.

(4) **Application of this clause to exempt persons**

This clause applies to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:

VD1, VD2, VD7, VR1, VR2, VR3 and VR4.

27A In Home Displays (SRC, MRC and EPA)

(1) If a *retailer* provides an In Home Display to a *customer*, the *retailer* must provide information to the *customer* setting out how any consumption and cost information displayed on the In Home Display compares to the consumption and cost information on the *customer's* bills.

(2) **Application of this clause to standard retail contracts**

This clause applies in relation to *standard retail contracts*.

(3) **Application of this clause to market retail contracts**

This clause applies in relation to *market retail contracts*.

(4) **Application of this clause to exempt persons**

This clause applies to *exempt persons* in the following *category*:

VR2.

28 Historical billing information (SRC, MRC and EPA)

(1) A *retailer* must use its best endeavours to provide historical billing and *metering data* to a *small customer* for the previous 2 years within 10 *business days* of the *customer's* request, or such other period they agree.

(2) Historical billing data provided to the *small customer* for the previous 2 years must be provided without charge, but data requested for an earlier period or more than once in any 12 month period may be provided subject to a reasonable charge.

(2A) If a *customer* with a *smart meter* makes a request for historical billing data or *metering data*, a *retailer* must provide interval data electronically, or by some other form, in a way which makes the information understandable or accessible to the *customer*.

(3) **Application of this clause to standard retail contracts**

This clause applies in relation to *standard retail contracts*.

(4) **Application of this clause to market retail contracts**

This clause applies in relation to *market retail contracts*.

(5) **Application of this clause to exempt persons**

This clause applies to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:

VD1, VD2, VD7, VR1, VR2, VR3 and VR4.

29 Billing disputes (SRC, MRC and EPA)

(1) A *retailer* must review a bill if requested to do so by the *small customer*.

(2) The *retailer* must conduct the review in accordance with the *retailer's* standard complaints and dispute resolution procedures, including any time limits applicable under those procedures.

(3) The *retailer* must inform the *small customer* of the outcome of the review as soon as reasonably possible but, in any event, within any time limits applicable under the *retailer's* standard complaints and dispute resolution procedures.

(4) The *retailer* may require the *small customer* to pay:

(a) the lesser of:

(i) that portion of the bill under review that the *customer* and the *retailer* agree is not the subject of review; or

(ii) an amount equal to the average amount of the *customer's* bills in the previous 12 months (excluding the bill in dispute); and

(iii) [Not Used]

(b) any other bills that are properly due.

(5) If the *small customer* requests that, in reviewing the bill, the *meter* reading or *metering data* be checked or the *meter* tested:

(a) the *retailer* must, as the case may require:

(i) arrange for a check of the *meter* reading or *metering data*; or

(ii) request the *responsible person* to test the *meter*; and

(b) the *retailer* may require the *customer* to pay for the cost of the check or test if the check or test shows that the *meter* or *metering data* was not faulty or incorrect.

Note:

Additional obligations in relation to meter testing are contained in the Electricity Metering Code and Gas Distribution System Code.

- (5A) For the purposes of subclause (5), a *small customer* request made under subclause 21(3A) is not to be treated as a request for the *meter* reading or *metering data* to be checked or the *meter* tested.
- (6) Where, after conducting a review of the bill, the *retailer* is satisfied that it is:
- (a) correct, the *retailer* may require the *small customer* to pay the amount of the bill that is still outstanding; or
 - (b) incorrect, the *retailer*:
 - (i) must adjust the bill in accordance with clauses 30 or 31, as the case requires; and
 - (ii) may require the *customer* to pay the amount (if any) of the bill that is still outstanding.
- (7) The *retailer* must inform the *small customer* that the *customer* may lodge a dispute with the *energy ombudsman* after completion of the *retailer*'s review of a bill, where the *customer* is not satisfied with the *retailer*'s decision in the review and the *retailer*'s action or proposed action under subclause (6).

(8) **Application of this clause to standard retail contracts**

This clause applies in relation to *standard retail contracts*.

(9) **Application of this clause to market retail contracts**

This clause applies in relation to *market retail contracts*.

(10) **Application of this clause to exempt persons**

This clause applies to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:

VD1, VD2, VD7, VR1, VR2, VR3 and VR4.

30 Undercharging (SRC, MRC and EPA)

- (1) Subject to subclause (2), where a *retailer* has undercharged a *small customer*, it may recover from the *customer* the amount undercharged.
- (2) Where a *retailer* proposes to recover an amount undercharged the *retailer* must:
- (a) unless the amount was undercharged as a result of the *small customer*'s fault or unlawful act or omission, limit the amount to be recovered to the amount undercharged in the 9 months before the date the *customer* is notified of the undercharging; and
 - (b) not charge the *customer* interest on that amount; and
 - (c) state the amount to be recovered as a separate item in a special bill or in the next bill, together with an explanation of that amount; and
 - (d) offer the *customer* time to pay that amount by agreed instalments, over a period nominated by the *customer* being no longer than:

- (i) the period during which the undercharging occurred, if the undercharging occurred over a period of less than 12 months; or
 - (ii) 12 months, in any other case.
- (2A) If during the period that a *retailer* has undercharged a *customer* the *customer's* tariff changes, the *retailer* must charge the *customer* at the original and changed tariffs in proportion to the relevant periods during which the original and changed tariffs were in effect.
- (3) To avoid doubt, a reference in this clause to undercharging by a *retailer* includes a reference to a failure by the *retailer* to issue a bill.
- (4) **Application of this clause to standard retail contracts**
This clause applies in relation to *standard retail contracts*.
- (5) **Application of this clause to market retail contracts**
This clause applies in relation to *market retail contracts*.
- (6) **Application of this clause to exempt persons**
This clause applies to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:
VD1, VD2, VD7, VR1 VR2, VR3 and VR4.

31 Overcharging (SRC, MRC and EPA)

- (1) Where a *small customer* has been overcharged by an amount equal to or above the overcharge threshold, the *retailer* must inform the *customer* accordingly within 10 *business days* after the *retailer* becomes aware of the overcharging.
- (2) If the amount overcharged is equal to or above the overcharge threshold, the *retailer* must:
- (a) repay that amount as reasonably directed by the *small customer*; or
 - (b) if there is no such reasonable direction, credit that amount to the next bill; or
 - (c) if there is no such reasonable direction and the *small customer* has ceased to obtain *customer retail services* from the *retailer*, use its best endeavours to refund that amount within 10 *business days*.

Note:

Money not claimed is to be dealt with by the *retailer* in accordance with the relevant unclaimed money legislation.

- (3) If the amount overcharged is less than the overcharge threshold, the *retailer* must:
- (a) credit that amount to the next bill; or
 - (b) if the *small customer* has ceased to obtain *customer retail services* from the *retailer*, use its best endeavours to refund that amount within 10 *business days*.

- (4) No interest is payable on an amount overcharged.
- (5) If the *small customer* was overcharged as a result of the *customer's* unlawful act or omission, the *retailer* is only required to repay, credit or refund the *customer* the amount the *customer* was overcharged in the 12 months before the error was discovered.
- (6) The overcharge threshold is \$50 or such other amount as the *Commission* determines under subclause (7).
- (7) The *Commission* may from time to time determine a new overcharge threshold after consultation with *retailers* and other relevant stakeholders.
- (8) The *Commission* must publish the current overcharge threshold on its website.
- (9) **Application of this clause to standard retail contracts**
This clause applies in relation to *standard retail contracts*.
- (10) **Application of this clause to market retail contracts**
This clause applies in relation to *market retail contracts*.
- (11) **Application of this clause to exempt persons**
This clause applies to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:
VD1, VD2, VD7, VR1, VR2, VR3 and VR4.

32 Payment methods for retailers (SRC and MRC)

- (1) A *retailer* must accept payment for a bill by a *small customer* in any of the following ways:
- (a) in person;
 - (b) by telephone;
 - (c) by mail;
 - (d) by direct debit;
 - (e) by electronic funds transfer.
- (2) A *small customer*:
- (a) applying for or on a *standard retail contract*; or
 - (b) on a *market retail contract*;
- may request the *retailer* to permit payment by using Centrepay as a payment option and, subject to clause 94, the *retailer* may elect to permit this option.
- (3) Where a direct debit arrangement is to be entered into between a *retailer* and a *small customer*:

-
- (a) the *retailer* and the *small customer* must agree the amount, initial date and frequency of the direct debits; and
 - (b) the *explicit informed consent* of the *small customer* is required for entering into the arrangement.
- (4) Where a direct debit arrangement is entered into between a *retailer* and a *small customer*, the *retailer* must:
- (a) notify the *small customer* in writing that if the *customer* requests the *retailer* to cease to rely on the arrangement, the *retailer* will no longer rely on the direct debit authority; and
 - (b) terminate the arrangement on being requested by the *customer* to do so; and
 - (c) if a *last resort event* occurs in respect of the *retailer*, the *retailer* must immediately cancel the direct debit arrangement and notify both the *customer* and the financial institution of the cancellation.
- (5) A *retailer* must accept payments by a *small customer* for a bill in advance.
- (6) **Application of this clause to standard retail contracts**
- This clause applies in relation to *standard retail contracts*.
- (7) **Application of this clause to market retail contracts**
- This clause (other than subclause (1)) applies in relation to *market retail contracts*.
- 32A Payment methods for exempt persons (EPA)**
- (1) This clause applies to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:
- VD1, VD2, VD3, VD7, VR1, VR2, VR3 and VR4.
- (2) An *exempt person* must offer a *small customer* at least two of the following payment methods:
- (a) in person;
 - (b) by telephone;
 - (c) by mail;
 - (d) by electronic funds transfer;
 - (e) by direct debit.
- (3) An *exempt person* must offer each *small customer* at least one payment method which does not require internet access.
- (4) If the *exempt person* offers direct debit as a payment method, the *exempt person* must offer two payment methods in addition to direct debit to the *small customer*.
- (5) An *exempt person* must accept payment for a bill from a *small customer* in advance.

32B Receipts (EPA)

- (1) This clause applies to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:
VD1, VD2, VD3, VD7, VR1, VR2, VR3 and VR4.
- (2) An *exempt person* must provide a person who purchases electricity from them with a receipt for any amount paid for electricity, except where payment has been made by:
 - (a) direct debit; or
 - (b) credit card over the phone or internet and the person is provided with a receipt number.
- (3) If a person purchases electricity from an *exempt person* and pays for the electricity together with a payment for rent, the *exempt person* must either:
 - (a) separately identify the payment for electricity on the rent receipt; or
 - (b) produce a separate receipt for the electricity payment.

33 [Not Used]**34 Shortened collection cycles (SRC, MRC and EPA)**

- (1) A *retailer* may place a *small customer* on a shortened collection cycle with the agreement of the *customer*.
- (2) Otherwise, a *retailer* may place a *small customer* on a shortened collection cycle only if:
 - (a) in the case of a *residential customer*—the *customer* is not receiving assistance under Part 3; and
 - (b) the *retailer* has given the *customer* a *reminder or warning notice* for 2 consecutive bills; and
 - (c) before the second *reminder or warning notice*, the *retailer* has given the *customer* a notice informing the *customer* that:
 - (i) receipt of the second *reminder or warning notice* may result in the *customer* being placed on a shortened collection cycle; and
 - (ii) being on a shortened collection cycle means the *customer* will not receive a *reminder notice* until the *customer* has paid 3 consecutive bills in the *customer's* billing cycle by the *pay-by date*; and
 - (iii) failure to make a payment may result in arrangements being made for *disconnection* of the supply of *energy* without a further *reminder notice*; and
 - (iv) alternative payment arrangements may be available; and
 - (v) the *customer* may obtain further information from the *retailer* (on a specified telephone number).

- (3) The *retailer* must, within 10 *business days* of placing the *small customer* on a shortened collection cycle, give the *customer* notice that:
- (a) the *customer* has been placed on a shortened collection cycle; and
 - (b) the *customer* must pay 3 consecutive bills in the *customer's* billing cycle by the *pay-by date* in order to be removed from the shortened collection cycle; and
 - (c) failure to make a payment may result in arrangements being made for *disconnection* of the supply of *energy* without a further *reminder notice*.
- (4) The *retailer* must remove the *small customer* from the shortened collection cycle as soon as practicable after the *customer* pays 3 consecutive bills in the *customer's* billing cycle by the *pay-by date*, unless the *customer* requests that this not be done.

- (5) In this clause:

reminder or warning notice means a *reminder notice* or a *disconnection warning notice*.

- (6) **Application of this clause to standard retail contracts**

This clause applies in relation to *standard retail contracts*.

- (7) **Application of this clause to market retail contracts**

This clause applies in relation to *market retail contracts*.

- (8) **Application of this clause to exempt persons**

This clause applies to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:

VD1, VD7 and VR1.

35 Request for final bill (SRC and EPA)

- (1) If a *customer* requests the *retailer* to arrange for the preparation and issue of a final bill for the *customer's* premises, the *retailer* must use its best endeavours to arrange for:
- (a) a *meter* reading; and
 - (b) the preparation and issue of a final bill for the premises in accordance with the *customer's* request.

Note:

Clause 118 makes provision for the issue of a final bill where the *customer* requests *de-energisation* of the premises.

- (2) **Application of this clause to standard retail contracts**

This clause applies in relation to *standard retail contracts*.

(3) **Application of this clause to market retail contracts**

This clause does not apply in relation to *market retail contracts*.

(4) **Application of this clause to exempt persons**

This clause, except for subclause (1)(a) applies to *exempt persons* in the following categories:

VD1, VD2, VD7, VR1, VR2, VR3 and VR4.

35A Additional Retail Charges (SRC, MRC and EPA)

(1) *A retailer* may impose an *additional retail charge* on a *customer*:

- (a) if their *energy* contract is a *market retail contract*, whether or not the imposition of an *additional retail charge* is expressly provided for in a term or condition set out in this Code; and
- (b) otherwise, only where the imposition of an *additional retail charge* is expressly provided for in a term or condition set out in this Code.

(2) The amount of any *additional retail charge* must be fair and reasonable having regard to related costs incurred by the *retailer*.

(3) In this clause:

additional retail charge means a charge relating to the sale of *energy* by a *retailer* to a *customer* other than a charge based on the tariff applicable to the *customer* and which must be calculated in accordance with clause 35A of this Code. To avoid doubt:

- (a) any network charge relating to the supply, but not sale, of *energy* to a *customer's* supply address is not an *additional retail charge* (whether or not the network charge is bundled in the *retailer's* tariff);
- (b) without limiting paragraph (a), any charge the *retailer* may impose as a direct pass through of a distribution tariff, standard control or alternative control service charge for electricity, ancillary reference tariff for gas or other charge imposed on the *retailer* by a distributor for *connection* to, or use of, the distributor's distribution system is not an *additional retail charge*; and
- (c) any amount payable by a *customer* to a *retailer* for the *customer's* breach of their *customer retail contract*, whether under an *agreed damages term* or otherwise, is not an *additional retail charge*.

(4) **Application of this clause to standard retail contracts**

This clause applies in relation to *standard retail contracts*.

(5) **Application of this clause to market retail contracts**

This clause applies in relation to *market retail contracts*.

(6) **Application of this clause to exempt persons**

This clause applies to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:

VD1, VD2, VD7, VR1, VR2, VR3 and VR4.

35B Merchant Service Fees (MRC and EPA)

(1) Where a *residential customer* pays the *retailer's* bill using a method that results in the *retailer* incurring a merchant service fee, the *retailer* may recover the amount of that fee from the *residential customer*.

(2) **Application of this clause to standard retail contracts**

This clause does not apply in relation to *standard retail contracts*.

(3) **Application of this clause to market retail contracts**

This clause applies in relation to *market retail contracts*.

(4) **Application of this clause to exempt persons**

This clause applies to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:

VD1, VD2, VD7, VR1, VR2, VR3 and VR4.

35C Dishonoured Payments (SRC, MRC and EPA)

(1) If a *residential customer* pays the *retailer's* bill and that payment is dishonoured or reversed through fault of the *residential customer*, resulting in the *retailer* incurring a fee, the *retailer* may recover that fee from the *residential customer*.

(2) **Application of this clause to standard retail contracts**

This clause applies in relation to *standard retail contracts*.

(3) **Application of this clause to market retail contracts**

This clause applies in relation to *market retail contracts*.

(4) **Application of this clause to exempt persons**

This clause applies to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:

VD1, VD2, VD7, VR1, VR2, VR3 and VR4.

Division 5 Tariff changes

36 Obligations on retailers (SRC)

(1) Where during a billing cycle a *small customer* changes from one type of tariff to another type of tariff for *customer retail services*, the *retailer* must (if it is necessary to do so due to the change in the type of tariff applying to that *small customer*):

- (a) obtain a *meter* reading (or *metering data*) at the time the type of tariff changes; and
- (b) calculate the *customer's* bill using the type of tariff applying:
 - (i) the old type of tariff up to but not including the date of the *meter* reading; and
 - (ii) the new type of tariff from and including the date of the *meter* reading.

(2) **Application of this clause to standard retail contracts**

This clause applies in relation to *standard retail contracts*.

(3) **Application of this clause to market retail contracts**

This clause does not apply in relation to *market retail contracts*.

37 **Customer request for change of tariff (SRC)**

(1) Where a *retailer* offers alternative tariffs or tariff options and a *small customer*:

- (a) requests a *retailer* to transfer from that *customer's* current tariff to another tariff; and
- (b) demonstrates to the *retailer* that it satisfies all of the conditions relating to that other tariff and any conditions imposed by the *customer's* distributor,

the *retailer* must transfer the *small customer* to that other tariff within 10 *business days* of satisfying those conditions.

(2) Where a *small customer* transfers from one tariff type to another, the effective date of the transfer is:

- (a) subject to paragraph (b), the date on which the *meter* reading was obtained; or
- (b) where the transfer requires a change to the *meter* at the *small customer's* premises, the date the *meter* change is completed.

(3) **Application of this clause to standard retail contracts**

This clause applies in relation to *standard retail contracts*.

(4) **Application of this clause to market retail contracts**

This clause does not apply in relation to *market retail contracts*.

38 **Change in use (SRC)**

(1) A *small customer* must notify its *retailer* of a change in use of the *customer's* premises.

- (2) Where a *small customer* notifies a *retailer* of a change in use of the *customer's* premises, the *retailer* may require the *customer* to transfer to a tariff applicable to the *customer's* use of that premises with effect from the date on which the *retailer* notifies the *customer* of the new tariff.
- (3) [Not used].
- (4) If a *small customer* fails to give notice of a change in use of the *customer's* premises, the *retailer* may, upon giving notice to the *customer*, transfer the *customer* to the applicable tariff with effect from the date on which the change of use occurred.
- (5) [Not used].
- (6) **Application of this clause to standard retail contracts**
This clause applies in relation to *standard retail contracts*.
- (7) **Application of this clause to market retail contracts**
This clause does not apply in relation to *market retail contracts*.

Division 6 Customer retail contracts—security deposits

39 Consideration of credit history (SRC, MRC and EPA)

- (1) For the purpose of deciding whether to require a *small customer* to provide a *security deposit* under clause 40 a *retailer* must:
- (a) request the *customer* to provide the *retailer* with:
- (i) permission to obtain a credit check of the credit history of the *customer*; and
- (ii) other information relating to the credit history of the *customer*; and
- (b) take into consideration:
- (i) any credit history obtained as a result of the credit check; and
- (ii) any credit history provided by the *customer*; and
- (iii) any other available information that relates to the credit history of the *customer*;

that is reasonably required for the *retailer* to assess the ability of the *customer* to meet the *customer's* financial obligations under a *customer retail contract*.

(2) **Application of this clause to standard retail contracts**

This clause applies in relation to *standard retail contracts*.

(3) **Application of this clause to market retail contracts**

This clause applies in relation to *market retail contracts*, but only to the extent (if any) a contract provides for payment of a *security deposit*.

(4) **Application of this clause to exempt persons**

This clause applies to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:

VD1, VD7 and VR1.

40 Requirement for security deposit (SRC, MRC and EPA)

(1) Subject to subclauses (2)-(4) a *retailer* may require a *small customer* to provide a *security deposit*:

- (a) in the case of a *residential customer*—only at the time the *customer* requests the sale and supply of *energy* under a *customer retail contract* and not during the currency of the *customer retail contract*; and
- (b) in the case of a *business customer*—at the time the *customer* requests the sale and supply of *energy* under a *customer retail contract* or during the currency of the *customer retail contract*.

(2) A *retailer* cannot require a *small customer* to provide a *security deposit* unless:

- (a) the *customer* owes money to that *retailer* in relation to the sale and supply of *energy* to any premises, unless the bill relating to the amount owed is:
 - (i) under review by the *retailer* under clause 29; or
 - (ii) under consideration by the *energy ombudsman* as referred to in that clause; or
- (b) the *customer* has fraudulently acquired or intentionally consumed *energy* otherwise than in accordance with the *energy laws* within the past 2 years; or
- (c) the *customer* has refused or failed to provide *acceptable identification* to the *retailer*; or
- (d) the *retailer* reasonably considers that the *customer* has an unsatisfactory credit history; or
- (e) in the case of a *business customer*, the *retailer* reasonably considers that the *customer* has (in respect of the business):
 - (i) no history of paying *energy* accounts; or
 - (ii) an unsatisfactory record in relation to the payment of *energy* accounts; or
- (f) the *customer* has refused or failed to provide the *retailer* with the permission or other information requested under clause 39(1)(a).

(3) A *retailer* cannot require a *residential customer* to provide a *security deposit* if the *customer*:

- (a) is a *residential customer* receiving assistance under Division 3 of Part 3; or

-
- (b) [Not Used].
- (c) [Not Used].
- (d) if the *residential customer* has formally applied for a Utility Relief Grant and a decision on the application has not been made.
- (4) A *retailer* cannot require a *residential customer* to provide a *security deposit* unless the *retailer* has offered the *customer* the option of a *payment plan* and the *customer* has either declined the offer or failed to pay an instalment having accepted the offer and the *retailer* has otherwise complied with Part 3.
- (5) If the *retailer* requires a *security deposit* on the basis that the *small customer* has an unsatisfactory credit history, the *retailer* must inform the *customer*:
- (a) that the *retailer* has decided the *customer* has an unsatisfactory credit history; and
- (b) the reasons for the *retailer*'s decision; and
- (c) of the *customer*'s rights to dispute the decision of the *retailer*.
- (6) A *retailer* must not refuse to sell *energy* on the grounds of non-payment or partial payment of a *security deposit* but may:
- (a) arrange to *de-energise* (or *disconnect*) premises under clause 112; or
- (b) refuse to arrange *re-energisation* of premises.
- (7) Subject to subclause (6), payment or partial payment of a *security deposit* is not a pre-condition to the formation of a *standard retail contract*.
- (7A) In considering whether to require a *customer* who is an *affected customer* to pay a *security deposit* the *retailer* must take into account the particular circumstances of that *customer*.
- (8) **Application of this clause to standard retail contracts**
- This clause applies in relation to *standard retail contracts*.
- (9) **Application of this clause to market retail contracts**
- This clause applies in relation to *market retail contracts*, but only to the extent (if any) a contract provides for payment of a *security deposit*.
- (10) **Application of this clause to exempt persons**
- This clause, other than subclause (7A), applies to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:
- VD1, VD7 and VR1.

