

Spotlight on Port of Melbourne rents

Victoria's economic regulator will be checking whether charges issued by Australia's largest port mean consumers are paying more for everyday goods coming through the port.

The upcoming inquiry is part of the Essential Services Commission's ongoing monitoring role established by the Victorian Government following the [2016 agreement](#) to lease the Port of Melbourne.

The inquiry¹, commencing 1 November 2019, will assess how the Port of Melbourne sets and reviews rent for port tenants, and whether these are ultimately passed on to Victorian consumers.

The commission's director of pricing Marcus Crudden says it's important to check on the pricing and setting of rent for land users at the port.

"Unfair prices for renting port land could mean consumers end up paying more for everyday items that are moved through the port.

"Our inquiry will be about ensuring that Australia's largest port has set and reviewed rents fairly, he said.

The port has 35 commercial berths, jetties and piers in nine separate port areas or precinct.

If the regulator finds there has been a misuse of market power², it can make recommendations on possible economic regulation of the Port of Melbourne to the responsible minister, the Assistant Treasurer.

The commission is inviting feedback on a scoping paper outlining the rent inquiry process and key questions. The inquiry will commence on 1 November 2019 with advice on the outcome to be provided to the Assistant Treasurer by the end of April 2020.

Visit [Engage Victoria](#) to respond to the scoping paper by 25 October 2019.

¹The inquiry is required under Section 53 of the Port Management Act 1995.

²'Market power' is a business' ability to keep their prices above competitive levels for a sustained period of time.

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