41 Payment of security deposit (SRC, MRC and EPA)

(1) Security deposit must be paid

A *small customer* who is required under clause 40 to pay a *security deposit* to a *retailer* is obliged to pay the *security deposit* when requested by the *retailer* to do so.

(2) Re-energisation may be refused for non-payment of security deposit

A *retailer* may refuse to arrange the *re-energisation* of a *customer's* premises if a required *security deposit* remains unpaid and the *customer* has been *de-energised* for that reason under clause 112.

(3) Security deposit account

A *retailer* must keep *security deposits* in a separate account and separately identify in its company accounts the value of *security deposits* that it holds for *small customers*.

(4) Application of this clause to standard retail contracts

This clause applies in relation to *standard retail contracts*.

(5) Application of this clause to market retail contracts

This clause (other than subclause (3)) does not apply in relation to *market retail contracts*.

(6) Application of this clause to exempt persons

This clause applies to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:

VD1, VD7 and VR1.

42 Amount of security deposit (SRC and EPA)

(1) A *retailer* must ensure that the amount of a *security deposit* for a *small customer* is not greater than 37.5% of the *customer's* estimated bills over a 12 month period, based on:

- (a) the *customer's* billing history; or
- (b) the average usage of *energy* by a comparable *customer* over a comparable 12 month period.

(2) Application of this clause to standard retail contracts

This clause applies in relation to *standard retail contracts*.

(3) Application of this clause to market retail contracts

This clause does not apply in relation to *market retail contracts*.

(4) Application of this clause to exempt persons

This clause applies to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:

VD1, VD7 and VR1.

43 Interest on security deposit (SRC, MRC and EPA)

- (1) If a *retailer* has received a *security deposit* from a *small customer*, the *retailer* must pay interest to the *customer* on the deposit at the bank bill rate.
- (2) Interest is to accrue daily and is to be capitalised (if not paid) every 90 days.
- (3) For the purposes of this clause, bank bill rate means a daily published rate no less than the pre-tax rate of return the *retailer* would earn over the period the *retailer* retains the *security deposit* if it were invested in bank bills that have a term of 90 days.

(4) Application of this clause to standard retail contracts

This clause applies in relation to *standard retail contracts*.

(5) Application of this clause to market retail contracts

This clause applies in relation to *market retail contracts*, but only to the extent (if any) a contract provides for payment of a *security deposit*.

(6) Application of this clause to exempt persons

This clause applies to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:

VD1, VD7 and VR1.

44 Use of security deposit (SRC and EPA)

- (1) A *retailer* may apply a *security deposit* to offset amounts owed to it by a *small customer* if and only if:
 - (a) the *customer* fails to pay a bill and the failure results in *de-energisation* of the *customer's* premises by the *retailer* and there is no contractual right to *re-energisation*; or
 - (b) in relation to the issue of a final bill:
 - (i) the *customer* vacates the premises; or
 - (ii) the *customer* requests *de-energisation* of the premises; or
 - (iii) the *customer* transfers to another *retailer*.
- (2) If a final bill includes amounts payable for goods and services provided by the *retailer* other than for the sale of *energy*, the *retailer* must apply the *security deposit* firstly in satisfaction of the charges for the sale of *energy*, unless:
 - (a) the *customer* otherwise directs; or
 - (b) another apportionment arrangement is agreed to by the *customer*.

(3) The *retailer* must account to the *customer* in relation to the application of a *security deposit* amount within 10 *business days* after the application of the *security deposit*.

(4) A reference in this clause to a *security deposit* includes a reference to any accrued interest on the *security deposit*.

(5) **Application of this clause to standard retail contracts**

This clause applies in relation to *standard retail contracts*.

(6) **Application of this clause to market retail contracts**

This clause does not apply in relation to *market retail contracts*.

(7) **Application of this clause to exempt persons**

This clause applies to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:

VD1, VD7 and VR1.

45 Obligation to return security deposit (SRC and EPA)

(1) If a *small customer* has been required by a *retailer* to pay a *security deposit*, the *retailer* must repay to the *small customer* in accordance with the *small customer's* reasonable instructions the amount of the *security deposit*, together with accrued interest, within 10 *business days* after the *small customer*:

(a) completes 1 year's payment (in the case of a *residential customer*) or 2 years' payment (in the case of a *business customer*) by the *pay-by dates* for the *retailer's* bills; or

(b) vacates the relevant premises, requests *de-energisation* of the premises or transfers to another *retailer*, where the *security deposit* or any part of it is not required in settlement of the final bill referred to in clause 44(1)(b).

(2) If no reasonable instructions are given by the *small customer*, a *retailer* must credit the amount of the *security deposit*, together with accrued interest, on:

(a) in a case to which subclause (1)(a) applies—the *customer's* next bill; or

(b) in a case to which subclause (1)(b) applies—the *customer's* final bill.

(3) **Application of this clause to standard retail contracts**

This clause applies in relation to *standard retail contracts*.

(4) **Application of this clause to market retail contracts**

This clause does not apply in relation to *market retail contracts*.

(5) **Application of this clause to exempt persons**

This clause applies to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:

VD1, VD7 and VR1.

Division 7 Particular requirements for contracts and exempt person arrangements

45AA Application of this Part

- (1) This Division does not apply to *standard retail contracts*.
- (2) This Division applies to *market retail contracts* unless otherwise expressly provided.
- (3) This Division applies to *exempt persons* in particular *categories* where a clause in this Part specifies that the clause applies to *exempt persons* in that *category*.

45A Definitions

In this Division:

fixed term retail contract means a *market retail contract* or an *exempt person arrangement* that contains a term or condition that specifies:

- (a) the date on which the contract will end; or
- (b) a method for calculating the date on which the contract will end and which is ascertainable at the time the contract is entered into.

46 Tariffs and charges

- (1) This clause sets out some minimum requirements that are to apply in relation to the terms and conditions of *market retail contracts* and *exempt person arrangement*.
- (2) A *retailer* must set out in a *market retail contract* or an *exempt person arrangement* with a *small customer* all tariffs and charges payable by the *customer*.
- (3) The *retailer* must give notice to the *customer* of any variation to the tariffs and charges that affects the *customer*.
- (4) The notice must be given as soon as practicable, and otherwise no later than the *customer's* next bill.
- (5) The *retailer* must set out in the *market retail contract* the obligations with regard to notice that the *retailer* must comply with where the tariffs and charges are to be varied.
- (6) Any variation of the terms and conditions of a *market retail contract* must not be inconsistent with the requirements of this Code in relation to the variation of *market retail contracts*.

(7) Application of this clause to market retail contracts

Subclauses (3) and (4) do not apply in relation to *market retail contracts*.

(8) Application of this clause to exempt persons

Subclauses (1), (2), (3) and (4) of this clause applies to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:

VD1, VD2, VD7, VR1, VR2, VR3 and VR4.

46A Variations to market retail contracts

- (1) The structure and nature of the tariff of a *market retail contract* between a *customer* and a *retailer* may only be varied by agreement in writing between the *customer* and the *retailer*. The *retailer* may be required to obtain the *customer's explicit informed consent* in order to vary a *market retail contract* if provided for by a provision of this Code.
- (2) If the structure or nature of the tariff changes in accordance with a term or condition of a *customer retail contract* previously agreed between the *customer* and the *retailer* or in accordance with the Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI Tariffs) Order 2013, no further agreement is required between the *retailer* and the *customer* to effect such tariff change, provided that, where the contract is a *market retail contract*, the *customer* had given its *explicit informed consent* to the inclusion of the relevant term or condition in the *customer retail contract*.
- (3) For the avoidance of doubt, if the tariff and terms and conditions of a *dual fuel contract* vary on *disconnection* by a *retailer* of a *residential customer's* gas in accordance with and as contemplated by a *disconnection warning notice*, no further agreement is required.
- (4) In this clause:

dual fuel contract has the meaning given to it in clause 117(1) of this Code.

47 Cooling off period and right of withdrawal (MRC and EPA)

(1) Right of withdrawal

A *small customer* who enters into a *market retail contract* or an *exempt person arrangement* with a *retailer* has the right to withdraw from the contract in accordance with this clause.

(2) When right of withdrawal may be exercised

The right of withdrawal may be exercised within the period of 10 *business days* (the *cooling off period*) commencing with the date the *small customer*:

- (a) receives the required information under clause 64 about the contract; or
- (b) enters into the *exempt person arrangement*.

(3) Customer's agreement or acceptance is not a bar to withdrawal

The right of withdrawal may be exercised even though the *small customer* agreed to or accepted the contract or the *exempt person arrangement*.

(4) How right of withdrawal may be exercised

The *small customer* withdraws from the contract or arrangement on the *exempt person arrangement* by informing the *retailer* orally or in writing of the *customer's* intention to withdraw from the contract or arrangement.

(5) **Rights and obligations to be set out in contract**

A *retailer* must include in each *market retail contract* or *exempt person arrangement* it enters into with a *small customer* express provisions setting out the rights and obligations provided for by this clause.

(6) **Record of withdrawal**

A *retailer* must create a record of each withdrawal, and the provisions of clause 3D of the Code apply in relation to a record of withdrawal as if it were a record of *explicit informed consent*.

(7) **Effect of withdrawal**

Withdrawal from a *market retail contract* or an *exempt person arrangement* operates as a rescission of the contract or arrangement.

(8) **Application of this clause to exempt persons**

This clause applies to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:

VD1, VD2, VD7, VR1, VR2, VR3 and VR4.

47A Notice of benefit change (EPA)

(1) If an *exempt person arrangement* provides for a benefit change, the *retailer* must, in accordance with this clause, notify the *small customer* of each benefit change.

(2) The notice of *benefit change* must be given:

(a) in writing; and

(b) no earlier than 40 *business days* and no later than 20 *business days* before the date the *benefit change* takes effect.

(3) The notice of the *benefit change* must state:

(a) the *small customer's metering* identifier; and

(b) that a *benefit change* will occur and the date *benefit change* will take effect; and

(4) **Application of this clause to market retail contracts**

This clause does not apply in relation to *market retail contracts*.

(5) **Application of this clause to exempt persons**

This clause applies to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:

VD1, VD2, VR1, VR2, VR3 and VR4.

48 Retailer notice of end of fixed term retail contract and EPA

- (1) This clause applies to a *fixed term retail contract* and an *exempt person arrangement*.
- (2) A *retailer* must, in accordance with this clause, notify a *small customer* with a *fixed term retail contract* or *exempt person arrangement* that the contract or arrangement is due to end.
- (3) The notice must be given no earlier than 40 *business days* and no later than 20 *business days* before the end date of the contract or arrangement.
- (4) The notice must state:
 - (a) the date on which the contract or arrangement will end; and
 - (b) details of the prices, terms and conditions applicable to the sale of *energy* to the premises concerned under a *deemed customer retail arrangement*; and
 - (c) the *customer's* options for establishing a *customer retail contract* (including the availability of a *standing offer*) or *exempt person arrangement*; and
 - (d) the consequences for the *customer* if the *customer* does not enter into a *customer retail contract* (whether with that or another *retailer*) or *exempt person arrangement*, including the entitlement of the *retailer* to arrange for the *de-energisation* of the premises and details of the process for *de-energisation*.
- (5) The *retailer* is not required to give the notice where the *customer* has already entered into a new contract with the *retailer*, or has given instructions to the *retailer* as to what actions the *retailer* must take at the end of the contract.
- (6) A *retailer* must, for a *fixed term retail contract*, include a term or condition to the effect that the *retailer* will:
 - (a) notify the *customer* that the contract is due to end; and
 - (b) give such notice no earlier than 40 *business days* and no later than 20 *business days* before the end of the contract.

(7) Application of this clause to exempt persons

Subclauses (1), (2), (3), (4) and (5), (except for (4)(b)) of this clause apply to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:

VD1, VD2, VD7, VR1, VR2, VR3 and VR4.

49 Termination (MRC and EPA)

- (1) A *market retail contract* or an *exempt person arrangement* terminates:
 - (a) on a date agreed between the *retailer* and the *customer*; or
 - (b) [Not used]; or

- (c) when the provision of *customer retail services* to the premises commences under a *customer retail contract* with a different *customer*; or
- (d) when the provision of *customer retail services* to the premises commences under a different *customer retail contract* between the *customer* and the *retailer* or another *retailer*; or
- (e) at the end of the period of 10 *business days* commencing on the day the *customer's* premises are *de-energised*, if there is no contractual right to *re-energisation*; or
- (f) subject to subclause (2), on another date or event specified in the *market retail contract*, or an *exempt person arrangement*,

whichever first occurs.

- (2) A term or condition of a *market retail contract* or an *exempt person arrangement* has no effect to the extent that it requires a *customer* to give more than 20 *business days* notice to terminate the contract, and to the extent that it requires the *customer* to give notice of a termination that is necessary for, or a direct consequence of, the *customer* exercising the *customer's* right to opt-out of a *flexible AMI retail tariff* in accordance with clause 8 of the Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI Tariffs) Order in Council 2013.
- (3) Termination of a *market retail contract* or an *exempt person arrangement* does not affect any rights or obligations that have already accrued under the contract.
- (4) [Not used]
- (5) This clause is a minimum requirement that is to apply in relation to *small customers* who purchase *energy* under a *market retail contract* or *exempt person arrangement*.
- (6) **Application of this clause to exempt persons**

Subclauses (1), (2), (3) and (5) of this clause apply to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:

VD1, VD2, VD7, VR1, VR2, VR3 and VR4.

49A Early termination charges and agreed damages terms

- (1) A term or condition of a *fixed term retail contract* has no effect to the extent that it provides for payment of an early termination charge or *agreed damages term* (however described), unless:
 - (a) the contract includes details of the amount or manner of calculation of the early termination charge or *agreed damages term*; and
 - (b) subject to subclause 49A(6A), the early termination charge or *agreed damages term* is a reasonable estimate of the costs to the *retailer* resulting from the early termination or other event the subject of the *agreed damages term*.

- (2) For the purposes of subclause (1)(b), the costs to the *retailer* are the reasonable costs incurred or to be incurred by the *retailer*, and do not include costs based on lost supply or lost profits.
- (3) Subject to subclause (4), a term or condition of a *market retail contract* that is not a *fixed term retail contract* has no effect to the extent that it provides for the payment of an early termination charge (however described).
- (4) Subclauses (1) and (3) do not prevent the imposition of an early termination charge due to the early termination of a *fixed benefit period*, even if this coincides with the termination of the *market retail contract*.
- (5) An early termination charge (however described), payable where a *customer* terminates a *fixed benefit period* early, only has effect if:
- (a) the contract includes details of the amount or manner of calculation of the early termination charge; and
 - (b) subject to subclause 49A(6A) the early termination charge is a reasonable estimate of the costs to the retailer resulting from the early termination.
- (6) For the purposes of subclause (5)(b), the costs to the *retailer* are the reasonable costs incurred or to be incurred by the *retailer*, and do not include costs based on lost supply or lost profits.
- (6A) Any amount of an early termination charge must be determined by reference to, and must not exceed, the total of the following direct costs incurred by the *retailer* in relation to that particular *customer* which remain unamortised at the time of termination:
- (i) pro-rata costs of procuring the *customer* to enter into the contract; and
 - (ii) unless the early termination was a direct consequence of the *customer* exercising the *customer's* right to opt-out of a *flexible AMI retail tariff* in accordance with clause 8 of the Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI Tariffs) Order in Council 2013, \$20:
- which comprises:
- (iii) the additional costs of giving effect to the early termination of the contract, final billing and ceasing to be responsible for the *customer's* premises; and
 - (iv) the value of any imbalance in the *retailer's* electricity or gas hedging program to the extent that it is directly attributable to that breach of contract.
- (7) This clause is a minimum requirement that is to apply in relation to *small customers* who purchase *energy* under a *market retail contract*.

50 Small customer complaints and dispute resolution information

- (1) A *retailer* must include, as a minimum requirement in relation to the terms and conditions of a *market retail contract*, provisions to the effect of the following:
- (a) the *small customer* may, if they have a query, complaint or dispute, contact the *retailer*;

- (b) the *retailer* is obliged to handle a complaint made by a *small customer* in accordance with the *retailer's* standard complaints and dispute resolution procedures, which can be found on the *retailer's* website or provided to the *customer* on request;
- (c) the *retailer* must inform the *small customer* of the outcome of the *customer's* complaint;

if the *small customer* is not satisfied with the *retailer's* response to the *customer's* complaint, the *customer* has a right to refer the complaint or dispute to the *energy ombudsman*.

- (2) The provisions required to be included in the *market retail contract* must provide the *retailer's* contact details for the *small customer* to contact the *retailer* in connection with a query, complaint or dispute.

Note:

This clause 50 reflects the conditions of an *exempt person's* exemption under clause 9 of the *General Exemption Order* (set out in Schedule 9 to this *Energy Retail Code*)

51 Liabilities and immunities

- (1) A *retailer* must not include any term or condition in a *market retail contract* or an *exempt person arrangement* with a *small customer* that limits the liability of the *retailer* for breach of the contract or negligence by the *retailer*.

- (2) **Application of this clause to exempt persons**

This clause applies to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:

VD1, VD2, VD3, VD7, VR1, VR2, VR3 and VR4.

52 Indemnities

- (1) A *retailer* must not include any term or condition in a *market retail contract* or an *exempt person arrangement* with a *small customer* under which the *customer* indemnifies the *retailer*, so that the *retailer* may recover from the *customer* an amount greater than the *retailer* would otherwise have been able to recover at general law for breach of contract or negligence by the *customer* in respect of the contract.

- (2) **Application of this clause to exempt persons**

This clause applies to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:

VD1, VD2, VD3, VD7, VR1, VR2, VR3 and VR4.

Division 8 Deemed customer retail arrangements

53 Obligations of retailers

- (1) As soon as practicable after becoming aware that a *small customer* is consuming *energy* under a *deemed customer retail arrangement*, the *financially responsible retailer* for the premises concerned must give the *customer* information about the following:

- (a) the *retailer's* contact information;
 - (b) details of the prices, terms and conditions applicable to the sale of *energy* to the premises concerned under the *deemed customer retail arrangement*;
 - (c) the *customer's* options for establishing a *customer retail contract* (including the availability of a *standing offer*);
 - (d) the consequences for the *customer* if the *customer* does not enter into a *customer retail contract* (whether with that or another *retailer*), including the entitlement of the *retailer* to arrange for the *de-energisation* of the premises and details of the process for *de-energisation*.
- (2) If the *small customer* is a *carry-over customer* of the *retailer*, the *retailer* does not have to give the *customer* the information required under subclause (1) if the *retailer* has already given the *customer* a notice under clause 0 relating to a *market retail contract* and containing that information.

53A Obligations of exempt persons

- (1) As soon as practicable after becoming aware that a *small customer* is consuming electricity without entering an *exempt person arrangement*, the *exempt person* must give the *customer* information about the following:
- (a) the *exempt person's* contact information;
 - (b) details of the prices, terms and conditions applicable to the sale of electricity to the premises concerned under an *exempt person arrangement*;
 - (c) the consequences for the *customer* if the *customer* does not enter into an *exempt person arrangement*, including the entitlement of the *exempt person* to arrange for the *de-energisation* of the premises and details of the process for *de-energisation*.
- (2) If the *small customer* is a *carry-over customer* of the *exempt person*, the *exempt person* does not have to give the *customer* the information required under subclause (1) if the *exempt person* has already given the *customer* a notice under clause 0 relating to an *exempt person arrangement* and containing that information.

(3) Application of this clause to exempt persons

This clause applies to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:

VD1, VD2, VD7, VR1, VR2, VR3 and VR4.

54 Formation of standard retail contract on incomplete request

The *financially responsible retailer* for a *move-in customer* or *carry-over customer* may treat the *customer* as requesting the sale of *energy* under the *retailer's standing offer* and may take all appropriate steps for the formation of a *standard retail contract* with the *customer*, if:

- (a) the *customer* has provided the *retailer* with the *customer's* name and (if required by the *retailer*) *acceptable identification* and contact details for billing purposes; but
- (b) the *customer* has not advised the *retailer* as to the type of *customer retail contract* under which the *customer* wishes to be supplied.

Division 9 Other retailer obligations

55 Referral to interpreter services

- (1) A *retailer* must refer a *residential customer* to a relevant interpreter service if a referral is necessary or appropriate to meet the reasonable needs of the *customer*.

(2) Application of this clause to exempt persons

This clause applies to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:

VD2, VR2, VR3 and VR4.

56 Provision of information to customers

- (1) A *retailer* must publish on its website a summary of the rights, entitlements and obligations of *small customers*, including:
 - (aa) the entitlements of *customers* to assistance from the *retailer* under Part 3; and
 - (a) the *retailer's* standard complaints and dispute resolution procedure; and
 - (b) the contact details for the relevant *energy ombudsman*.
- (2) If a *small customer* requests information of the kind referred to in subclause (1), the *retailer* must either:
 - (a) refer the *customer* to the *retailer's* website; or
 - (b) provide the information to the *customer*.
- (3) The *retailer* must provide a copy of any information of that kind to the *customer* if the *customer* requests a copy.
- (4) The information or a copy of the information requested under this clause must be provided without charge, but information requested more than once in any 12 month period may be provided subject to a reasonable charge.

57 Retailer obligations in relation to customer transfer

- (1) A *retailer* must not submit a request for the transfer of a *small customer* under the relevant *Retail Market Procedures* unless:
 - (a) the *retailer* has obtained *explicit informed consent* from the *customer* to enter into the *relevant customer retail contract*; and

(b) the *retailer* has a *customer retail contract* in place to enable the sale of *energy* to the *customer* at their premises.

(2) A *customer* transfer under the relevant *Retail Market Procedures* is permitted prior to the completion of the *cooling off period*, provided that the transfer can be reversed if the *customer* elects to withdraw from the contract under clause 47.

58 Notice to small customers on transfer

A *retailer* must, within 5 *business days* of receiving notification that it has become the *financially responsible retailer* for a *small customer* as a result of a *customer* transfer, give notice to the *customer*:

- (a) that the *retailer* has commenced selling *energy* to the *customer*; and
- (b) of the date on which the *retailer* commenced selling *energy* to the *customer*.

59 Notice to small customers where transfer delayed

Where a *retailer* has notified a *small customer* of the expected date of a transfer and that transfer does not occur, the *retailer* must, within 5 days of becoming aware that a transfer has not occurred on the expected date, notify the *customer*:

- (a) that the transfer did not occur; and
- (b) of the reason for the delay; and
- (c) of the new expected date of the completion of the transfer, if it is still proceeding.

Note:

Additional requirements in relation to customer transfers are contained in the Electricity Customer Transfer Code.

59A Standard complaints and dispute resolution procedures

(1) A *retailer* or *responsible person* must develop, make and publish on its website a set of procedures detailing the *retailer's* or *responsible person's* procedures for handling *small customer* complaints and dispute resolution procedures. The procedures must be regularly reviewed and kept up to date. The procedures must be substantially consistent with the Australian Standard AS ISO 10002-2006 (Customer satisfaction – Guidelines for complaints handling in organizations) as amended and updated from time to time.

(2) Application of this clause to exempt persons

This clause applies to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:

VD1, VD2, VD7, VR1, VR2, VR3 and VR4, except that an *exempt person* does not need to publish its procedures on a website.

Note:

This clause 59A reflects the conditions of an *exempt person's* exemption under clause 9 of the *General Exemption Order* (set out in Schedule 9 to this *Energy Retail Code*).

Division 10 Energy marketing

Note:

The *Telecommunications Act 1997*, the *Do Not Call Register Act 2006* and the Australian Consumer Law set out in Schedule 2 to the *Competition and Consumer Act 2010* of the Commonwealth may also apply to *retail marketers* carrying out *energy marketing activities*.

Subdivision 1 Preliminary

60 Application of Division

This Division applies to *retail marketers* carrying out *energy marketing activities*.

Subdivision 2 Providing information to small customers

61 Overview of this Subdivision

- (1) This Subdivision requires a *retail marketer* to provide specific information to *small customers* in connection with *market retail contracts*.
- (2) The information is referred to in this Subdivision as required information.

62 Requirement for and timing of disclosure to small customers

A *retail marketer* must provide the required information to a *small customer* in relation to the *market retail contract* concerned:

- (a) before the formation of the contract; or
- (b) as soon as practicable after the formation of the contract.

Note:

If the *small customer* is a '*small retail customer*', clause 15C of this Code requires that a *retail marketer* must provide an *offer summary* to the *small retail customer* in writing before the formation of the contract.

63 Form of disclosure to *small customers*

- (1) Required information provided to a *small customer* before the formation of the *market retail contract* may be provided electronically, verbally or in writing.
- (2) Required information provided to a *small customer* after the formation of the *market retail contract* must be provided in a single written disclosure statement.
- (3) If required information was provided to a *small customer* electronically or verbally before the formation of the *market retail contract*, required information in a single written disclosure statement must also be provided to the *customer* after the formation of the contract.

64 Required information

- (1) The required information that a *retail marketer* is to provide to a *small customer* is information in relation to the following:
 - (a) all applicable prices, charges, early termination payments and penalties, *security deposits*, service levels, concessions or rebates, billing and payment arrangements and how any of these matters may be changed;
 - (b) the commencement date and duration of the contract, the availability of extensions, and the termination of the contract if the *customer* moves out during the term of the contract;
 - (c) if any requirement is to be or may be complied with by an electronic transaction—how the transaction is to operate and, as appropriate, an indication that the *customer* will be bound by the electronic transaction or will be recognised as having received the information contained in the electronic transaction;
 - (d) the rights that a *customer* has to withdraw from the contract during the *cooling off period*, including how to exercise those rights;
 - (e) the *customer's* right to complain to the *retailer* in respect of any *energy marketing activity* of the *retail marketer* conducted on behalf of the *retailer*, and, if the complaint is not satisfactorily resolved by the *retailer*, of the *customer's* right to complain to the *energy ombudsman*.
- (2) The required information, when given in a written disclosure statement, must include or be accompanied by a copy of the *market retail contract*.

Subdivision 3 Energy marketing activities

65 No contact lists

- (1) This clause applies to *energy marketing* in person at a person's premises or marketing by mail, but does not apply to *telemarketing calls* or *e-marketing activities*.
- (2) A *retailer* must ensure that a "no contact list" is created and maintained for its *retail marketers*, whether by the *retailer* itself or by a person or organisation on behalf of the *retailer*.
- (3) A "no contact list" is a list of *small customers* who indicate they wish to be placed on the list.
- (4) A *small customer* may give such an indication by applying (in person, electronically, by telephone or in writing) to the *retailer* or by communicating directly with a *retail marketer*.
- (5) A *retail marketer* must not make contact with a *small customer* whose name is on the relevant no contact list.

- (6) An entry for a particular *small customer* in a no contact list continues for a period of 2 years, but the period is refreshed each time the *customer* requests inclusion or maintenance of inclusion.
- (7) A *retailer* must publish a statement on its website about the existence of its no contact list and the procedures for being placed on the list.

66 No canvassing or advertising signs

In carrying out *energy marketing activities* a *retail marketer* must comply with any signs at a person's premises indicating:

- (a) canvassing is not permitted at the premises; or
- (b) no advertising or similar material is to be left at the premises or in a letterbox or other receptacle at or associated with the premises.

67 Duty of retailer to ensure compliance

A *retailer* must ensure that a *retail marketer* who is an *associate* of the *retailer* complies with this Subdivision.

68 Record keeping

- (1) A *retailer* must ensure that records are kept of all *energy marketing activities* carried out by it or on its behalf by *retail marketers*, including details of *energy marketing* visits that have been conducted, and telephone *energy marketing* calls that have been placed.
- (2) The *retailer* must ensure that each such record is retained:
 - (a) for the period of 12 months; or
 - (b) where a *small customer* has within that period made a complaint or referred a dispute to the *energy ombudsman* in relation to *energy marketing activities*—for the period the complaint or dispute remains unresolved,whichever is the longer period.
- (3) A *retailer* must ensure that it and appropriate officers or employees of the *retailer*, have immediate access, or a right of immediate access, to each such record.

Division 11 Miscellaneous

69 Compliance by small customer who is not owner of premises

- (1) If a *small customer* is unable to fulfil an obligation in respect of:
 - (a) premises (including, but not limited to, access to premises) under a *customer retail contract* or an *exempt person arrangement*; or
 - (b) access to premises under this Code,

because the *customer* is not the owner of the premises, the *customer* is not in breach of the contract or this Code if the *customer* takes all reasonable steps to ensure that the owner or other person responsible for the premises fulfils the obligation.

(2) **Application of this clause to exempt persons**

This clause applies to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:

VD1, VD2, VD7, VR1, VR2, VR3 and VR4.

70 Termination of standard retail contract (SRC)

(1) *A standard retail contract* terminates:

- (a) subject to subclause (3), in a case where the *small customer*:
 - (i) gives the *retailer* a notice (a termination notice) stating that the *customer* wishes to terminate the contract (even if the *customer* has vacated the premises earlier); or
 - (ii) is reclassified so that the *customer* is no longer a *small customer*;
 - on a date advised by the *retailer* (which must be at least 5 but not more than 20 *business days* from the giving of a termination notice or a reclassification); or
- (b) on a date agreed between the *retailer* and the *small customer*; or
- (c) when the *small customer* starts receiving *customer retail services* for the premises under a different *customer retail contract* with the *retailer* or a different *retailer*; or
- (d) when a different *customer* starts receiving *customer retail services* for the premises under a *customer retail contract* with the *retailer* or a different *retailer*; or
- (e) at the end of the period of 10 *business days* commencing on the day the *small customer's* premises are *de-energised*, if there is no contractual right to *re-energisation*,

whichever first occurs.

(2) Where a *small customer* gives a termination notice and notifies the *retailer* of a date on which the *small customer* intends to vacate the premises, the *retailer* must:

- (a) use its best endeavours to ensure that the relevant *meters* are read at, or the relevant *metering data* is obtained for, the premises on the date and at the time agreed with the *small customer* (or as soon as possible after that date if the *small customer* has not provided access to the relevant *meters* on that date or at that time); and
- (b) prepare and send to the *small customer* at the forwarding address provided by the *small customer* a final bill based on the relevant *meter* reading or *metering data*.

- (3) If the *small customer* gives a termination notice, or is reclassified so that the *customer* is no longer a *small customer*, but does not give safe access to the premises to conduct a final *meter* reading (where relevant), the *standard retail contract* does not terminate under subclause (1)(a) until the date the *retailer* issues a final bill and the *customer* has paid any outstanding balance.
- (4) A *retailer* must not impose a termination charge (however described) under a *standard retail contract* in respect of the termination of the contract.
- (5) Termination of a *standard retail contract* does not affect any rights or obligations that have already accrued under the contract.
- (6) Where there is an existing *standard retail contract* between a *retailer* and a *small customer* who is reclassified under the Code so that the *customer* is no longer a *small customer*, the *retailer* is no longer obliged to make a *standing offer* to the *customer*.

(7) [Not used]

(8) **Application of this clause to standard retail contracts**

This clause applies in relation to *standard retail contracts*.

(9) **Application of this clause to market retail contracts**

This clause does not apply in relation to *market retail contracts*.

70A Termination of a deemed contract

For the purposes of:

- (a) section 39(5)(b) of the *Electricity Industry Act*; or
- (b) section 46(5)(b) of the *Gas Industry Act*,

a deemed contract under that section comes to an end at the end of the period covered by the second bill issued by the *retailer* to the *customer* or if any of the events listed in section 39(7) of the *Electricity Industry Act* or section 46(7) of the *Gas Industry Act* occur, whichever occurs first.

70B Termination in the event of a last resort event

- (1) Where a *retailer* and a *customer* have entered into a *customer retail contract* or *exempt person arrangement*, other than a *dual fuel contract*, and a *last resort event* occurs in relation to the *retailer*, that *customer retail contract* or *exempt person arrangement* will automatically terminate and the *customer* will not be liable for any termination fee or other penalty.
- (2) Where a *retailer* and a *customer* have a *dual fuel contract* under which both gas and electricity are sold under the one contract and:
 - (a) *last resort events* simultaneously occur in relation to the *retailer* in relation to both fuels, that *customer retail contract* will automatically terminate and the *customer* will not be liable for any early termination fee or other penalty; or

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- (b) *a last resort event* occurs in relation to the *retailer* in relation to one of the fuels:
- (i) the *customer retail contract* will automatically terminate to the extent it applies to the fuel in relation to which the *last resort event* occurred and, subject to subclause (ii) below, will continue in relation to the other fuel on the same terms and conditions in so far as they apply to the sale of that other fuel; and
 - (ii) the *customer* may, within 14 days of the *last resort event* occurring, terminate the *customer retail contract* in relation to that other fuel by giving the *retailer* 7 days' notice; and
 - (iii) in either case, the *customer* will not be liable for any early termination fee.
- (3) Where a *retailer* and a *customer* have a *dual fuel contract* which comprises two separate *customer retail contracts*, one each for gas and electricity, with synchronised billing cycles, and:
- (a) *last resort events* simultaneously occur in relation to the *retailer* in relation to both fuels, those *customer retail contracts* will automatically terminate and the *customer* will not be liable for any early termination fee or other penalty; or
 - (b) a *last resort event* occurs in relation to the *retailer* in relation to one of the fuels:
 - (i) the *customer retail contract* for the fuel in relation to which the *last resort event* occurred will automatically terminate and the *customer* will not be liable for any early termination fee or other penalty; and
 - (ii) the *customer retail contract* for the other fuel will continue on the same terms and conditions.

- (4) In this clause:

dual fuel contract has the meaning given to it in clause 117(1) of this Code.

- (5) **Application of this clause to exempt persons**

Clause (1) of this clause applies to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:

VD1, VD2, VD7, VR1, VR2, VR3 and VR4.

Part 2A Market Integrity**Division 1 Operation of this Part****70C Requirement**

A retailer is required to perform its obligations under this Part in a way that promotes the purpose of this Part.

70CA Purpose

The purpose of this Part is to establish that *small customers* have an entitlement to measures that assist them to engage confidently with the *energy* market.

70D Application of this Part

Except where otherwise provided, this Part applies to *customer retail contracts*.

70E Interpretation of this Part

The approach that the *Commission* will take to the interpretation of this Part is as follows:

- (1) clear words will be given their natural and ordinary meaning; and
- (2) where this Part appears to be capable of having more than one meaning, the *Commission* will have regard to the following, in the following order, in seeking to discover the intended meaning of the Part:
 - (a) first, the objective of the relevant Division(s);
 - (b) secondly, the purpose of this Part;
 - (c) thirdly, any guidelines published by the *Commission* under section 13 of the *Essential Service Commission Act 2001* (Vic);
 - (d) fourthly, any relevant guidance notes published by the *Commission* under its Energy Compliance and Enforcement Policy; and
 - (e) fifthly, any written information issued by the *Commission* regarding a *small customer's* entitlement to supporting measures under this Part.

Division 2 Customers entitled to clear advice**70F Requirement**

A *retailer* is required to perform its obligations under this Division in a way that promotes the objective of this Division.

70G Objective

The objective of this Division is to give *small customers* an entitlement to clear, timely and reliable information, provided in a respectful manner, to assist the *small customer* to assess the suitability of, and select, a *customer retail contract*.

70H Minimum standards – clear advice

- (1) Prior to obtaining a *small customer's explicit informed consent* to enter a *customer retail contract*, a *retailer* must communicate to the *small customer* in a readily understandable manner information about:
 - (a) any terms pursuant to which the amounts payable by the *small customer* may vary depending on the actions of the *small customer* (for example, any conditional discounts);
 - (b) any terms pursuant to which the amounts payable by the *small customer* may vary depending on the actions of the *retailer* (for example, any terms pursuant to which the *retailer* may make *price changes*, or any specific *price changes* that will apply to that *customer retail contract*);
 - (c) any terms pursuant to which a *benefit change* may occur;
 - (d) the *retailer's* other *generally available plans* or a *Victorian default offer* available to the *customer*, which the *retailer* reasonably believes may be more suitable for the *customer* having regard to any information the *retailer* has regarding the *customer* wherever it is practicable to do so; and
 - (e) if switching to the *customer retail contract* involves moving the *small customer* to a new tariff structure, the cost impact that the new tariff structure may have for the customer.
- (1A) If requested by the *customer*, the *retailer* must provide the *customer* with information about the availability of the *Victorian default offer* and how the *customer* may access the *Victorian default offer*.
- (2) Subclause (1) does not apply to charges payable for distribution services other than standard control services (electricity) and ancillary reference services (gas).
- (3) The reference to “any information the *retailer* has” in subclause (1)(d) is a reference to any relevant information the *customer* provides during the communication required by subclause (1) including in response to any relevant inquiries by the *retailer*, or any other information the *retailer* has about the *customer* and which the *retailer* considers relevant in providing the advice.
- (4) In communicating the information required by subclause (1), the *retailer* must do so in a manner that:
 - (a) insofar as possible, is done by reference to the *retailer's* estimate of the dollar impact on the *customer*; and
 - (b) emphasises any information the *retailer* reasonably believes may be of particular relevance to that *customer*.

70I Compliance

- (1) A *retailer* must maintain records that are sufficient to evidence its compliance with this Division.

- (2) The *retailer* must ensure that the records required to be maintained pursuant to subclause (1) are retained:
 - (a) for at least 2 years; or
 - (b) where a *small customer* has within that period made a complaint or referred a dispute to the *energy ombudsman* in relation to the provision of advice by the *retailer* in connection with a *customer retail contract*—for the period the complaint or dispute remains unresolved.

Division 3 Customers entitled to notification of change

70J Requirement

A *retailer* is required to perform its obligations under this Division in a way that promotes the objective of this Division.

70K Objective

The objective of this Division is to give *small customers* an entitlement to clear, timely, easily understood information to allow them to evaluate the ongoing suitability of their *customer retail contract*, before any changes that will affect their bill occur, and the steps the *small customer* can take to find an alternative *customer retail contract*.

70L Minimum standards - Notice of price or benefit change to be given

- (1) If a *benefit change* or a *price change* is to take effect, the *retailer* must provide the *small customer* who is party to the relevant *customer retail contract* with a *bill change alert* in accordance with this Division 3.
- (2) The *bill change alert* must be given to the *small customer*:
 - (a) in writing;
 - (b) using the *customer's* preferred method of communication (if nominated, for example by post or by email to a specified address);
 - (c) at least 5 *business days* before the *benefit change* or *price change* will take effect.
- (3) The *bill change alert* must state:
 - (a) the customer's metering identifier;
 - (b) that the *customer* may use a *price comparator* to compare offers that are generally available to classes of *small customers* in their geographical area;
 - (c) the name and web address of the *price comparator* including a hyperlink to the *price comparator* website on notices provided electronically;
 - (d) that the *customer* may request historical billing data from the *retailer* that will assist the *customer* to compare offers that are generally available to similar classes of *small customers* in their geographical area;

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- (e) the nature of the *price change* or *benefit change* and the date on which the *price change* or *benefit change* will take effect;
 - (f) any early termination charges payable under the *customer retail contract*;
 - (g) the *retailer's* estimate of the annual dollar impact of the *price change* or *benefit change* to the *customer*, determined by the *retailer* calculating the difference in dollars between the *customer's annual total cost of current plan* calculated from the effective date of the *price change* or *benefit change* and the *customer's annual total cost of current plan* calculated immediately prior to the effective date of the *price change* or *benefit change*;
 - (h) any information the *retailer* has regarding the *customer's* account that will assist the *customer* to use the *price comparator* and which is practicable to provide as part of the *bill change alert*; and
 - (i) a *deemed best offer message*.
- (4) For the purposes of subclause (3)(i):
- (a) the *retailer* must identify the *deemed best offer* for the *customer* in accordance with clause 70P as at the effective date of the *price change* or *benefit change*;
 - (b) using this *deemed best offer*, the *retailer* must perform the *deemed best offer check* for the *customer* in accordance with clause 70Q with *annual total cost of current plan* and *annual total cost of deemed best offer* determined as at the date the *price change* or *benefit change* becomes effective;
 - (c) if the *deemed best offer check result* is negative, the *retailer* must include a *negative best offer message* in accordance with clause 70S(4) on the *customer's bill change alert*;
 - (d) if the *deemed best offer check* is positive, the *retailer* must include a *positive best offer message* in accordance with clause 70S(3) on the *customer's bill change alert*;
 - (e) a *deemed best offer message* must:
 - (i) be on the front page of the *bill change alert*; and
 - (ii) be contained in a border;
 - (f) a *deemed best offer message* is not required to use the words "best offer", but must be written in a way which clearly and simply conveys the meaning of *deemed best offer*.
- (5) Where a *retailer* provides a *small customer* with a *bill change alert* in relation to a *price change*, in addition to the requirements of subclauses (3) and (4) the *bill change alert* must:
- (a) identify the *customer's* existing tariffs and charges inclusive of GST;
 - (b) identify the *customer's* tariffs and charges as varied by the *price change* inclusive of GST; and

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- (c) specify that the tariffs and charges identified in subclauses (a) and (b) are inclusive of GST.
- (6) A *retailer* is not required to comply with this clause in respect of a *benefit change*:
- (a) relating to a benefit that is a one-off gift or sign-up credit provided to a *customer* as a result of entering the *customer retail contract*;
 - (b) that occurs within 40 *business days* of the commencement of the *customer retail contract*; or
 - (c) where the benefit is rolled over on the same terms and conditions after the expiry of the existing benefit.
- (7) A *retailer* is not required to comply with this clause in respect of a *price change* where:
- (a) a *small customer* enters a *customer retail contract* less than 10 *business days* prior to a *price change* taking effect, and the *retailer* notified the *small customer* of the *price change* prior to *small customer* entering the *customer retail contract*;
 - (b) the *price change* is a result of a tariff or charge that continually varies in relation to the prevailing spot price of *energy*. For the avoidance of doubt, this exemption does not apply with respect to *price changes* to any remaining tariffs and charges that form part of the same *customer retail contract* and which do not vary in relation to the spot price of *energy*;
 - (c) the *price change* is a direct result of a change or withdrawal or expiry of a government funded *energy* charge rebate, concession or relief scheme;
 - (d) the *price change* is a direct result of a change to any bank charges or fees, credit card charges or fees, or payment processing charges or fees applicable to the customer.
- (8) Despite subclause (2)(c), a *retailer* must provide the *bill change alert* as soon as practicable, and in any event no later than the *customer's* next bill, where the variations to the tariffs and charges are a direct result of a tariff reassignment by the distributor. For the purposes of providing a notice under this subclause (8), the reference to:
- (a) “is to take effect” in subclause (1) is taken to be “is to take effect or has taken effect (whichever is applicable)”; and
 - (b) “will take effect” in subclause (3)(e) is taken to be “will take effect or has taken effect”.
- (9) A *retailer* is not required to comply with subclause (3)(i) where:
- (a) the *customer* is or would be a *small customer* in relation to at least one of the relevant premises; and
 - (b) the aggregate of the actual or estimated annual consumption level of the relevant premises is higher than:

- (i) in the case of electricity—the upper consumption threshold provided for in an Order made under section 35(5) of the *Electricity Industry Act*;
 - (ii) in the case of gas—the upper consumption threshold provided for in an Order made under section 42(5) of the *Gas Industry Act*.
- (10) A *retailer* is not required to comply with subclause (3)(i) where the *customer* receives a single bill in respect of the provision of *customer retail services* at two or more premises.
- (11) Nothing in subclauses (6) and (7) limits or otherwise affects the application of any other requirement in relation to the provision of information by a *retailer* to a *small customer*.

70M Compliance

- (1) A *retailer* must maintain records that are sufficient to evidence its compliance with this Division.
- (2) The *retailer* must ensure that the records required to be maintained pursuant to subclause (1) are retained:
- (a) for at least two years; or
 - (b) where a *small customer* has within that period made a complaint or referred a dispute to the *energy ombudsman* in relation to the provision of notice of a *benefit change* or *price change*, including that such notice was not provided—for the period the complaint or dispute remains unresolved.

Division 4 Customers entitled to deemed best offer information on bills and bill summaries

70N Requirement

A *retailer* is required to perform its obligations under this Division in a way that promotes the objective of this Division.

70O Objective

The objective of this Division is to give *small customers* an entitlement to prominently displayed, helpful information that enables them to easily:

- (1) identify whether they are on their *retailer's deemed best offer*;
- (2) understand how to access their *retailer's deemed best offer*, if they are not already on the *retailer's deemed best offer*; and
- (3) understand how to access offers from other *retailers* via the *price comparator*.

70P Identification of deemed best offer

- (1) Where a *retailer* is required to carry out a *deemed best offer check* for a *customer*, the *retailer* must identify the relevant *deemed best offer* for that customer.

- (2) The *deemed best offer* must be either:
- (a) the plan that the *retailer* offers which:
 - (i) is the lowest cost *generally available plan* or *Victorian default offer* applicable to the *customer* having regard to the *customer's annual usage history*; and
 - (ii) does not have as a precondition or condition that the *customer* have or maintain an affiliation or membership with an entity that is unrelated to the *retailer*; or
 - (b) a plan that has a lower cost than the lowest cost *generally available plan* or *Victorian default offer* applicable to the *customer*.
- (3) Where the *customer* is party to a *customer retail contract* that provides a discount on condition that the *customer* buys another good or service, the *deemed best offer* identified in accordance with subclause (2) must be determined without any such discount.

70Q Deemed best offer check

- (1) A *retailer* must carry out the *deemed best offer check* by calculating the *deemed best offer check result* in accordance with the following formula:

$$\text{deemed best offer check result} = A - B$$

Where:

A = *annual total cost of current plan*

B = *annual total cost of deemed best offer*

- (2) If the *deemed best offer check result* is less than or equal to \$22, the *deemed best offer check result* is positive.
- (3) If the *deemed best offer check result* is greater than \$22, the *deemed best offer check result* is negative.

70R Retailers to give customers deemed best offer message

- (1) A *retailer* must provide a *deemed best offer message* on a bill or *bill summary* to a *small customer*:
- (a) at least once every 3 months (electricity); or
 - (b) at least once every 4 months (gas); or
 - (c) where a *retailer* and a *small customer* have agreed to a billing cycle with a regular recurrent period that differs from the *retailer's* usual recurrent period and that period is 3 months or longer, once in each billing cycle.
- (2) A *retailer* must, before providing a *deemed best offer message*:

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- (a) determine the *deemed best offer* for the relevant *customer* in accordance with clause 70P as at the date the bill or *bill summary* containing the *deemed best offer message* will be issued; and
 - (b) using this *deemed best offer*, perform the *deemed best offer check* for the *customer*.
 - (3) If the *deemed best offer check result* is negative, the *retailer* must include:
 - (a) a *negative deemed best offer message* on the *small customer's bill*; and
 - (b) a *negative deemed best offer message* on any *bill summary* of the bill that it sends to the *small customer*.
 - (4) If the *deemed best offer check result* is positive, the *retailer* must include:
 - (a) a *positive deemed best offer message* on the *small customer's bill*; and
 - (b) a *positive deemed best offer message* on any *bill summary* of the bill it sends to the *small customer*.
 - (5) The requirement in subclause (1) is in addition to the requirement to provide a *deemed best offer message* on a *bill change alert* in clause 70L.
 - (6) A *retailer* is not required to comply with this clause where:
 - (a) the *customer* is or would be a *small customer* in relation to at least one of the relevant premises; and
 - (b) the aggregate of the actual or estimated annual consumption level of the relevant premises is higher than:
 - (i) in the case of electricity—the upper consumption threshold provided for in an Order made under section 35(5) of the *Electricity Industry Act*;
 - (ii) in the case of gas—the upper consumption threshold provided for in an Order made under section 42(5) of the *Gas Industry Act*.
 - (7) A *retailer* is not required to comply with this clause where the *customer* receives a single bill in respect of the provision of *customer retail services* at two or more premises.

70S Form and content requirements of deemed best offer message

- (1) The requirements in this clause 70S apply to any bill or *bill summary* that contains a *deemed best offer message*.
- (2) A *deemed best offer message* must:

- (a) if included on a bill, be on the front page of the bill;
 - (b) be contained in a border; and
 - (c) be located adjacent to and no less prominently than the amount due.
- (3) A *retailer* has discretion over what to include in a *positive deemed best offer message*, provided that the *retailer*:
- (a) ensures that it is clear to the *small customer* that they are on one of the *retailer's* lowest cost *customer retail contracts* available to the *customer* having regard to the *customer's annual usage history*; and
 - (b) includes the name and web address of the *price comparator* and how to access it, including a hyperlink on electronic bills.
- (4) A *negative deemed best offer message*:
- (a) must contain a title using the exact words "Could you save money on another plan";
 - (b) must contain the exact words "Based on your past usage, our" followed by the name of the *deemed best offer* plan, followed by the exact words "may cost you up to", followed by the dollar amount of the *deemed best offer check result*, followed by the exact words "less per year than your current plan."
 - (c) where the *deemed best offer* is subject to conditions, may provide that conditions apply and the nature of those conditions; and
 - (d) must contain clear and simple instructions on how to switch to the *deemed best offer*.
- (5) A *deemed best offer message* is not required to use the words "best offer", but must be written in a way which clearly and simply conveys the meaning of *deemed best offer*, having regard to the objective of this Division.
- (6) Nothing in subclauses (3) and (4) otherwise limits a retailer in providing other information to *customers* in connection with a *best offer message* in a manner and form that promotes the objective of this Division.
- (7) Despite subclause (1), a *deemed best offer message* on a *bill summary* is not required to comply with subclause (2) only to the extent it is not practicable to do so because of the method by which the *bill summary* is communicated to the *customer*.

70T Compliance

- (1) A *retailer* must maintain records that are sufficient to evidence its compliance with this Division.
- (2) The *retailer* must ensure that the records required to be maintained pursuant to subclause (1) are retained:
 - (a) for at least 2 years; or

- (b) where a *small customer* has within that period made a complaint or referred a dispute to the *energy ombudsman* in relation to the provision of information about a *deemed best offer*, including that such information was not provided—for the period the complaint or dispute remains unresolved.

Division 5 Customers entitled to access information on the features and prices of energy plans

70U Requirement

A *retailer* is required to perform its obligations under this Division in a way that promotes the objective of this Division.

70V Objective

The Objective of this Division is to provide *small customers* with a mechanism to consider and compare the features and prices of different *energy plans* so as to assist the *small customer* to assess the suitability of, and select, a plan.

70W Application of this Division

This Division does not apply to *exempt persons*.

70X Requirement to provide information via the Victorian Retailer Portal website and obtain an energy fact sheet

- (1) A *retailer* must input into the *Victorian Retailer Portal website* accurate details of each current *generally available plan*, *restricted plan* and the *Victorian default offer*, including all relevant details in the form required by that internet site.
- (2) A *retailer* must obtain from the *Victorian Retailer Portal website* an *energy fact sheet* for each current *generally available plan* and *restricted plan*.
- (3) All information uploaded to the *Victorian Retailer Portal website* must be written in plain English and be designed to be readily understandable by *customers*.
- (4) A *retailer* must co-operate with relevant parties in implementing a system to create and sustain reliable links from the internet site nominated by the Minister so that a *customer* can:
 - (a) easily view the same or more offer information on the *retailer's* website; and
 - (b) potentially accept that offer or another offer.
- (5) If the available input fields of the *Victorian Retailer Portal website* does not enable the terms of a plan to be accurately represented, a *retailer* must supplement any fact sheet obtained in subclause 70X(2) with information to ensure that a *customer* is able to consider and compare the features and prices of the plan to assess the suitability of, and select a plan.

70Y Retailers to make energy fact sheets accessible to relevant customers

- (1) A *retailer* must ensure that an *energy fact sheet* for each current *generally available plan*, *restricted plan* and the *Victorian default offer* is available to relevant *customers* within two *business days* of the plan becoming available to *customers*.
- (2) A *retailer* will not contravene clause 70Y to the extent that it has been unable to obtain the relevant *energy fact sheet* from the *Victorian Retailer Portal website* through no fault of the *retailer*.
- (3) Where a *retailer* provides, either directly or via arrangements with another person, information about a current *generally available plan* on a website, the *retailer* must ensure:
 - (a) a clear link to the *energy fact sheet* relevant to that *generally available plan* is published in a prominent position on that website; and
 - (b) the link is labelled “energy fact sheet”.
- (4) Where a *generally available plan* is available through an online sign-up process, the *retailer* must ensure that a clear and prominent link to the relevant *energy fact sheet* is provided in close proximity to where the *customer* signs up to the plan.
- (5) A *retailer* must ensure that the *energy fact sheet* for a *generally available plan* that is applicable to a *customer’s* circumstances is readily identifiable by a *customer*.
- (6) When marketing a *generally available plan* by any means, and regardless of whether the marketing is done by the *retailer* directly or another person, a *retailer* must ensure that the *customer* is:
 - (a) informed that an *energy fact sheet* containing the key details of that plan is available; and
 - (b) provided with the location of the relevant *energy fact sheet* for that plan on the *retailer’s* website.
- (7) When marketing a *generally available plan* on mass media channels, and regardless of whether the marketing is done by the *retailer* directly or another person, a *retailer* must ensure that the following statement is included in any advertisements in a clear manner and (as relevant for the medium) easily readable text or audible language:

“Fact sheets available at [insert link to the website where the energy fact sheet is available]. For clear advice on the right plan for you, contact us on [insert contact details].”
- (8) Where a plan is advertised using a medium with inherent limitations that prevents the text required by subclause (7), a *retailer* must ensure that the text is included in a prominent location on the first webpage linked to the advertisement.
- (9) Where a *retailer* provides information about a *restricted plan* to a customer, or when marketing a *restricted plan* by any means, and regardless of whether the information is provided or the marketing is done by the *retailer* directly or via arrangements with

another person, a *retailer* must ensure that the *customer* is informed that an *energy fact sheet* containing the key details of the plan is available and will be provided on request.

- (10) A *retailer* must ensure that, if a *customer* requests an *energy fact sheet* for a *generally available plan*, a *restricted plan* or the *Victorian default offer*, the *customer* is sent, either by post or electronically, the relevant *energy fact sheet* within five *business days* of contact with the *customer*.
- (11) When marketing a plan, and regardless of whether the marketing is done by the *retailer* directly or by another person, a *retailer* must ensure that the offer ID generated by the *Victorian Retailer Portal website* is able to be identified and referred to in communications with a *customer* about that plan.
- (12) A *retailer* must not require a *customer* to provide technical or personal information in order for the *customer* to obtain an *energy fact sheet* other than information required to determine if a *customer* is eligible for a particular plan.

70Z Compliance

- (1) A *retailer* must maintain records that are sufficient to evidence its compliance with this Division.
- (2) The *retailer* must ensure that the records required to be maintained pursuant to subclause (1) are retained:
 - (a) for at least 2 years; or
 - (b) for as long as the *retailer* has at least one *customer* on a *generally available plan*, a *restricted plan* or the *Victorian default offer* for which it has an obligation to provide an *energy fact sheet* under this Division.

Part 3 Assistance for residential customers anticipating or facing payment difficulties

Division 1 Operation of this Part

71 Purpose

The purpose of this Part is to set out the minimum standards of assistance to which *residential customers* anticipating or facing payment difficulties are entitled, so that *disconnection of a residential customer* for not paying a bill is a measure of last resort.

72 Application of this Part

This Part applies to *customers* who are *residential customers*. Where a clause states it applies to *exempt persons* in one or more *categories* it applies to people who purchase electricity principally for personal, household or domestic use from an *exempt person* in the relevant *category*.

73 Interpretation of this Part

The approach that the *Commission* will take to the interpretation of this Part is as follows.

- (a) clear words will be given their natural and ordinary meaning; and
- (b) if words appear to be capable of having more than one meaning, the *Commission* will have regard to the following, in the following order, in seeking to discover the intended meaning of those words:
 - (i) firstly (for Divisions 2 and 3), the objective of the Division; and
 - (ii) secondly, the purpose of this Part; and
 - (iii) thirdly, any guidelines published by the *Commission* under section 13 of the *Essential Services Commission Act 2001* (Vic); and
 - (iv) fourthly, any relevant guidance notes published by the *Commission* under its Energy Compliance and Enforcement Policy; and
 - (v) fifthly, any written information issued by the *Commission* regarding the assistance that *residential customers* might reasonably expect to be provided by their *retailer* under this Part.

Division 2 Standard assistance

74 Objective

The objective of this Division is to give *residential customers* an entitlement to minimum standard forms of assistance, to help them avoid getting into arrears with their *retailer*.

75 Application of this Division

This Division applies to all *residential customers*. Where a clause states it applies to *exempt persons* in one or more *categories* it applies to people who purchase electricity principally for personal, household or domestic use from an *exempt person* in the relevant *category*.

76 Standard assistance

- (1) A *retailer* must take steps to provide to its *residential customers* the forms of standard assistance, from those listed in subclause (2), it elects to make available to help them avoid getting into arrears.
- (2) Standard assistance made available must include at least 3 of the following:
 - (a) making payments of an equal amount over a specified period;
 - (b) options for making payments at different intervals;
 - (c) extending by a specified period the *pay-by date* for a bill for at least one billing cycle in any 12 month period;
 - (d) paying for *energy* use in advance.
- (3) **Application of this clause to exempt persons**

This clause applies to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:

VD2, VR2, VR3 and VR4.

Division 3 Tailored assistance

77 Objective

The objective of this Division is to give *residential customers* an entitlement to minimum standards of flexible and practicable assistance that makes it easier for them to pay for their on-going *energy* use, repay their arrears and lower their *energy* costs.

78 Application of this Division

This Division applies to all *residential customers* who are in arrears. Where a clause states it applies to *exempt persons* in one or more *categories* it applies to people who purchase electricity principally for personal, household or domestic use from an *exempt person* in the relevant *category*.

79 Minimum assistance

- (1) Tailored assistance consists of the following measures:
 - (a) repayment of arrears over not more than 2 years by payments at regular intervals of up to one month;
 - (b) advice from the *retailer* about payment options that would enable a *customer* to repay their arrears over not more than 2 years;

- (c) specific advice about the likely cost of a *customer's* future *energy* use and how this cost may be lowered;
 - (d) specific advice about any government and non-government assistance (including Utility Relief Grants and *energy* concessions) available to help a *customer* meet their *energy* costs;
 - (e) practical assistance to help a *customer* lower their *energy* costs including, but not limited to:
 - (i) the tariff that is most likely to minimise the *customer's energy* costs, based on the *retailer's* knowledge of the *customer's* pattern of *energy* use and payment history; and
 - (ii) practical assistance to help the *customer* reduce their use of *energy*, based on the *customer's* pattern of *energy* use and on the circumstances of where the *customer* lives, provided there is scope for action to be taken for that purpose; and
 - (iii) information about how the *customer* is progressing towards lowering their *energy* costs given at sufficient intervals for the *customer* to be able to adequately assess that progress;
 - (f) an initial period of at least 6 months during which:
 - (i) repayment of the *customer's* arrears is put on hold; and
 - (ii) the *customer* pays less than the full cost of their on-going *energy* use while working to lower that cost;
 - (g) any other assistance consistent with the objective of this Division.
- (2) A *customer* is entitled, at the very least, to the assistance mentioned in subclause (1)(a) to (d), while continuing to pay the full cost of their on-going *energy* use.
 - (3) A *customer* is entitled, at the very least, to the assistance mentioned in subclause (1)(c) to (f) if they cannot pay the full cost of their on-going *energy* use.
 - (4) The *retailer* may extend the assistance mentioned in subclause (1)(f) for a further period or periods if the extension would assist the *customer* to continue to lower the cost of their *energy* use.
 - (5) A *customer* who has exercised an entitlement to the assistance mentioned in subclause (1)(f) may, at the end of the period during which that assistance is provided (including that period as extended under subclause (4)), exercise an entitlement mentioned in subclause (2).
 - (6) **Application of this clause to exempt persons**

This clause applies to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:

VD2, VR2, VR3 and VR4.

Exempt persons in those *categories* must offer the assistance described in subclauses (1)(a), (b), (d) and (g) to their *customers*.

80 Information about assistance available

- (1) A *residential customer* who has not paid a bill by its *pay-by date* and who contacts the *retailer* is entitled to be given by the *retailer* information about the assistance to which the *customer* is entitled under this Division and how to access it.
- (2) A *residential customer* who has not paid a bill by its *pay-by date* and who has arrears of more than \$55 (inclusive of GST) is entitled to be contacted by the *retailer*, within 21 *business days* after that *pay-by-date*, and given information about the assistance to which the *customer* is entitled under this Division and how to access it.
- (3) The *retailer* must allow the *customer* no less than 6 *business days* to consider the information given under subclause (1) or (2), request further information, and put forward a payment proposal under clause 81.

(4) Nothing in this clause limits clause 86.

(5) Application of this clause to exempt persons

This clause applies to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:

VD2, VR2, VR3 and VR4.

81 Payment arrangements

- (1) This clause applies to a *residential customer* whose repayment of arrears is not on hold under clause 79(1)(f)(i).
- (2) The *retailer* must accept a payment proposal or revised proposal put forward under this clause by the *residential customer* that complies with subclause (3).
- (3) A payment proposal or revised proposal complies with this subclause if it:
 - (a) provides for the making of payments of equal amounts at regular intervals of up to one month; and
 - (b) would result in the *residential customer's* arrears being fully paid in no more than 2 years after the first payment; and
 - (c) provides for payments for *energy* use being made together with payments to reduce arrears; and
 - (d) is based on a reasonable forecast of the *customer's energy* use over the next 12 months.
- (4) However, the *retailer* may accept a payment proposal or revised proposal that does any or all of the following:
 - (a) provides for payments of different amounts at different intervals;
 - (b) would result in the arrears being fully paid by a date later than 2 years after the first payment;
 - (c) provides for payments for *energy* use being made separately from payments for arrears.

- (5) On accepting a payment proposal or a revised proposal, the *retailer* must give the *customer* a written schedule of payments showing:
- (a) the total number of payments to be made to pay the arrears; and
 - (b) the period over which the payments are to be made; and
 - (c) the date by which each payment must be made; and
 - (d) the amount of each payment.
- (6) If a *residential customer* receiving assistance under this Division fails to make a payment by the date on which it was payable, the *retailer* must contact the *customer* to discuss their putting forward a revised proposal under this clause.
- (7) **Application of this clause to exempt persons**

This clause applies to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:

VD2, VR2, VR3 and VR4.

82 Non-payment of amounts towards on-going energy use

- (1) This clause applies to a *residential customer* whose repayment of arrears is on hold under clause 79(1)(f)(i).
- (2) If the *residential customer* fails to make a payment towards the cost of their on-going *energy* use by the date on which it was payable, the *retailer* must contact the *customer* to discuss varying the amount payable, or the frequency of those payments, or both, to give the *customer* more time to lower their *energy* costs.
- (3) If a *customer* is not meeting their responsibility to implement practical assistance referred to in clause 79(1)(e)(ii) provided by the *retailer*, the *retailer* must contact the *customer* and work with them to identify an implementation timeframe, consistent with the objective of this Division.
- (4) The *retailer* may add any amount unpaid for *energy* use to the *customer's* arrears.

83 Continued provision of assistance

- (1) A *retailer* is required to continue to provide assistance under this Division to a *residential customer* unless:
- (a) after the *retailer* has complied with clause 81(6), the *customer* has refused or failed to take reasonable action towards paying for their on-going *energy* use and repaying their arrears; or
 - (b) after the *retailer* has complied with clause 82(2), the *customer* has refused or failed to take reasonable action towards making payments towards the cost of their on-going *energy* use; or
 - (c) the *customer* is not facing payment difficulties.
- (2) **Application of this clause to exempt persons**

This clause applies to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:

VD2, VR2, VR3 and VR4.

Division 4 Financial Hardship Policies

84 Approval of financial hardship policies

A *retailer* must prepare a financial hardship policy, and submit it to the *Commission* for approval, as mentioned in section 43(1) of the *Electricity Industry Act* or section 48G(1) of the *Gas Industry Act*.

85 Content of financial hardship policies

A financial hardship policy must include:

- (a) the matters set out in section 43C of the *Electricity Industry Act* or section 48GC of the *Gas Industry Act*; and
- (b) the entitlements to minimum assistance set out in Division 3 of this Part; and
- (c) any matters covered by guidelines or guidance notes published by the *Commission* in relation to those entitlements.

Division 5 Communications

86 Provision of information to customers

- (1) A *retailer* must ensure that its financial hardship policy is easily accessible on its website in a readily printable form.
- (2) A *retailer* must send a copy of its financial hardship policy to any *residential customer* who requests to be sent a copy.
- (3) A *retailer* must ensure that information is readily available to *residential customers* about:
 - (a) the financial hardship policy of the *retailer*; and
 - (b) the assistance available under Division 2 or 3 and how to access that assistance; and
 - (c) approaches to lowering *energy* costs; and
 - (d) government and non-government assistance (including Utility Relief Grants and *energy* concessions) that may be available to help with meeting *energy* costs.
- (4) Without limiting the means by which information may be made readily available, information is readily available for the purposes of subclause (3) if:
 - (a) it is easily accessible on the *retailer's* website in a readily printable form; or

- (b) it is sent to any *residential customer* who requests to be sent that information.

(5) **Application of this clause to exempt persons**

Subclauses (3)(b),(c), (d) and (4)(b) of this clause apply to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:

VD2, VR2, VR3 and VR4.

Note: Clause 87(2) states how information is required to be sent to a *residential customer*.

87 Written communications

- (1) Any written communication by a *retailer* to a *residential customer* under, or in connection with, this Part must be:
 - (a) expressed in plain language; and
 - (b) legible; and
 - (c) presented clearly and appropriately having regard to its nature.
- (2) Despite clause 3F, a *retailer* must give or send by post to a *residential customer* any written communication required or permitted to be given or sent under, or in connection with, this Part unless the *customer* has given *explicit informed consent* to receiving it in another way.
- (3) Information sent by post to a *residential customer* must be taken to be delivered at the time at which it would be delivered in the ordinary course of post.
- (4) Information sent by registered post to a *residential customer* must be taken to be delivered at the time at which it would ordinarily be delivered by registered post.
- (5) A *retailer* must not impose a charge on a *residential customer* for any written communication given or sent to the *customer* (whether by post or otherwise) under, or in connection with, this Part.
- (6) **Application of this clause to exempt persons**

This clause applies to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:

VD2, VR2, VR3 and VR4;

88 Effect of this Division

Nothing in this Division limits clause 56 or any other provision of this Code about providing information to *residential customers*.

Division 6 Miscellaneous

89 Retailer obligations

- (1) A *retailer* must:

- (aa) in any dealing with an *affected customer* who is receiving, or is entitled to receive, assistance pursuant to Part 3A (Assistance for customers affected by family violence), take into account the particular circumstances of that *affected customer*; and
- (a) in any dealing with a *residential customer* under, or in connection with, Division 3 take into account all of the circumstances of the *customer* of which they are aware and, having regard to those circumstances, act fairly and reasonably; and
- (b) at all times when it is relevant to do so, including on being contacted by a *residential customer*, give the *customer* in a timely manner clear and unambiguous information about the assistance available under this Part; and
- (c) in a timely manner provide, or use its best endeavours to provide, a *residential customer* who is entitled to receive assistance under this Part with that assistance; and
- (d) give a *residential customer* who is receiving, or is entitled to receive, assistance under this Part clear information about how to access other assistance provided by government or community service providers for which the *customer* is or may be eligible; and
- (e) work cooperatively with any government or non-government service, including the Energy and Water Ombudsman (Victoria), providing support to a *residential customer* who is receiving assistance under this Part to ensure that the assistance being provided by the *retailer* complements, and is provided in a coordinated way with, that support; and
- (f) in relation to a *residential customer* who is receiving, or is entitled to receive, assistance under this Part, comply with any relevant guideline published by the *Commission* relating to *customers* in particular payment difficulty.

(2) **Application of this clause to exempt persons**

This clause applies to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:

VD2, VR2, VR3 and VR4.

90 Assistance beyond the minimum standards

- (1) Nothing in this Part prevents a *retailer* from providing to *residential customers*, who are anticipating or facing payment difficulties, assistance in addition to the minimum standards set out in this Part.

(2) **Application of this clause to exempt persons**

This clause applies to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:

VD2, VR2, VR3 and VR4.

91 Restriction on conditions

(1) *A retailer* must not impose any condition on the provision of assistance under this Part (whether in accordance with the minimum standards set out in this Part or in addition to them) that requires the *customer* to provide personal or financial information or to waive any entitlement under this Part.

(2) Application of this clause to exempt persons

This clause applies to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:

VD2, VR2, VR3 and VR4.

92 Debt

(1) Restriction on debt recovery

A retailer must not commence or continue with proceedings for the recovery of arrears from a *residential customer* who is receiving assistance under this Part.

(2) Restriction on sale of debt

A retailer must not sell or otherwise dispose of the debt of a *residential customer* who is in arrears:

- (a) at any time while the *customer* is receiving assistance under this Part; or
- (b) within 10 *business days* after the *customer* has been disconnected from their *energy* supply under clause 111A.

(3) Guideline to be complied with on sale of debt to third party

A retailer must not sell or otherwise dispose of the debt of a *residential customer* to a third party other than in accordance with the guideline “*Debt collection guideline: for collectors and creditors*” jointly published by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission and the Australian Securities and Investments Commission.

(4) Waiver of debt

Nothing in this Part prevents a *retailer* from waiving any fee, charge or amount of arrears for a *residential customer*.

(5) Application of this clause to exempt persons

This clause applies to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:

VD2, VR2, VR3 and VR4.

93 Supply capacity control product

(1) *A retailer* must not offer a *supply capacity control product* to a *residential customer* for any credit management purpose.

(2) Application of this clause to exempt persons

This clause applies to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:

VD2, VR2, VR3 and VR4.

94 Payment by Centrepay (SRC and MRC)

- (1) This clause applies where a *residential customer* requests a *retailer* to permit payment by using Centrepay as a payment option (see clause 32).
- (2) If the *residential customer* is applying for or on a *standard retail contract*, the *retailer* must allow the *customer* to use Centrepay as a payment option.
- (3) If the *residential customer* is on a *market retail contract* and Centrepay is available as a payment option under that contract, the *retailer* must allow the *customer* to use Centrepay as a payment option.
- (4) If the *residential customer* is on a *market retail contract* and Centrepay is not available as a payment option under that contract, the *retailer* must undertake a review of the *market retail contract*.
- (5) If, as a result of a review, an alternative *customer retail contract* is considered to be more appropriate, the *retailer* must transfer the *customer* to that alternative contract, where the *retailer* has obtained the *customer's explicit informed consent*.
- (6) Any alternative *customer retail contract* offered to a *residential customer* must make Centrepay available as a payment option.
- (7) If, as a result of the review, there is no alternative *customer retail contract* considered to be more appropriate, the *retailer* must make Centrepay available as a payment option under the *residential customer's* existing *market retail contract*.
- (8) The *retailer* must not charge the *residential customer* for the review, for any transfer to an alternative *customer retail contract* or any early termination charge or other penalty for the early termination of the *customer's* previous *customer retail contract*.

- 95 [Not used]
- 96 [Not used]
- 97 [Not used]
- 98 [Not used]
- 99 [Not used]
- 100 [Not used]
- 101 [Not used]
- 102 [Not used]
- 103 [Not used]
- 104 [Not used]
- 105 [Not used]
- 106 [Not used]

Part 3A Assistance for customers affected by family violence

Division 1 – Operation of this Part

106A Requirement

A *retailer* is required to perform its obligations under this Part in a way that promotes the purpose of this Part.

106B Purpose

The purpose of this Part is to promote protections for *affected customers*.

106C Interpretation of this Part

The approach that the *Commission* will take to the interpretation of this Part is as follows:

- (1) clear words will be given their natural and ordinary meaning; and
- (2) where this Part appears to be capable of having more than one meaning, the *Commission* will have regard to the following, in the following order, in seeking to discover the intended meaning of the Part:
 - (a) first, the objective of the relevant Division(s);
 - (b) secondly, the purpose of this Part;
 - (c) thirdly, any guidelines published by the *Commission* under section 13 of the *Essential Services Commission Act 2001* (Vic);
 - (d) fourthly, any relevant guidance notes published by the *Commission* under its Energy Compliance and Enforcement Policy; and
 - (e) fifthly, any written information issued by the *Commission* regarding an *affected customer's* entitlement to supporting measures under this Part.

Division 2 - Providing family violence assistance—minimum standards

106D Requirement

A *retailer* is required to perform its obligations under this Division in a way that promotes the objective of this Division.

106E Objective

The objective of this Division is to give *affected customers* an entitlement to safe, supportive and flexible assistance from a *retailer* when managing their personal and financial security.

106F Training

- (3) A *retailer* must ensure that training is provided to any person (including employees, agents and contractors) acting on its behalf who:
 - (a) may engage with *affected customers* by any means of communication; or

- (b) is a manager of a person identified in paragraph (a); or
 - (c) is responsible for systems and processes that guide interactions with *customers*.
- (4) For the purposes of subclause (1), a *retailer* must ensure that the training provided addresses:
- (a) the nature and consequences of *family violence*; and
 - (b) the application of the retailer's *family violence* policy; and
 - (c) how to identify *affected customers*; and
 - (d) how to engage appropriately and effectively with *affected customers*.

106G Account security

- (1) Notwithstanding any other requirement in this Code, a *retailer* must not disclose or provide access to confidential information about an *affected customer* to any other person without the consent of the *affected customer*.
- (2) In this clause, the term “confidential information” refers to any information that may be used to identify or locate an *affected customer*, including information about their whereabouts, contact details, or financial or personal circumstances.
- (3) In this clause, the term “any other person” includes a person who is or has been a joint account holder with an *affected customer*.
- (4) To identify a safe method of communication with an *affected customer*, a *retailer* must:
- (a) take reasonable steps to elicit the *affected customer*'s preferred method of communication; and
 - (b) offer alternative methods of communication if the *affected customer*'s preferred method of communication identified in paragraph (a) is not practicable.
- (5) An *affected customer*'s entitlement for communications to be in accordance with the method of communication identified pursuant to subclause (4) takes precedence over any other customer entitlement or *retailer* requirement in this Code to communicate with or provide information to a *customer* in a particular way.
- (6) A *retailer* must keep a record of arrangements reached pursuant to subclause (4).

106H Customer service

A *retailer* must provide for a secure process designed to avoid the need for an *affected customer* to repeatedly disclose or refer to their experience of *family violence* by:

- (a) providing a method for readily identifying the account of a *customer* who has been identified as an *affected customer*; and
- (b) providing for effective ongoing engagement with an *affected customer*.

106I Debt management

- (1) Before taking action to recover arrears from an *affected customer*, a *retailer* must take into account:
 - (a) the potential impact of debt recovery action at that time on the *affected customer*; and
 - (b) whether other persons are jointly or severally responsible for the *energy* usage that resulted in the accumulation of those arrears.
- (2) Nothing in this Part prevents a *retailer* from waiving, suspending or repurchasing the debt of an *affected customer*.

106J Family violence as a potential cause of payment difficulty

A *retailer* must recognise *family violence* as a potential cause of payment difficulty.

106K External support

- (1) A *retailer* must provide an *affected customer* with information about the availability of one or more external *family violence* support services at a time and in a manner that is safe, respectful and appropriate given the *affected customer*'s circumstances.
- (2) A *retailer* must publish on its website and keep up to date a list of one or more external *family violence* support services.

106L Evidence

- (1) A *retailer* may only seek documentary evidence of *family violence* when considering debt management and recovery under clause 106I, or restrictions on *de-energisation* in Part 6.
- (2) Any documentary evidence sought in accordance with subclause (1) must be limited to that which is reasonably required by the *retailer* for the purposes of considering debt management and recovery under clause 106I, or restrictions on *de-energisation* in Part 6.

106M Assistance beyond the minimum standards

Nothing in this part prevents a *retailer* from providing assistance to *affected customers* in addition to the minimum standards set out in this Part.

Division 3 – Family violence policies

106N Family violence policy

A *retailer* must have a *family violence* policy that addresses this Part.

106O Family violence policy to be accessible

A *retailer* must ensure that its *family violence* policy is easily accessible on its website in a readily printable form.

106P Family violence policy to be reviewed

A *retailer* must review its *family violence* policy no less than once every two years.

Division 4 – Compliance and reporting**106Q Compliance**

- (1) A *retailer* must maintain records that are sufficient to evidence its compliance with this Part.
- (2) The *retailer* must ensure that the records required to be maintained pursuant to subclause (1) are retained:
 - (a) for at least 2 years; or
 - (b) for as long as the *customer* continues to receive assistance under this Part; or
 - (c) where a *customer* has, within the periods referred to in paragraph (a) or (b) above, made a complaint or referred a dispute to the energy ombudsman in relation to the provision of *family violence* assistance by the *retailer*—for the period the complaint or dispute remains unresolved, whichever is the longer period.

Part 6 De-energisation (or disconnection) of premises—small customers

Division 1 Preliminary

107 Application of this Part

- (1) [Not used]
- (2) A *retailer* must not arrange *de-energisation* of a *customer's* premises except in accordance with Division 2.
- (3) **Application of this clause to exempt persons**

This clause applies to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:

VD1, VD2, VD7, VR1, VR2, VR3 and VR4.

- (4) [Not used]

108 Definitions

In this Part:

disconnection warning period means the period that starts on the date of issue of a *disconnection warning notice* under clause 110 which must be no earlier than the next *business day* after the end of the *reminder notice period*, and ends no earlier than 6 *business days* from the date of issue of the *disconnection warning notice*;

protected period means:

- (a) a *business day* before 8am or after 2pm for a *residential customer* or 3pm for a *business customer*; or
- (b) a Friday or the day before a *public holiday*; or
- (c) a weekend or a *public holiday*; or
- (d) the days between 20 December and 31 December (both inclusive) in any year;

public holiday, in relation to a *customer*, means a day that is observed as a local *public holiday* in the area in which the *customer's* premises are located (including the whole of Victoria);

reminder notice period in relation to a *small customer*, means the period that starts on the date of issue to the *customer* of a *reminder notice* under clause 109, which must be no earlier than the next *business day* after the *pay-by date*, and ends no earlier than 6 *business days* after the date of issue of the *reminder notice*.

109 Reminder notices—retailers

- (1) A *reminder notice* is:

- (a) for a *residential customer*, a written notice with the heading ‘Reminder Notice’ prominently displayed on it issued by a *retailer* to the *customer* to remind the *customer* that payment of a bill is required; and
 - (b) for any other *small customer*, a notice issued by a *retailer* to the *customer* after the *pay-by-date* for a bill to remind the *customer* that payment is required.
- (2) A *reminder notice* must not be issued to a *residential customer* later than 21 *business days* after the *pay-by date*.
- (3) The purpose of a *reminder notice* to a *residential customer* is to remind the *customer* of their obligation to pay the bill.
- (4) A *retailer* must not issue a *reminder notice* to a *residential customer* who has put forward a payment proposal or revised proposal in accordance with clause 81 that the *retailer* has accepted unless the *residential customer* has failed to make a payment by the date on which it was payable under the proposal or revised proposal.
- (5) A *reminder notice* must:
- (a) state the date of its issue; and
 - (b) state the date on which the *reminder notice period* ends; and
 - (c) state that payment of the bill is required to be made before the end of the *reminder notice period*; and
 - (d) give details of how to contact the *retailer* in connection with a complaint or dispute.
- (6) **Application of this clause to exempt persons**
- This clause applies to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:
- VD1, VD2, VD7, VR1, VR2, VR3 and VR4.

110 Disconnection warning notices

(1) Nature of disconnection warning notices

A *disconnection warning notice* is a notice issued by a *retailer* to warn a *customer* that the *customer*’s premises will or may be *de-energised*.

(1A) Purpose of disconnection warning notices

The purpose of a *disconnection warning notice* is to give the *customer* clear and unambiguous advice about what the *customer* needs to do to avoid being disconnected from their *energy supply*.

(2) Particulars to be included in disconnection warning notices

A *disconnection warning notice* must:

- (a) state the date of its issue; and

- (b) state the matter giving rise to the potential *de-energisation* of the *customer's* premises; and
- (ba) if the *customer* is a *residential customer* who is entitled to receive assistance under Part 3:
 - (i) give an explanation in plain language of the notice and of why it is being issued; and
 - (ii) give the *customer* clear and unambiguous advice about what the *customer* needs to do to avoid being disconnected from their *energy* supply, including any entitlement that they may have to further assistance under Part 3; and
 - (iii) if the *customer* is or may be eligible for other assistance provided by government or community service providers, give the *customer* clear information about how to access that assistance; and
- (c) where the notice has been issued for not paying a bill:
 - (i) state the date on which the *disconnection warning period* ends; and
 - (ii) state that payment of the bill must be made during the *disconnection warning period*; and
- (d) for matters other than not paying a bill—allow a period of not fewer than 5 *business days* after the date of issue for the *customer* to rectify the matter before *de-energisation* will or may occur; and
- (e) inform the *customer* of applicable *re-energisation* procedures and (if applicable) that a charge will be imposed for *re-energisation*; and
- (f) include details of the existence and operation of the *energy ombudsman*, including contact details; and
- (g) include details of the telephone number of the *retailer* for payment assistance enquiries; and
- (h) for a *customer* with a *smart meter*, state that *de-energisation* could occur remotely.

(3) **Application of this clause to exempt persons**

This clause applies to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:

VD1, VD2, VD7, VR1, VR2, VR3 and VR4.

Division 2 Retailer-initiated de-energisation of premises

111 De-energisation for not paying bill (small customer who is not a residential customer)

- (1) A retailer may arrange *de-energisation* of the premises of a *small customer* (other than a *residential customer*), including by de-energising the *customer's* supply remotely, if:
 - (a) the *customer*:
 - (i) has not paid a bill by the *pay-by date*; or
 - (ii) is on a *payment plan* with the *retailer* and has not adhered to the terms of the plan; and
 - (b) [Not used].
 - (c) the *retailer* has given the *customer* a *reminder notice*; and
 - (d) the *retailer* has given the *customer* a *disconnection warning notice* after the expiry of the period referred to in the *reminder notice*; and
 - (e) the *retailer* has, after giving the *disconnection warning notice*, used its best endeavours to contact the *customer*, in connection with the failure to pay, or to adhere to the terms of the *payment plan* referred to in subclause (1)(a)(ii) in one of the following ways:
 - (i) in person;
 - (ii) by telephone;
 - (iii) by facsimile or other electronic means; and
 - (f) the *customer* has refused or failed to take any reasonable action towards settling the debt; and
 - (g) where the *customer* is an *affected customer*, the *retailer* has taken into account the particular circumstances of that *customer*.
- (2) [Not used].
- (3) A retailer may arrange *de-energisation* of the premises of a *small customer* (other than a *residential customer*), including by de-energising the *customer's* supply remotely, if:
 - (a) the *customer* has, while on a shortened collection cycle, not paid a bill by the *pay-by date*; and
 - (b) the *retailer* has given the *customer* a *disconnection warning notice* after the *pay-by date*; and
 - (c) the *retailer* has, after giving the *disconnection warning notice*, used its best endeavours to contact the *customer*, in connection with the failure to pay or to adhere to the terms of the *payment plan* referred to in subclause (1)(a)(ii), in one of the following ways:

- (i) in person;
- (ii) by telephone;
- (iii) by facsimile or other electronic means; and
- (d) the *customer* has refused or failed to take any reasonable action towards settling the debt.

Note:

The *Commission* notes that “other electronic means” includes email.

(4) Application of this clause to standard retail contracts

This clause applies in relation to *standard retail contracts*.

(5) Application of this clause to market retail contracts

This clause applies in relation to *market retail contracts*.

(6) Application of this clause to exempt persons

This clause, other than paragraph (1)(g), applies to *exempt persons* in the following categories:

VD1, VD7 and VR1.

111A Residential customer only to be disconnected as a last resort for non-payment

- (1) A *retailer* may only arrange *de-energisation* of the premises of a *residential customer* for not paying a bill if:
 - (a) the *retailer*:
 - (i) has complied with all of the *retailer's* obligations to the customer under clause 89; and
 - (ii) has issued a *reminder notice* to the *customer* that complies with clause 109; and
 - (iii) has issued a *disconnection warning notice* to the *customer* that complies with clause 110; and
 - (iv) has, after the issue of the *disconnection warning notice*, used its best endeavours to contact the *customer* in relation to the matter and, in so doing, provided clear and unambiguous information about the assistance available under Part 3; and
 - (v) has at all times acted fairly and reasonably in relation to the *customer*; and
 - (vi) has, where the *customer* is an *affected customer*, taken into account the particular circumstances of that *customer*; and

- (b) the *customer*:
 - (i) while receiving tailored assistance under clause 79(1)(a), has failed to make a payment by the date on which it was payable, has not put forward a revised payment proposal under clause 81 and does not have an entitlement to the assistance mentioned in clause 79(1)(f); or
 - (ii) has exercised an entitlement to the assistance mentioned in clause 79(1)(f) and has failed to make a payment by the date on which it was payable and has not put forward a proposal to vary the amount payable or the frequency of payments; and
- (c) the *customer* has refused or failed to take reasonable action towards remedying the matter; and
- (d) the *retailer* has records that are sufficient to evidence the matters mentioned in paragraphs (a), (b) and (c).

(2) **Application of this clause to exempt persons**

This clause, other than subparagraph (1)(a)(vi), applies to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:

VD2, VR2, VR3 and VR4.

112 De-energisation for not paying security deposit or refusal to provide acceptable identification

- (1) A *retailer* may arrange for the *de-energisation* of a *customer*'s premises if the *customer* has failed to pay a *security deposit* and if:
 - (a) the *retailer* has given the *customer* a notice of its intention to do so; and
 - (b) the *retailer* has given the *customer* a *disconnection warning notice* after the expiry of the period referred to in the notice of its intention (being not less than 5 *business days* after the notice of its intention was given); and
 - (c) the *customer* has continued not to provide a security deposit or *acceptable identification*.
- (2) A *retailer* may arrange for the *de-energisation* of a *customer*'s premises if the *customer* refuses when required to provide *acceptable identification* (if the *customer* is a new *customer* of the *retailer*) and if:
 - (a) the *retailer* has given the *customer* a notice of its intention to do so; and
 - (b) the *retailer* has given the *customer* a *disconnection warning notice* after the expiry of the period referred to in the notice of its intention (being not less than 5 *business days* after the notice of its intention was given); and
 - (c) the *customer* has continued not to provide *acceptable identification*.

(3) **Application of this clause to standard retail contracts**

This clause applies in relation to *standard retail contracts*.

(4) **Application of this clause to market retail contracts**

This clause applies in relation to *market retail contracts*, but only to the extent (if any) a contract provides for payment of a *security deposit*.

(5) **Application of this clause to exempt persons**

(a) Subclause (1) of this clause applies to *exempt persons* in the following *categories* but only to the extent (if any) a contract provides for payment of a *security deposit*:

VD1, VD7 and VR1;

(b) Subclause (2) of this clause applies to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:

VD1, VD2, VD7, VR1, VR2, VR3 and VR4.

113 De-energisation for denying access to meter

(1) A *retailer* may arrange for *de-energisation* of a *customer's* premises if the *customer* has failed to allow, for 3 consecutive scheduled *meter* readings, access to the *customer's* premises to read a *meter* and if:

(a) the *retailer* has given the *customer* an opportunity to offer reasonable alternative arrangements for access that are acceptable to the *responsible person*; and

(b) the *retailer* has, on each of the occasions access was denied, arranged for the *customer* to be given a notice requesting access to the *meter* at the premises and advising of the *retailer's* ability to arrange for *de-energisation*; and

(c) the *retailer* has used its best endeavours to contact the *customer*:

(i) in person; or

(ii) by telephone; or

(iii) by facsimile or other electronic means; and

(d) the *retailer* has given the *customer* a notice of its intention to arrange for *de-energisation*; and

(e) the *retailer* has given the *customer* a *disconnection warning notice* after the expiry of the period referred to in the notice of its intention; and

(f) the *customer* has not rectified the matter that gave rise to the right to arrange for *de-energisation*.

(2) Application of this clause to standard retail contracts

This clause applies in relation to *standard retail contracts*.

(3) Application of this clause to market retail contracts

This clause applies in relation to *market retail contracts*.

(4) Application of this clause to exempt persons

This clause applies to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:

VD1, VD2, VD7, VR1, VR2, VR3 and VR4.

Note:

Further guidance in relation to the *Commission's* expectations with respect to *de-energisation* of a *customer's* premises is set out in the *Commission's* publication Operating Procedure Compensation for Wrongful Disconnection.

114 De-energisation for illegally using energy

(1) A *retailer* may make immediate arrangements for *de-energisation* of a *customer's* premises if there has been:

- (a) fraudulent acquisition of *energy* at those premises; or
- (b) intentional consumption of *energy* at those premises otherwise than in accordance with the *energy laws*.

(2) No *disconnection warning notice* or other notice is required for *de-energisation* under this clause.

(3) Application of this clause to standard retail contracts

This clause applies in relation to *standard retail contracts*.

(4) Application of this clause to market retail contracts

This clause applies in relation to *market retail contracts*.

(5) Application of this clause to exempt persons

This clause applies to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:

VD1, VD2, VD7, VR1, VR2, VR3 and VR4.

115 De-energisation for non-notification by move-in or carry-over customers

(1) The *financially responsible retailer* or *exempt person* for a *move-in customer's* or *carry-over customer's* premises may arrange for the *de-energisation* of the premises if the *customer* refuses or fails to take appropriate steps to enter into a *customer retail contract* or *exempt person arrangement* as soon as practicable.

(2) A *financially responsible retailer* or *exempt person* must not arrange for *de-energisation* under this clause unless:

- (a) the *retailer* or *exempt person* has given the *customer* a notice of its intention to do so; and
 - (b) the *retailer* or *exempt person* has given the *customer* a *disconnection warning notice* after the expiry of the period referred to in the notice of its intention, not being less than 5 *business days* after the notice of its intention was given.
- (3) The *financially responsible retailer* or *exempt person* may commence *de-energisation* procedures even if the *retailer* is unable to ascertain the name or other particulars of the person consuming *energy* at the premises.
- (4) If a *customer's* premises are *de-energised* in accordance with this clause, the deemed contract that is in effect under section 39 of the *Electricity Industry Act* or section 46 of the *Gas Industry Act* will come to an end.
- (5) **Application of this clause to exempt persons**

Subclauses (1), (2) and (3) of this clause applies to *exempt persons* in the following categories:

VD1, VD2, VD7, VR1, VR2, VR3 and VR4.

Note:

Section 39 of the *Electricity Industry Act* and section 46 of the *Gas Industry Act* provide for deemed contracts for supply and sale of *energy* to apply between retailers and *customers* who take a supply of *energy* without having a retail contract in place. Section 39(5) of the *Electricity Industry Act* and section 46(5) of the *Gas Industry Act* authorises the *Commission* to decide, and provide for the licence of a licensee, conditions setting out events on the happening of which a deemed contract under section 39 and 46 may come to an end.

116 When retailer must not arrange de-energisation

(1) Restrictions on de-energisation

Despite any other provisions of this Division but subject to subclauses (2), (3) and (4), a *retailer* must not arrange for the *de-energisation* of a *customer's* premises to occur:

- (a) where the premises are registered under Part 7 as having *life support equipment*; or
- (b) where the *customer* has made a complaint, directly related to the reason for the proposed *de-energisation*, to the *retailer* under the *retailer's* standard complaints and dispute resolution procedures, and the complaint remains unresolved; or
- (c) where the *customer* has made a complaint, directly related to the reason for the proposed *de-energisation*, to the *energy ombudsman*, and the complaint remains unresolved; or
- (d) where the *customer* is a *residential customer* who is receiving assistance under Part 3 and is adhering to the terms of that assistance; or

- (e) where the *customer* informs the *retailer*, or the *retailer* is otherwise aware, that the *customer* has formally applied for assistance to an organisation responsible for a rebate, concession or relief available under any government funded *energy* charge rebate, concession or relief scheme and a decision on the application has not been made; or
- (f) on the ground that the *customer* has failed to pay an amount on a bill that relates to goods and services other than for the sale of *energy*; or
- (g) for non-payment of a bill where the total amount of the *customer's* arrears is less than \$300 (inclusive of GST); or
- (h) [Not used]
- (i) during a *protected period*.

(2) **Restrictions not applying for non-access to meter**

The restrictions in subclauses (1)(d), (e) and (f) do not apply if the reason for *de-energisation* was failure to provide access to a *meter*.

(3) **Non-application of restrictions where de-energisation requested by customer**

The restrictions in subclause (1) do not apply if the *customer* has requested *de-energisation*.

(4) **Non-application of restrictions where illegal use of energy**

Apart from the restriction in subclause (1)(a) relating to *life support equipment*, the restrictions in subclause (1) do not apply in relation to *de-energisation* of a *customer's* premises for:

- (a) the fraudulent acquisition of *energy* at those premises; or
- (b) the intentional consumption of *energy* at those premises otherwise than in accordance with the *energy laws*.

(5) **Application of this clause to standard retail contracts**

This clause applies in relation to *standard retail contracts*.

(6) **Application of this clause to market retail contracts**

This clause applies in relation to *market retail contracts*.

(7) **Application of this clause to exempt persons**

This clause applies to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:

VD1, VD2, VD7, VR1, VR2, VR3 and VR4.

117 Timing of de-energisation where dual fuel contract

(1) Definition

In this clause:

dual fuel contract means:

- (a) one *market retail contract* between a *small customer* and a *retailer* for the sale of both electricity and gas by the *retailer* to the *small customer*; or
- (b) two *market retail contracts* between the same *small customer* and the same *retailer*, one for the sale of electricity and the other for the sale of gas, by the *retailer* to the *customer*, under which a single bill is issued.

(2) Application of this clause

This clause applies where a *retailer* and a *customer* have entered into a *dual fuel contract* for the *customer's* premises and the *retailer* has the right to arrange for *de-energisation* of the premises under this Division.

(3) De-energisation of gas supply

Despite any other provision of this Division, the *retailer* may exercise the right to arrange for *de-energisation* of the *customer's* gas supply no sooner than seven *business days* after the date of receipt of the *disconnection warning notice*.

(4) De-energisation of electricity supply

The *retailer* may exercise the right to arrange for *de-energisation* of the *customer's* electricity supply in accordance with timing determined under the *dual fuel contract* but no earlier than 15 *business days* after the date of the *de-energisation* of the *customer's* gas supply under subclause (3).

(5) Restrictions on de-energisation not affected

Nothing in this clause affects the operation of clause 116.

118 Request for de-energisation

(1) If a *customer* requests the *retailer* to arrange for *de-energisation* of the *customer's* premises, the *retailer* must use its best endeavours to arrange for:

- (a) *de-energisation* in accordance with the *customer's* request; and
- (b) a *meter* reading; and
- (c) if applicable, the preparation and issue of a final bill for the premises; and
- (d) where a *customer* can be disconnected by de-energising the *customer's* premises remotely and the *retailer* believes it can do so safely, the *retailer* must arrange for *de-energisation* of the *customer's* premises within two hours of the *customer's* request, unless the *customer* has requested *de-energisation* at a scheduled time.

(2) Application of this clause to standard retail contracts

This clause applies in relation to *standard retail contracts*.

(3) Application of this clause to market retail contracts

This clause applies in relation to *market retail contracts*.

(4) Application of this clause to exempt persons

This clause applies to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:

VD1, VD2, VD7, VR1, VR2, VR3 and VR4.

Division 3 Distributor de-energisation of premises**119 [Not used]**

(1) [Not used]

(2) [Not used]

(3) [Not used]

120 [Not used]

(1) [Not used]

(2) [Not used]

(3) [Not used]

(4) [Not used]

Division 4 Re-energisation of premises**121 Obligation on retailer to arrange re-energisation of premises**

(1) Where a *retailer* has arranged for the *de-energisation* of a *small customer*'s premises and the *customer* has within 10 *business days* of the *de-energisation*:

(a) if relevant, rectified the matter that led to the *de-energisation* or made arrangements to the satisfaction of the *retailer*; and

(b) made a request for *re-energisation*; and

(c) paid any charge for *re-energisation*;

the *retailer* must, in accordance with any requirements under the *energy laws*, initiate a request to the distributor for *re-energisation* of the premises.

(2A) If a *small customer* whose premises have been *de-energised* is eligible for a Utility Relief Grant and, within 10 *business days* of the *de-energisation*, applies for such a grant, then the *small customer* is to be taken by the *retailer* to have rectified the matter that led to the *de-energisation*.

(2) **Application of this clause to standard retail contracts**

This clause applies in relation to *standard retail contracts*.

(3) **Application of this clause to market retail contracts**

This clause applies in relation to *market retail contracts*.

(4) **Application of this clause to exempt persons**

This clause applies to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:

VD1, VD2, VD7, VR1, VR2, VR3 and VR4.

122 [Not used]

122A Time for re-energisation

(1) If a *customer* makes a request for *re-energisation*:

(a) before 3 pm on a *business day*, the *retailer* must arrange for *re-energisation* of the *customer's* premises on the day of the request; or

(b) after 3 pm on a *business day*, the *retailer* must arrange for *re-energisation* of the *customer's* premises on the next *business day* or, if the request also is made before 9 pm and the *customer* pays any applicable additional after hours *reconnection* charge, on the day requested by the *customer*; or

(c) where the *retailer* is able to reconnect the *customer* by re-energising the *customer's* premises remotely and reasonably believes that it can do so safely:

(i) subject to clauses (1)(a) and (b) above, the *retailer* must use its best endeavours to arrange for *re-energisation* of the *customer's* premises within two hours;

(ii) in any event, the *retailer* must pass on the request to the relevant distributor within one hour after the conclusion of the interaction during which the *customer* made the request.

(2) A *retailer* and a *customer* may agree that later times are to apply to the *retailer*.

(3) **Application of this clause to exempt persons**

This clause applies to *exempt persons* in the following *categories*:

VD1, VD2, VD7, VR1, VR2, VR3 and VR4.

Part 7 Life support equipment

123 Application of this Part

This Part applies:

- (a) in relation to a *customer* who is a party to a contract with a *retailer* for the sale of *energy*; and
- (b) in relation to a *customer* who is party to an *exempt person arrangement* with an *exempt person* for the sale of electricity,

and prevails to the extent of any inconsistency with Part 6.

124 Retailer obligations (SRC and MRC)

(1) Life support equipment

Where a *customer* provides a *retailer* with confirmation from a registered medical practitioner that a person residing at the *customer's* premises requires *life support equipment*, the *retailer* must:

- (a) register the premises as having *life support equipment*; and
- (b) advise the distributor that a person residing at the premises requires *life support equipment*; and
- (c) give the distributor relevant information about the premises for the purposes of updating the distributor's distribution records and registers; and
- (d) not arrange for the *de-energisation* of the premises while the person continues to reside at the premises and requires *life support equipment*; and
- (e) give the *customer* an emergency telephone contact number for the distributor (the charge for which is no more than the cost of a local call).

(2) Cessation of requirement for life support equipment

Where a *customer* whose premises have been registered under this clause advises the *retailer* that the person for whom the *life support equipment* is required has vacated the premises or no longer requires the *life support equipment*, the *retailer* must inform the distributor as soon as possible of the advice received from the *customer*.

(3) Application of this clause to standard retail contracts

This clause applies in relation to *standard retail contracts*.

(4) Application of this clause to market retail contracts

This clause applies in relation to *market retail contracts*.

125 Exempt persons additional requirements (EPA)

- (1) In this clause 125 *exempt distributor* means a person who is exempt from holding a distribution licence under the *Electricity Industry Act* to engage in certain activities set out in clauses 6 and 7 of the *General Exemption Order*.
- (2) An *exempt person* must maintain a register of the premises of its *customers* which have *life support equipment*.
- (3) Life support equipment

Where a *customer* provides an *exempt person* with confirmation from a registered medical practitioner that a person residing at the *customer's* premises requires *life support equipment*, the *exempt person* must:

- (a) register the premises as having *life support equipment*; and
 - (b) if the *exempt person* purchases electricity to sell to the *customer* from a licensed *retailer*, advise the licensed *retailer* that a person residing at the premises requires *life support equipment*; and
 - (c) if the *exempt person* purchases electricity to sell to the *customer* from a licensed *retailer*, give the licensed *retailer* relevant information about the premises for the purposes of updating the licensed *retailer's* records and registers; and
 - (d) if the *exempt person* purchases electricity to sell to the *customer* and that electricity is distributed by an *exempt distributor*, advise the *exempt distributor* that a person residing at the premises requires life support equipment; and
 - (e) if the *exempt person* purchases electricity to sell to the *customer* and that electricity is distributed by an *exempt distributor*, give the *exempt distributor* relevant information about the premises for the purposes of updating the *exempt distributor's* distribution records and registers; and
 - (f) not arrange for the *de-energisation* of the premises while the person continues to reside at the premises and requires *life support equipment*; and
 - (g) give the *customer* an emergency telephone contact number for the distributor (the charge for which is no more than the cost of a local call).
- (4) **Cessation of requirement for life support equipment**

Where a *customer* whose premises have been registered under this clause advises the *exempt person* that the person for whom the *life support equipment* is required has vacated the premises or no longer requires the *life support equipment*, the *exempt person* must inform whomever of the *exempt distributor* or licensed *retailer* the *exempt person* was required to inform under subclause (3) as soon as possible of the advice received from the *customer*.

- (5) **Application of this clause to exempt persons**

This clause applies to exempt persons in the following categories:

VD2, VR2, VR3 and VR4.

126 [Not used]

Part 8 [Not used]**127 [Not used]****128 [Not used]****129 [Not used]****130 [Not used]****131 [Not used]****132 [Not used]****133 [Not used]****134 [Not used]****135 [Not used]****136 [Not used]****137 [Not used]****138 [Not used]****139 [Not used]****140 [Not used]****141 [Not used]****142 [Not used]****143 [Not used]****144 [Not used]****145 [Not used]****146 [Not used]****147 [Not used]**

Part 9 [Not used]

Division 1 [Not used]

148 [Not used]

Division 2 [Not used]

149 [Not used]

150 [Not used]

151 [Not used]

152 [Not used]

153 [Not used]

Division 3 [Not used]

154 [Not used]

Division 4 [Not used]

155 [Not used]

156 [Not used]

157 [Not used]

158 [Not used]

159 [Not used]

160 [Not used]

161 [Not used]

162 [Not used]

163 [Not used]

Division 5 [Not used]

164 [Not used]

Part 10 [Not used]

165 [Not used]

166 [Not used]

167 [Not used]

Part 11 [Not used]

168 [Not used]

169 [Not used]

170 [Not used]

171 [Not used]

Part 12 [Not used]

172 [Not used]

173 [Not used]

Schedule 1 Model terms and conditions for standard retail contracts

(Rule 12)

PREAMBLE

This contract is about the sale of energy to you as a small customer at your premises. It is a standard retail contract that starts without you having to sign a document agreeing to these terms and conditions.

In addition to this contract, the energy laws and other consumer laws also contain rules about the sale of energy and we will comply with these rules in our dealings with you. For example, the National Energy Retail Law and the National Energy Retail Rules ('the Rules') set out specific rights and obligations about energy marketing, payment methods and arrangements for customers experiencing payment difficulties.

Note for Victorian customers:

For Victorian customers, until the National Energy Retail Law and the National Energy Retail Rules are adopted in Victoria (referred to as 'NECF implementation in Victoria'), the energy laws applicable in Victoria are the Electricity Industry Act 2000, the Gas Industry Act 2001 and the Energy Retail Code made by the Essential Services Commission. For customers in Victoria, prior to NECF implementation in Victoria all references to the National Energy Retail Law and Rules in this contract should be read as references to the Energy Retail Code unless stated otherwise.

You also have a separate contract with your distributor, called a customer connection contract. The customer connection contract deals with the supply of energy to your premises and can be found on your distributor's website.

Note for Victorian customers:

There are no gas customer connection contracts in Victoria.

More information about this contract and other matters is on our website [permitted alteration: insert retailer's website address].

1. THE PARTIES

This contract is between:

[Permitted alteration: name of designated retailer] who sells energy to you at your premises (in this contract referred to as "we", "our" or "us"); and

You, the customer to whom this contract applies (in this contract referred to as "you" or "your").

2. DEFINITIONS AND INTERPRETATION

- (a) Terms used in this contract have the same meanings as they have in the National Energy Retail Law and the Rules. However for ease of reference, a simplified explanation of some terms is given at the end of this contract.
- (b) Where the simplified explanations given at the end of this contract differ from the definitions in the National Energy Retail Law and the Rules, the definitions in the National Energy Retail Law and the Rules prevail.

3. DO THESE TERMS AND CONDITIONS APPLY TO YOU?

3.1 These are our terms and conditions

This contract sets out the terms and conditions for a standard retail contract for a small customer under the National Energy Retail Law and the Rules.

3.2 Application of these terms and conditions

These terms and conditions apply to you if:

- (a) you are a residential customer; or
- (b) you are a business customer who is a small customer; and
- (c) you request us to sell energy to you at your premises; and
- (d) you are not being sold energy for the premises under a market retail contract.

3.3 Electricity or gas

Standard retail contracts apply to electricity and gas, but some terms may be expressed to apply only to one or the other. If we are your retailer for both electricity and gas, you have a separate contract with us for each of them.

4. WHAT IS THE TERM OF THIS CONTRACT?

4.1 When does this contract start?

This contract starts on the date you satisfy any pre-conditions set out in the National Energy Retail Law and the Rules, including giving us *acceptable identification* and your contact details for billing purposes.

4.2 When does this contract end?

- (a) This contract ends:
 - (i) if you give us a notice stating you wish to end the contract—subject to paragraph (b), on a date advised by us of which we will give you at least 5 but no more than 20 *business days* notice; or
 - (ii) if you are no longer a small customer:

- (A) subject to paragraph (b), on a date specified by us, of which we will give you at least 5 but no more than 20 *business days* notice; or
 - (B) if you have not told us of a change in the use of your energy—from the time of the change in use; or
- (iii) if we both agree to a date to end the contract—on the date that is agreed; or
 - (iv) if you start to buy energy for the premises from us or a different retailer under a customer retail contract—on the date the market retail contract starts; or
 - (v) if a different customer starts to buy energy for the premises—on the date that customer’s contract starts; or
 - (vi) if the premises are disconnected and you have not met the requirements in the Rules for reconnection—10 *business days* from the date of disconnection.
- (b) If you do not give us safe and unhindered access to the premises to conduct a final meter reading (where relevant), this contract will not end under paragraph (a) (i) or (ii) until we have issued you a final bill and you have paid any outstanding amount for the sale of energy.
 - (c) Rights and obligations accrued before the end of this contract continue despite the end of the contract, including any obligations to pay amounts to us.

4.3 Vacating your premises

- (a) If you are vacating your premises, you must provide your forwarding address to us for your final bill in addition to a notice under clause 4.2(a)(i) of this contract.
- (b) When we receive the notice, we must use our best endeavours to arrange for the reading of the *meter* on the date specified in your notice (or as soon as possible after that date if you do not provide access to your *meter* on that date) and send a final bill to you at the forwarding address stated in your notice.
- (c) You will continue to be responsible for charges for the premises until your contract ends in accordance with clause 4.2 of this contract.

5. SCOPE OF THIS CONTRACT

5.1 What is covered by this contract?

- (a) Under this contract we agree to sell you energy at your premises. We also agree to meet other obligations set out in this contract and to comply with the energy laws.
- (b) In return, you agree:

- (i) to be responsible for charges for energy supplied to the premises until this contract ends under clause 4.2 even if you vacate the premises earlier; and
- (ii) to pay the amounts billed by us under this contract; and
- (iii) to meet your obligations under this contract and the energy laws.

5.2 What is not covered by this contract?

This contract does not cover the physical connection of your premises to the distribution system, including *metering* equipment and the maintenance of that connection and the supply of energy to your premises. This is the role of your distributor under a separate contract called a customer connection contract.

Note for Victorian customers:

There are no gas customer connection contracts in Victoria.

6. YOUR GENERAL OBLIGATIONS

6.1 Full information

You must give us any information we reasonably require for the purposes of this contract. The information must be correct, and you must not mislead or deceive us in relation to any information provided to us.

6.2 Updating information

You must tell us promptly if information you have provided to us changes, including if your billing address changes or if your use of energy changes (for example, if you start running a business at the premises).

6.3 Life support equipment

- (a) If a person living at your premises requires *life support equipment*, you must register the premises with us or your distributor. To register, you will need to give written confirmation from a registered medical practitioner of the requirement for *life support equipment* at the premises.
- (b) You must tell us or your distributor if the *life support equipment* is no longer required at the premises.

6.4 Obligations if you are not an owner

If you cannot meet an obligation relating to your premises under this contract because you are not the owner you will not be in breach of the obligation if you take all reasonable steps to ensure that the owner or other person responsible for the premises fulfils the obligation.

7. OUR LIABILITY

- (a) The quality and reliability of your electricity supply and the quality, pressure and continuity of your gas supply is subject to a variety of factors that are beyond our control as your retailer, including accidents, emergencies, weather conditions, vandalism, system demand, the technical limitations of the distribution system and the acts of other persons (such as your distributor), including at the direction of a *relevant authority*.
- (b) To the extent permitted by law, we give no condition, warranty or undertaking, and we make no representation to you, about the condition or suitability of energy, its quality, fitness for purpose or safety, other than those set out in this contract.
- (c) Unless we have acted in bad faith or negligently, the National Energy Retail Law excludes our liability for any loss or damage you suffer as a result of the total or partial failure to supply energy to your premises, which includes any loss or damage you suffer as a result of the defective supply of energy.

Note for Victorian customers:

Prior to NECF implementation in Victoria, the reference to the NERL in clause 7(c) is a reference to, in the case of electricity, s.120 of the National Electricity Law as set out in the Schedule to the *National Electricity (South Australia) Act 1996* or, in the case of gas, to s.232 of the *Gas Industry Act* or s.33 of the *Gas Safety Act 1997*.

8. PRICE FOR ENERGY AND OTHER SERVICES

8.1 What are our tariffs and charges?

- (a) Our tariffs and charges for the sale of energy to you under this contract are our standing offer prices. These are published on our website and include your distributor's charges.
- (b) Different tariffs and charges may apply to you depending on your circumstances. The conditions for each tariff and charge are set out in our standing offer prices.

Note:

We do not impose any charges for the termination of this contract.

8.2 Changes to tariffs and charges

- (a) If we vary our standing offer prices, we will publish the variation in a newspaper and on our website at least 10 *business days* before it starts. We will also include details with your next bill if the variation affects you.
- (b) Our standing offer prices will not be varied more often than once every 6 months.

8.3 Variation of tariff due to change of use

If a change in your use of energy means you are no longer eligible for the particular tariff you are on, we may transfer you to a new tariff under our standing offer prices:

- (a) if you notify us there has been a change of use—from the date of notification; or
- (b) if you have not notified us of the change of use—retrospectively from the date the change of use occurred.

8.4 Variation of tariff or type of tariff on request

- (a) If you think you satisfy the conditions applying to another tariff or type of tariff under our standing offer prices, you can ask us to review your current circumstances to see whether that tariff or type of tariff can apply to you.
- (b) If you meet the requirements for another tariff or type of tariff and request us to do so, we must:
 - (i) transfer you to that other tariff within 10 *business days*; or
 - (ii) transfer you to that other type of tariff from the date the *meter* is read or the type of *meter* is changed (if needed).

8.5 Changes to tariffs or type of tariff during a billing cycle

If a tariff applying to you changes during a billing cycle, we will calculate your next bill on a proportionate basis.

8.6 GST

Amounts specified in the standing offer prices from time to time and other amounts payable under this contract are inclusive of *GST*.

9. BILLING

9.1 General

We will send a bill to you as soon as possible after the end of each billing cycle. We will send the bill:

- (a) to you at the address nominated by you; or
- (b) to a person authorised in writing by you to act on your behalf at the address specified by you.

9.2 Calculating the bill

Bills we send to you ('your bills') will be calculated on:

- (a) the amount of energy consumed at your premises during the billing cycle (using information obtained from reading your meter or otherwise in accordance with the Rules); and

- (b) the amount of fees and charges for any other services provided under this contract during the billing cycle; and
- (c) the charges payable for services provided by your distributor, including connection charges if you have asked for a new connection or connection alteration and have not made alternative arrangements with your distributor.

9.3 Estimating the energy usage

- (a) We may estimate the amount of energy consumed at your premises if your *meter* cannot be read, if your metering data is not obtained (for example, if access to the *meter* is not given or the *meter* breaks down or is faulty), or if you otherwise consent.

Note for Victorian customers:

In Victoria, a retailer must obtain a customer's 'explicit informed consent' to base the customer's bill on an estimation, unless the meter cannot be read or the metering data is not obtained.

- (b) If we estimate the amount of energy consumed at your premises to calculate a bill, we must:
 - (i) clearly state on the bill that it is based on an estimation; and
 - (ii) when your *meter* is later read, adjust your bill for the difference between the estimate and the energy actually used.
- (c) If the later *meter* read shows that you have been undercharged, we will allow you to pay the undercharged amount in instalments, over the same period of time during which the *meter* was not read (if less than 12 months), or otherwise over 12 months.
- (d) If the *meter* has not been read due to your actions, and you request us to replace the estimated bill with a bill based on an actual reading of the *meter*, we will comply with your request but may charge you any cost we incur in doing so.

9.4 Your historical billing information

Upon request, we must give you information about your billing history for the previous 2 years free of charge. However, we may charge you if we have already given you this information in the previous 12 months, or if you require information going back more than 2 years.

9.5 Bill smoothing

We may, where you agree, arrange for you to pay your bills under a bill smoothing arrangement, which is based on a 12 monthly estimate of your energy consumption.

10. PAYING YOUR BILL

10.1 What you have to pay

You must pay to us the amount shown on each bill by the date for payment (the *pay-by date*) on the bill. The *pay-by date* will be no earlier than 13 *business days* from the date on which we issue your bill.

10.2 Issue of reminder notices

If you have not paid your bill by the *pay-by date*, we will send you a *reminder notice* that payment is required. The *reminder notice* will give you a further due date for payment which will be not less than 6 *business days* after we issue the notice.

10.3 Difficulties in paying

If you have difficulties paying your bill, you should contact us as soon as possible. We will provide you with information about your entitlements as a Victorian energy customer.

10.4 Late payment fees

If you have not paid a bill by the *pay-by date*, we may require you to pay a late payment fee, which is part of our standing offer prices published on our website.

[Required alteration: deletion of this clause is a required alteration where late payment fees for small customers under a standard retail contract are not permitted by a State or Territory law].

11. METERS

- (a) You must allow safe and unhindered access to your premises for the purposes of reading and maintaining the *meters* (where relevant).
- (b) We will use our best endeavours to ensure that a *meter* reading is carried out as frequently as is needed to prepare your bills, consistently with the *metering rules* and in any event at least once every 12 months.

12. UNDERCHARGING AND OVERCHARGING

12.1 Undercharging

- (a) If we have undercharged you, we may recover the undercharged amount from you. If we recover an undercharged amount from you:
 - (i) we will not charge interest on the undercharged amount; and
 - (ii) we will offer you time to pay the undercharged amount in instalments over the same period of time during which you were undercharged (if less than 12 months), or otherwise over 12 months.
- (b) The maximum amount we can recover from you is limited to the amount that has been undercharged in the 9 months immediately before we notify

you, unless the undercharge is your fault, or results from your unlawful act or omission.

12.2 Overcharging

- (a) Where you have been overcharged by less than [required alteration: insert current overcharge threshold], and you have already paid the overcharged amount, we must credit that amount to your next bill.
- (b) Where you have been overcharged by [required alteration: insert current overcharge threshold] or more, we must inform you within 10 *business days* of our becoming aware of the overcharge and, if you have already paid that amount, we must credit that amount to your next bill. However, if you request otherwise, we will comply with that request.
- (c) If you have stopped buying energy from us, we will use our best endeavours to pay the overcharged amount to you within 10 *business days*.
- (d) If you have been overcharged as a result of your own fault or unlawful act or omission, we may limit the amount we credit or pay you to the amount you were overcharged in the last 12 months.

12.3 Reviewing your bill

- (a) If you disagree with the amount you have been charged, you can ask us to review your bill in accordance with our standard complaints and dispute resolution procedures.
- (b) If you ask us to, we must arrange for a check of the meter reading or *metering data* or for a test of the *meter* in reviewing the bill. You will be liable for the cost of the check or test and we may request payment in advance. However, if the meter or metering data proves to be faulty or incorrect, we must reimburse you for the amount paid.

Note for Victorian customers:

Customers in Victoria are not required to pay for a meter check or test in advance.

- (c) If your bill is being reviewed, you are still required to pay any other bills from us that are due for payment and the lesser of:
 - (i) the portion of the bill that you do not dispute; or
 - (ii) an amount equal to the average of your bills in the last 12 months.

13. SECURITY DEPOSITS

13.1 Security deposit

We may require that you provide a *security deposit*. The circumstances in which we can require a *security deposit* and the maximum amount of the *security deposit* are governed by the Rules.

13.2 Interest on security deposits

Where you have paid a *security deposit*, we must pay you interest on the *security deposit* at a rate and on terms required by the Rules.

13.3 Use of a security deposit

- (a) We may use your *security deposit*, and any interest earned on the *security deposit*, to offset any amount you owe under this contract:
 - (i) if you fail to pay a bill and as a result we arrange for the disconnection of your premises; or
 - (ii) in relation to a final bill (i.e. a bill we issue when you vacate the premises or when you stop purchasing energy from us at your premises or when you request that your premises be disconnected).
- (b) If we use your security deposit or any accrued interest to offset amounts owed to us, we will advise you within 10 *business days*.

13.4 Return of security deposit

- (a) We must return your *security deposit* and any accrued interest in the following circumstances:
 - (i) you complete 1 years' payment (in the case of residential customers) or 2 years' payment (in the case of business customers) by the *pay-by dates* on our initial bills; or
 - (ii) subject to clause 14.3 of this contract, you stop purchasing energy at the relevant premises under this contract.
- (b) If you do not give us any reasonable instructions, we will credit the amount of the *security deposit*, together with any accrued interest, to your next bill.

14. DISCONNECTION OF SUPPLY

14.1 When can we arrange for disconnection?

Subject to us satisfying the requirements in the Rules, we may arrange for the disconnection of your premises if:

- (a) you do not pay your bill by the *pay-by-date* or, if you are a *residential customer* receiving assistance under Part 3 of the Energy Retail Code, you fail to make a payment or otherwise do not adhere to the terms of that assistance; or
- (b) you do not provide a *security deposit* we are entitled to require from you; or
- (c) you do not give access to your premises to read a *meter* (where relevant) for 3 consecutive *meter* reads; or
- (d) there has been illegal or fraudulent use of energy at your premises in breach of clause 16 of this contract; or

- (e) we are otherwise entitled or required to do so under the Rules or by law.

14.2 Notice and warning of disconnection

Before disconnecting your premises, we must comply with relevant warning notice requirements and other provisions in the Rules. However, we are not required to provide a warning notice prior to disconnection in certain circumstances (for example, where there has been illegal or fraudulent use of energy at your premises or where there is an emergency or health and safety issue).

14.3 When we must not arrange disconnection

- (a) Subject to paragraph (b), your premises may not be disconnected during the following times ('the protected period'):
- (i) on a *business day* before 8.00am or after 3.00pm; or

Note for Victorian customers:

The protected period for a residential customer in Victoria is before 8:00am or after 2:00pm. The protected period for a business customer in Victoria is before 8:00am or after 3:00pm

- (ii) on a Friday or the day before a public holiday; or
- (iii) on a weekend or a public holiday; or
- (iv) on the days between 20 December and 31 December (both inclusive) in any year; or
- (v) if you are being disconnected under clause 14.1(a), during an extreme weather event.

Note for Victorian customers:

Paragraph (v) does not apply in Victoria.

- (b) Your premises may be disconnected within the protected period:
- (i) for reasons of health and safety; or
- (ii) in an emergency; or
- (iii) as directed by a *relevant authority*; or
- (iv) if you are in breach of clause 6.5 of your customer connection contract which deals with interference with energy equipment; or

Note for Victorian customers:

Victorian customers may be disconnected if it is permitted under their connection contract

or under the applicable *energy laws*.

- (v) if you request us to arrange disconnection within the protected period; or
- (vi) if your premises contain a commercial business that only operates within the protected period and where access to the premises is necessary to effect disconnection; or
- (vii) where the premises are not occupied.

15. RECONNECTION AFTER DISCONNECTION

- (a) We must request your distributor to reconnect your premises if, within 10 *business days* of your premises being disconnected:
 - (i) you ask us to arrange for reconnection of your premises; and
 - (ii) you rectify the matter that led to the disconnection; and
 - (iii) you pay any reconnection charge (if requested).
- (b) We may terminate this contract 10 *business days* following disconnection if you do not meet the requirements in paragraph (a).

16. WRONGFUL AND ILLEGAL USE OF ENERGY

16.1 Use of energy

You must not, and must take reasonable steps to ensure others do not:

- (a) illegally use energy supplied to your premises; or
- (b) interfere or allow interference with any energy equipment that is at your premises except as may be permitted by law; or
- (c) use the energy supplied to your premises or any energy equipment in a manner that:
 - (i) unreasonably interferes with the connection or supply of energy to another customer; or
 - (ii) causes damage or interference to any third party; or
- (d) allow energy purchased from us to be used otherwise than in accordance with this contract and the Rules; or
- (e) tamper with, or permit tampering with, any *meters* or associated equipment.

17. NOTICES AND BILLS

- (a) Notices and bills under this contract must be sent in writing, unless this contract or the National Energy Retail Law and the Rules say otherwise.

- (b) A notice or bill sent under this contract is taken to have been received by you or by us (as relevant):
- (i) on the date it is handed to the party, left at the party's premises (in your case) or one of our offices (in our case) or successfully faxed to the party (which occurs when the sender receives a transmission report to that effect); or
 - (ii) on the date 2 *business days* after it is posted; or
 - (iii) on the date of transmission (unless the sender receives notice that delivery did not occur or has been delayed) if sent electronically and the use of electronic communication has been agreed between us.
- (c) Our contact details for you to contact us or send us a notice are as set out in our bill to you, or as notified to you from time to time.

18. PRIVACY ACT NOTICE

We will comply with all relevant privacy legislation in relation to your personal information. You can find a summary of our privacy policy on our website. If you have any questions, you can contact our privacy officer.

19. COMPLAINTS AND DISPUTE RESOLUTION

19.1 Complaints

If you have a complaint relating to the sale of energy by us to you, or this contract generally, you may lodge a complaint with us in accordance with our standard complaints and dispute resolution procedures.

Note:

Our standard complaints and dispute resolution procedures are published on our website.

19.2 Our obligations in handling complaints

If you make a complaint, we must respond to your complaint within the required timeframes set out in our standard complaints and dispute resolution procedures and inform you:

- (a) of the outcome of your complaint and the reasons for our decision; and
- (b) that if you are not satisfied with our response, you have a right to refer the complaint to [required alteration: insert name of relevant energy ombudsman].

20. FORCE MAJEURE

20.1 Effect of force majeure event

If either party to this contract cannot meet an obligation under this contract because of an event outside the control of that party ('a force majeure event'):

- (a) the obligation, other than an obligation to pay money, is suspended to the extent it is affected by the force majeure event for as long as the force majeure event continues; and
- (b) the affected party must use its best endeavours to give the other party prompt notice of that fact including full particulars of the event, an estimate of its likely duration, the extent to which the affected party's obligations are affected and the steps being taken to remove, overcome or minimise those effects.

20.2 Deemed prompt notice

If the effects of a force majeure event are widespread, we will be deemed to have given you prompt notice if we make the necessary information available by way of a 24 hour telephone service within 30 minutes of being advised of the event or otherwise as soon as practicable.

20.3 Obligation to overcome or minimise effect of force majeure event

A party that claims a force majeure event must use its best endeavours to remove, overcome or minimise the effects of that event as soon as practicable.

20.4 Settlement of industrial disputes

Nothing in this clause requires a party to settle an industrial dispute that constitutes a force majeure event in any manner other than the manner preferred by that party.

21. APPLICABLE LAW

The laws of [required alteration: insert the name of the relevant participating jurisdiction where the customer's premises are located] govern this contract.

22. RETAILER OF LAST RESORT EVENT

If we are no longer entitled by law to sell energy to you due to a Retailer of Last Resort (RoLR) event occurring in relation to us, we are required under the National Energy Retail Law and the Rules to provide relevant information (including your name, billing address and *metering* identifier) to the entity appointed as the relevant designated retailer for the RoLR event and this contract will come to an end.

23. GENERAL

23.1 Our obligations

Some obligations placed on us under this contract may be carried out by another person. If an obligation is placed on us to do something under this contract, then:

- (a) we are taken to have complied with the obligation if another person does it on our behalf; and
- (b) if the obligation is not complied with, we are still liable to you for the failure to comply with this contract.

23.2 Amending this contract

- (a) This contract may only be amended in accordance with the procedures set out in the National Energy Retail Law.

Note for Victorian customers:

For Victorian customers the procedures are set out in section 40A of the Electricity Industry Act and section 48 Gas Industry Act.

- (b) We must publish any amendments to this contract on our website.

Simplified explanation of terms

billing cycle means the regular recurrent period for which you receive a bill from us;

business day means a day other than a Saturday, a Sunday or a public holiday;

customer means a person who buys or wants to buy energy from a retailer;

customer connection contract means a contract between you and your distributor for the provision of customer connection services;

Note for Victorian customers:

There are no gas customer connection contracts in Victoria.

designated retailer means the financially responsible retailer for the premises (where you have an existing connection) or the local area retailer (where you do not have an existing connection) for your premises;

disconnection means an action to prevent the flow of energy to the premises, but does not include an *interruption*;

distributor means the person who operates the system that connects your premises to the distribution network;

Note for Victorian customers:

In Victoria, **Electricity Industry Act** means the Electricity Industry Act 2000.

emergency means an emergency due to the actual or imminent occurrence of an event that in any way endangers or threatens to endanger the safety or health of any person, or normal operation of the distribution system or transmission system, or that destroys or damages, or threatens to destroy or damage, any property;

energy means electricity or gas;

energy laws means national and State and Territory laws and rules relating to energy and the legal instruments made under those laws and rules;

Note for Victorian customers:

In Victoria **Energy Retail Code** means the Energy Retail Code Version 11 dated 13 October 2014 produced by the Essential Services Commission Victoria and as amended from time to time.

force majeure event means an event outside the control of a party;

Note for Victorian customers:

In Victoria, **Gas Industry Act** means the Gas Industry Act 2001.

GST has the meaning given in the *GST Act (A New Tax System (Goods and Services Tax) Act 1999* (Cth));

National Energy Retail Law means the *Law* of that name that is applied by each participating State and Territory;

relevant authority means any person or body who has the power under law to direct us, including the Australian Energy Market Operator and State or Federal Police;

residential customer means a person who purchases energy principally for personal, household or domestic use at their premises;

retailer means a person that is authorised to sell energy to customers;

RoLR event means an event that triggers the operation of the Retailer of Last Resort scheme under the National Energy Retail Law;

Note for Victorian customers:

In Victoria, the Retailer of Last Resort scheme is under the Electricity Industry Act or the Gas Industry Act.

Rules means the National Energy Retail Rules made under the National Energy Retail Law:

security deposit means an amount of money paid to us as security against non-payment of a bill in accordance with the Rules;

small customer means:

- (a) a residential customer; or
- (b) a business customer who consumes energy at or below a level determined under the National Energy Retail Law;

Note for Victorian customers:

In Victoria, a small customer is a 'domestic or small business customer' as defined in the Electricity Industry Act or the Gas Industry Act.

standing offer prices means tariffs and charges that we charge you for or in connection with the sale and supply of energy. These are published on our website.

Schedule 2 [Not used]

Schedule 3 Transitional Provisions

1. Standing offers

Each *retailer* that is required to publish a standing offer under section 35(1)(b) of the *Electricity Industry Act* or section 42(1)(b) of the *Gas Industry Act* must, within 60 days after the date on which this Code comes into operation (the commencement date):

- (a) adopt the model terms set out in Schedule 1, varied to incorporate any permitted alterations or required alterations, and publish the model terms as so adopted in the Government Gazette as a variation to its existing standing offer in accordance with section 35(4) of the *Electricity Industry Act* and section 42(4) of the *Gas Industry Act*; or
- (b) otherwise vary its existing standing offer so that it complies with the requirements of this Code and:
 - (i) submit the varied standing offer for approval by the *Commission*; and
 - (ii) after obtaining the *Commission's* approval, publish the varied standing offer in the Government Gazette,

in accordance with section 35(4) of the *Electricity Industry Act* and section 42(4) of the *Gas Industry Act*.

- (c) If any provision of a *retailer's* standing offer in existence on the commencement date does not comply with any provision of this Code relating to the form or content of the *retailer's* standing offer, the relevant provision of this Code will be deemed not to apply to the *retailer* until the date which is 60 days after the commencement date.
- (d) Paragraph (c) does not relieve the *retailer* from the obligation to comply with the provisions of this Code that apply to standard retail contracts and that impose obligations on the *retailer* independently of the form or content of the *retailer's* standing offer.

2. Market contracts

- (a) A contract which is a 'market contract' for the purpose of this Code as in effect immediately before the commencement date is taken to be a 'market retail contract' for the purpose of this Code as in effect on and from the commencement date.
- (b) The terms and conditions set out in a *market retail contract* entered into on or after the commencement date must be consistent with the requirements of this Code that apply to *market retail contracts*.
- (c) The terms and conditions set out in a *market retail contract* that is in existence on the commencement date must be varied, or must be replaced by a new market retail contract, so that they are consistent with the requirements of this Code that apply to *market retail contracts* on or before the date which is two years after the commencement date.

- (d) Paragraph (c) does not relieve the *retailer* from the obligation to comply with the provisions of this Code despite those provisions being inconsistent with a term or condition included in the *retailer's market retail contract*.

3. Best offer message

- (a) A *retailer* may comply with the requirements of clauses 70R(1) during the period 1 July 2019 to 30 September 2019 by providing the *customer* with a *deemed best offer message* other than on a bill or *bill summary*.
- (b) For the purposes of (a):
- (i) subclause 70R(2) is to be read as requiring the *deemed best offer* to be determined as at the date the *deemed best offer* will be issued;
 - (ii) subclause 70R(3) is to be read as requiring the *negative deemed best offer* to be provided to the customer in writing and not necessarily on a bill or *bill summary*;
 - (iii) subclause 70R(4) is to be read as requiring the *positive deemed best offer* to be provided to the customer in writing and not necessarily on a bill or *bill summary*;
 - (iv) the requirements of subclause 70S apply other than subclause (2);
 - (v) in the definition of *annual total cost of current plan*, the relevant date is to be read as the date the *deemed best offer message* will be issued; and
 - (vi) in the definition of *annual total cost of deemed best offer*, the relevant date is to be read as the date the *deemed best offer message* will be issued.
- (c) A *retailer* is not required to comply with the requirements of subclause 70L(3)(i) until after 30 September 2019.

Note

The effect of section 36 of the Electricity Industry Act and section 43 of the Gas Industry Act, read with clause 15 of this Code, is that where a term or condition set out in a market retail contract is inconsistent with a requirement of this Code that applies to market retail contracts, the requirement of the Code applies in place of the inconsistent term or condition.

4. Life Support Equipment

1 Definitions

In this clause:

Amending Rule means the Electricity Distribution Code Review 2019 (Strengthening protections for customers requiring life support equipment).

commencement date means 3 February 2020.

existing life support customer means a customer whose *premises* is registered under:

- (i) clause 5.6.1(b) of version 9A of the *Electricity Distribution Code*; or
- (ii) clause 124(1)(a) and clause 125(3)(a) of the *Energy Retail Code*;

as having *life support equipment* as at the *commencement date*.

existing medical confirmation means confirmation provided:

- (i) under clause 5.6.1(a) of version 9A of the *Electricity Distribution Code*; or
- (ii) under clause 124(1)(a) and clause 125(3)(a) of the *Energy Retail Code*;

as at the *commencement date*.

Notice Date means 30 April.

2 Retailer obligations for existing life support customers

- (1) When notified by a *distributor*, by the *commencement date*, pursuant to clause 21.2(1) of the *Electricity Distribution Code*:
 - (a) that a *premises* is registered as an *existing life support customer*; and
 - (b) whether *existing medical confirmation* has been provided for the *existing life support customer*;

the *retailer* must:

- (c) within one *business day* after the *commencement date*, register that the *existing life support customer* requires *life support equipment* and the date from which the *life support equipment* is required.

3 Exempt person obligations for existing life support customers

- (1) When notified by an *exempt distributor*, by the *commencement date*, pursuant to clause 21.3(1) of the *Electricity Distribution Code*:
 - (a) that a *premises* is registered as an *existing life support customer*; and
 - (b) whether *existing medical confirmation* has been provided for the *existing life support customer*;

the *exempt person* must:

- (c) within one business day after the *commencement date*, register that the *existing life support customer* requires *life support equipment* and the date from which the *life support equipment* is required.

Schedule 4 Residential Electricity Standing Offer

**[RETAILER NAME]
STANDING/RELEVANT PUBLISHED OFFER – ELECTRICITY RESIDENTIAL
DISTRIBUTION ZONE –
DATE OF PUBLICATION -**

| <i>Residential, single rate</i> | Tariff | Unit | Inc GST |
|--|------------------------------|--------|---------|
| Domestic – General | First [] kWh/qtr | c/kWh | |
| | Next [] kWh/qtr | c/kWh | |
| | Balance kWh/qtr | c/kWh | |
| | All consumption | c/kWh | |
| | Supply charge | \$/day | |
| <i>Residential, two-rate</i> | Tariff | Unit | Inc GST |
| Residential Domestic – General plus hot water and heating | Peak - First [] kWh/qtr | c/kWh | |
| | Peak - Next [] kWh/qtr | c/kWh | |
| | Peak – Balance kWh/qtr | c/kWh | |
| | Off-peak - First [] kWh/qtr | c/kWh | |
| | Off-peak - Next [] kWh/qtr | c/kWh | |
| | Off-peak – Balance kWh/qtr | c/kWh | |
| | All consumption | c/kWh | |
| | Supply charge | \$/day | |
| <i>Residential, two-rate</i> | Tariff | Unit | Inc GST |
| <i>Jemena and United Energy DB only</i> | | | |
| Residential Domestic – General plus hot water and heating (all except J6/JT) | Peak - First [] kWh/qtr | c/kWh | |
| | Peak - Next [] kWh/qtr | c/kWh | |
| | Peak – Balance kWh/qtr | c/kWh | |
| | Off-peak – First [] kWh/qtr | c/kWh | |
| | Off-peak - Next [] kWh/qtr | c/kWh | |
| | Off-peak – Balance kWh/qtr | c/kWh | |
| | All consumption | c/kWh | |
| | Supply charge | \$/day | |

| | | | |
|---|-----------------------------|--------|--|
| Residential Domestic – General plus hot water and heating (J6/JT) | Peak - First []kWh/qtr | c/kWh | |
| | Peak - Next []kWh/qtr | c/kWh | |
| | Peak – Balance kWh/qtr | c/kWh | |
| | Off-peak – First []kWh/qtr | c/kWh | |
| | Off-peak - Next []kWh/qtr | c/kWh | |
| | Off-peak – Balance kWh/qtr | c/kWh | |
| | All consumption | c/kWh | |
| | Supply charge | \$/day | |
| | Supply charge | \$/day | |
| | Supply charge | \$/day | |

| <i>Residential, time-of-use</i> | Tariff | Unit | Inc GST |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------|---------|
| Domestic – Time of Use | Peak - First []kWh/qtr | c/kWh | |
| | Peak - Next []kWh/qtr | c/kWh | |
| | Peak – Balance kWh/qtr | c/kWh | |
| | Off-peak – First []kWh/qtr | c/kWh | |
| | Off-peak - Next []kWh/qtr | c/kWh | |
| | Off-peak – Balance kWh/qtr | c/kWh | |
| | All consumption | c/kWh | |
| | Supply charge | \$/day | |

| <i>Residential, flexible</i> | Tariff | Unit | Inc GST |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------|---------|
| Domestic flexible | Peak time^ 3pm to 9pm weekdays | c/kWh | |
| | Shoulder time 7am to 3pm weekdays | c/kWh | |
| | Shoulder time 9pm to 10pm weekdays | c/kWh | |
| | Shoulder time 7am to 10pm weekends | c/kWh | |
| | Off-peak time 10pm to 7am all days | c/kWh | |
| | Supply charge | \$/day | |

^ All times are standard time except when summer time is in force in which case all times are summer time.

[RETAILER NAME]
STANDING/RELEVANT PUBLISHED OFFER – ELECTRICITY SMALL BUSINESS
DISTRIBUTION ZONE –
DATE OF PUBLICATION -

| <i>Small business, single-rate</i> | Tariff | Unit | Inc GST |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|--------|---------|
| Business – General | First [] kWh/qtr | c/kWh | |
| | Next [] kWh/qtr | c/kWh | |
| | Balance kWh/qtr | c/kWh | |
| | All consumption | c/kWh | |
| | Supply charge | \$/day | |

| <i>Small business, two-rate</i> | Tariff | Unit | Inc GST |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------|--------|---------|
| Business – General plus Heating | Peak - First [] kWh/qtr | c/kWh | |
| | Peak - Next [] kWh/qtr | c/kWh | |
| | Peak – Balance kWh/qtr | c/kWh | |
| | Off-peak - First [] kWh/qtr | c/kWh | |
| | Off-peak - Next [] kWh/qtr | c/kWh | |
| | Off-peak – Balance kWh/qtr | c/kWh | |
| | All consumption | c/kWh | |
| | Supply charge | \$/day | |

| <i>Small business, time-of-use</i> | Tariff | Unit | Inc GST |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------|--------|---------|
| Business – Time of Use 5 Days | Peak - First [] kWh/qtr | c/kWh | |
| | Peak - Next [] kWh/qtr | c/kWh | |
| | Peak – Balance kWh/qtr | c/kWh | |
| | Off-peak - First [] kWh/qtr | c/kWh | |
| | Off-peak - Next [] kWh/qtr | c/kWh | |
| | Off-peak – Balance kWh/qtr | c/kWh | |
| | All consumption | c/kWh | |
| | Supply charge | \$/day | |
| Business – Time of Use 7 Days | Peak - First [] kWh/qtr | c/kWh | |

| | | | |
|--|------------------------------|--------|---------|
| | Peak - Next [] kWh/qtr | c/kWh | |
| | Peak – Balance kWh/qtr | c/kWh | |
| | Off-peak - First [] kWh/qtr | c/kWh | |
| | Off-peak - Next [] kWh/qtr | c/kWh | |
| | Off-peak – Balance kWh/qtr | c/kWh | |
| | All consumption | c/kWh | |
| | Supply charge | \$/day | |
| <i>Small business, time-of-use Powercor and SPAusNet DB only</i> | Tariff | Unit | Inc GST |
| Farm 7 Days Time of Use | Peak - First [] kWh/qtr | c/kWh | |
| | Peak - Next [] kWh/qtr | c/kWh | |
| | Peak – Balance kWh/qtr | c/kWh | |
| | Off-peak - First [] kWh/qtr | c/kWh | |
| | Off-peak - Next [] kWh/qtr | c/kWh | |
| | Off-peak – Balance kWh/qtr | c/kWh | |
| | All consumption | c/kWh | |
| | Supply charge | \$/day | |
| Farm (B1/B2) | Peak - First [] kWh/qtr | c/kWh | |
| | Peak - Next [] kWh/qtr | c/kWh | |
| | Peak – Balance kWh/qtr | c/kWh | |
| | Off-peak – First [] kWh/qtr | c/kWh | |
| | Off-peak - Next [] kWh/qtr | c/kWh | |
| | Off-peak – Balance kWh/qtr | c/kWh | |
| | All consumption | c/kWh | |
| | Supply charge | \$/day | |

**[RETAILER NAME]
STANDING/RELEVANT PUBLISHED OFFER – GAS
DISTRIBUTION ZONE –
DATE OF PUBLICATION -**

| <i>Residential</i> | Tariff | Unit | Inc GST |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------|---------|
| Domestic – General | Peak - First [] MJ / 2 months | c/MJ | |
| | Peak - Next [] MJ / 2 months | c/MJ | |
| | Peak – Balance MJ / 2 months | c/MJ | |
| | Off-peak - First [] MJ / 2 months | c/MJ | |
| | Off-peak - Next [] MJ / 2 months | c/MJ | |
| | Off-peak – Balance MJ / 2 months | c/MJ | |
| | All consumption | c/MJ | |
| | Supply charge | \$/day | |
| Domestic – Bulk Hot Water to Flats | All gas - MJ / 2 months | c/MJ | |
| | Hot water charge | c/Litre | |
| | Hot water conversion factor | MJ/Litre | |

| <i>Small Business</i> | Tariff | Unit | Inc GST |
|-----------------------|------------------------------------|--------|---------|
| Business – General | Peak - First [] MJ / 2 months | c/MJ | |
| | Peak - Next [] MJ / 2 months | c/MJ | |
| | Peak – Balance MJ / 2 months | c/MJ | |
| | Off-peak - First [] MJ / 2 months | c/MJ | |
| | Off-peak - Next [] MJ / 2 months | c/MJ | |
| | Off-peak – Balance MJ / 2 months | c/MJ | |
| | All consumption | c/MJ | |
| | Supply charge | \$/day | |

Gas Distribution Zones

| Envestra Victoria | Multinet | SPI AusNet |
|--------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| Central 1 | Main 1 | Central 1 |
| Central 2 | Main 2 | Central 2 |
| North | Yarra Valley | West |
| Murray Valley | South Gippsland | Adjoining Central |
| Bairnsdale | | Adjoining West |
| Envestra Albury | | |
| Cardinia | | |
| Mildura | | |

Schedule 5 Price and Product Information Statement

Retailer Name

(Branding Banner)

Price and Product Information Statement

This information statement presents a summary of the tariff and terms and conditions applicable to this offer. If you would like further information or are interested in taking up this offer, follow the links to the quoting page on our website or call xxxx.

Product Name and / or Code

DATE OF PUBLICATION

PRODUCT DETAILS

[insert applicable details, such as, closing date, term and termination notification required, details of how tariffs can change, rebates, non-price incentives]

ELECTRICITY

| Electricity Tariffs | Including GST |
|--|----------------------|
| As set out in Schedule A | XX.xxx |
| Supply Charge (\$/Day) (or how billed and calculated) | XX.xxx |

GAS

| Gas Tariffs | Including GST |
|--|----------------------|
| As set out in Schedule A | XX.xxx |
| Supply Charge (\$/Day) (or how billed and calculated) | XX.xxx |

ELIGIBILITY

The details presented in this Price and Product Information Statement are for a [residential/small business] customer located in the [insert] distribution area with a [insert meter type] and [insert any other eligibility criteria].

About this document

This product information statement is presented in accordance with the requirements of the Essential Services Commission (ESC) - the independent regulator of the energy industry in Victoria. For information about choosing an energy retailer, visit **yourchoice.vic.gov.au**. To compare electricity retailer offers available to you, go to **mpp.switchon.vic.gov.au**; to compare gas retailer offers available to you, go to **yourchoice.vic.gov.au**.

Schedule 6 Bulk Hot Water Formulas

Bulk Hot Water Charging

Gas bulk hot water Pricing Formulae

A.
$$\text{Gas bulk hot water rate (cents per litre)} = \text{CF (MJ per litre)} \times \text{gas bulk hot water tariff (cents per MJ)}$$

Where *customers* are charged by their *retailer* for *energy* in delivering *gas bulk hot water*:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{CF} &= \text{the gas bulk hot water conversion factor} \\ &= 0.49724 \text{ MJ per litre} \\ \text{gas bulk hot water tariff} &= \text{the standing offer tariff applicable to the gas bulk hot water unit (gas tariff 10/11)} \end{aligned}$$

Where *customers* are charged for *energy* in delivering *gas bulk hot water* pursuant to a *market retail contract*:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{CF} &= \text{the gas bulk hot water conversion factor} \\ &= 0.49724 \text{ MJ per litre} \\ \text{gas bulk hot water tariff} &= \text{the market tariff applicable to the bulk hot water unit} \end{aligned}$$

B.
$$\text{Retailer provided gas bulk hot water per customer supply charge (cents)} = \frac{\text{the supply charge under the tariff applicable to the relevant gas bulk hot water unit}}{\text{number of customers supplied by the relevant gas bulk hot water unit.}}$$

Retailers may decide not to charge the supply charge or may decide to roll-in the supply charge into the commodity charge of the applicable tariff.

- C. *Customer gas bulk hot water charge (cents)* = the *customer's* metered consumption of hot water (litres)
- * *gas bulk hot water price (cents per litre)* + *customer's* supply charge (cents)

Electric Bulk Hot Water Billing Formulae

- A. Where *customers* are charged for *energy* in delivering *electric bulk hot water* either by their *retailer* under a *standard retail contract* or pursuant to a *market retail contract* the:

$$\text{Customer electricity bulk hot water charge (cents)} = \text{the customer's metered consumption of hot water (kilolitres)} \times \text{electricity tariff rate(s) applicable to the customer for the applicable electric bulk hot water unit (cents per kWh)} \times \text{CF (kWh per kilolitre)}$$

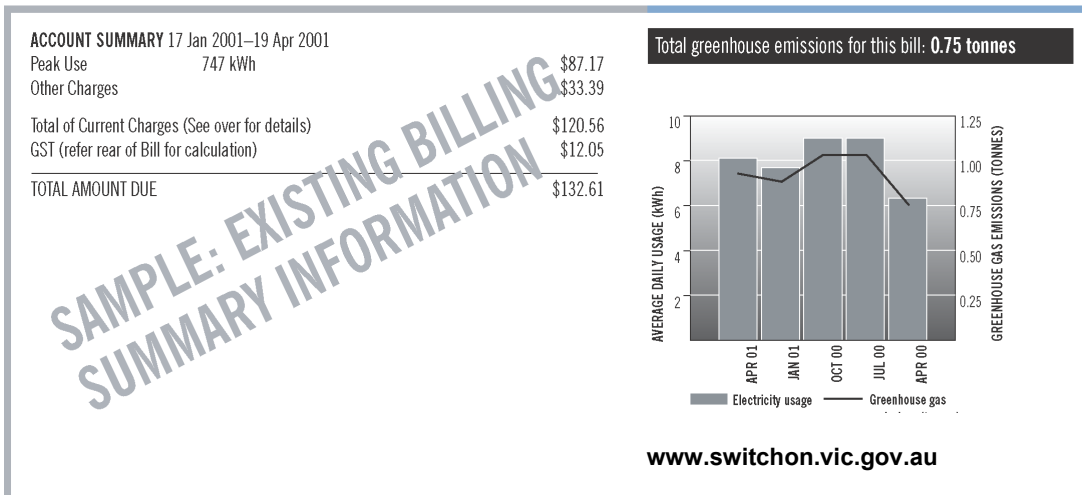
Where:

CF = *electric bulk hot water conversion factor* used by *retailers* to bill *electric bulk hot water* customers. The *electric bulk hot water conversion factor* will have a maximum value of 89 kWh per kilolitre. Where *customers* are currently billed using a lower *electric bulk hot water conversion factor*, or a lower *electric bulk hot water conversion factor* for the site is assessed, *retailers* must bill *customers* using the lower *electric bulk hot water conversion factor*.

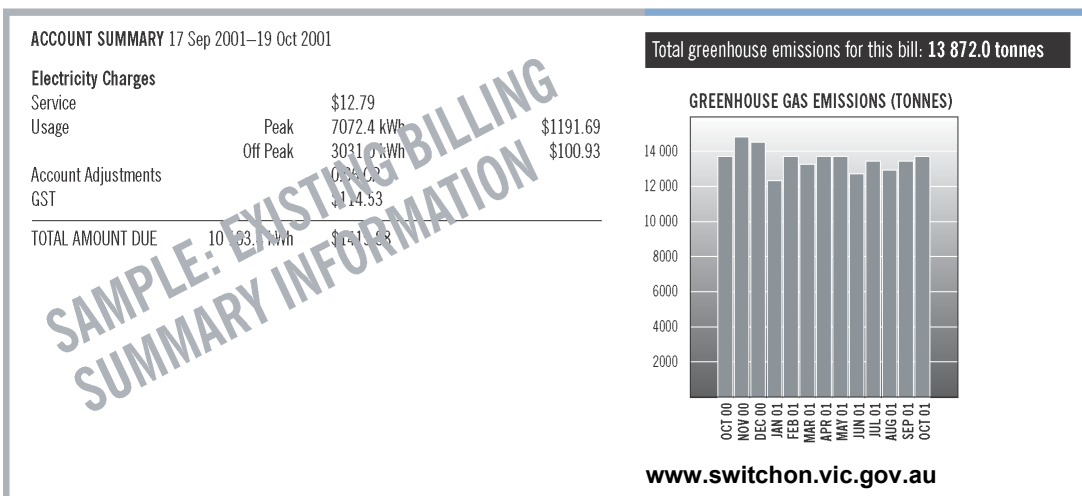
The *customer's* electricity tariff must be an off-peak tariff if supplied from an off-peak *electric bulk hot water* unit.

Schedule 7 Acceptable formats of greenhouse gas disclosure on customers' bills

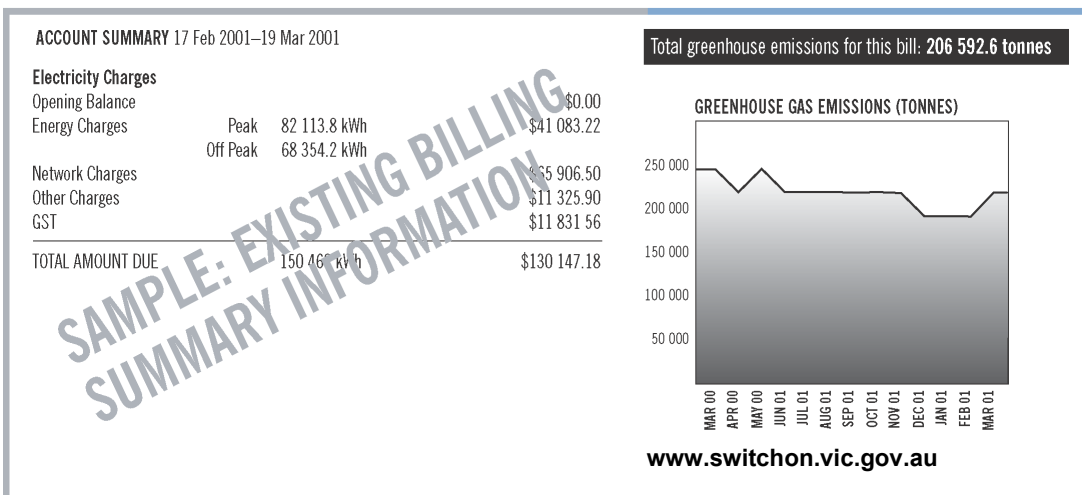
EXAMPLE 1: GREENHOUSE GAS DISCLOSURE



EXAMPLE 2: GREENHOUSE GAS DISCLOSURE



EXAMPLE 3: GREENHOUSE GAS DISCLOSURE



Schedule 8 Tables of categories of activities for exempt persons under the General Exemption Order 2017

Note:

The categories below are current as of 2 July 2018 but may be amended from time to time by a subsequent Order in Council.

Retail activity deemed exemptions

| Category | Description |
|----------|--|
| VD1 | Persons selling metered electricity to fewer than 10 small commercial/retail customers within the limits of a site that they own, occupy, or operate. |
| VD2 | Persons selling metered electricity to fewer than 10 residential customers within the limits of a site that they own, occupy, or operate (excluding retirement villages, caravan parks, holiday parks, residential land lease parks, and manufactured home estates) |
| VD3 | Persons selling metered electricity to occupants of holiday accommodation on a short-term basis (excluding caravan parks, holiday parks, residential land lease parks, and manufactured home estates). |
| VD4 | Persons temporarily selling electricity on construction sites, where the sale is an incidental supply to facilitate bona fide construction and commissioning of new facilities on the same or an adjoining site. |
| VD5 | Persons selling electricity to a related company. |
| VD6 | Persons selling electricity on or within the person's premises to customers in conjunction with, or ancillary to, the provision of telecommunications services. Includes internet, telephone, mobile phone, fibre optic, hybrid fibre cable, television, radio, Wi-F or other communications technology. |
| VD7 | Government agencies selling metered electricity to non-residential customers for purposes that are ancillary to their primary functions or objectives under the laws under which they are established. |

Retail activity registration exemptions

| Category | Description |
|----------|--|
| VR1 | Persons selling metered electricity to 10 or more small commercial/retail customers within the limits of a site that they own, occupy, or operate. |
| VR2 | Persons selling metered electricity to 10 or more residential customers within the limits of a site that they own, occupy, or operate, excluding sales to residents of retirement villages, caravan parks, holiday parks, residential land lease parks and |

| | |
|-----|---|
| | manufactured home estates. |
| VR3 | Retirement villages selling metered electricity to residential customers within the limits of a site that they own, occupy, or operate. |
| VR4 | Persons selling metered electricity in all caravan parks, holidays parks, residential land lease parks, and manufactured home estates. |
| VR5 | Persons selling metered electricity to large customers. |

Schedule 9 Definition of explicit informed consent and clause 9 of the General Exemption Order

Clause 3 of the *General Exemption Order* sets out definitions. The definition of explicit informed consent in the Order is set out below and is current as at 2 July 2018. The definition may be amended from time to time by a subsequent Order in Council under section 17 of the *Electricity Industry Act*.

In the Order, **explicit informed consent** means consent is given by a customer to an exempt person where:

- (a) the exempt person, or a person acting on behalf of the exempt person, has clearly, fully and adequately disclosed, in plain English, all matters relevant to the consent of the customer, including each specific purpose or use of the consent; and
- (b) the customer gives the consent to the arrangement or transaction,
 - (i) in writing, signed by the customer; or
 - (ii) verbally, if the verbal consent is evidenced in a way that it can be verified and recorded; or
 - (iii) by electronic communication generated by the customer;

Clause 9 of the *General Exemption Order* is set out below and is current as at 2 July 2018. The wording may be amended from time to time by a subsequent Order in Council under section 17 of the *Electricity Industry Act*.

9. Informed consent and provision of information

- (1) It is a condition of an exemption under Division 1 that the exempt person must obtain the explicit informed consent of the customer to an arrangement for the sale of electricity to that customer.
- (2) It is a condition of an exemption under Division 1 that the exempt person must provide the following information, in plain English, to the customer before obtaining the consent referred to in subclause (1):
 - (a) that the customer has the right to elect to purchase electricity from a licensed retailer of their choice, and information on the options for metering that would allow this choice;
 - (b) that the exempt person is not subject to all the obligations of a licensed retailer and the customer will not receive the same protections as it would if it were purchasing from a licensed retailer;
 - (c) the customer's rights in relation to dispute resolution including:
 - (i) the contact details of the exempt person as the initial point of contact for disputes; and
 - (ii) the exempt person's procedures for handling disputes and complaints; and

-
- (iii) from 1 July 2018, the right that the customer has to access an external dispute resolution service approved by the Essential Services Commission;
 - (d) the forms of assistance available if the customer is unable to pay electricity bills due to financial difficulty, as well as the process the customer should follow to seek these forms of assistance;
 - (e) the electricity tariffs and all associated fees and charges that will apply to the customer in relation to the sale of electricity;
 - (f) the flexible payment options that are available to the customer in relation to the sale of electricity, such as arrangements for payment by periodic instalments (bill smoothing);
 - (g) contact numbers in the event of an electricity fault or emergency.
- (3) It is a condition of an exemption under this Part that an exempt person must also provide the information set out in subclause (2):
- (a) at any time at the request of the customer or the Essential Services Commission; and
 - (b) annually to the customer.