This version of the Code tracks the changes that have been made to the draft ERC v11 since its initial release in December 2012.
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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 [insert date].

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;

agreed damages term means a term or condition of an energy 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 energy contract;

associate of a retailer includes—

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1 Definitions in clause 3 that are not accompanied by a footnote are in the same form as the equivalent definitions in the NERR.

2 This definition is substantially equivalent to the definition of acceptable identification in the ERC v10.

3 This definition is taken from the ERC v10 and has been inserted in response to the Consumer Groups’ submission that a definition of ‘agreed damages term’ should be included in the draft ERC v11.
(a) an employer or agent of the retailer; and
(b) a person contracted by the retailer; and
(c) a person who receives or is contracted to receive commissions from the retailer;4

**best endeavours** in relation to a person, means the person must act in good faith and do what is reasonably necessary in the circumstances;5

**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;6

**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;7

**Commission** means the Essential Services Commission under the Essential Services Commission Act 2001 (Vic);8

**connection** means a physical link between a distribution system and a customer's premises to allow the flow of energy;9

**cooling off period**—see rule 47(2);

**customer** means a person:

(a) to whom energy is sold for premises by a retailer; or

(b) who proposes to purchase energy for premises from a retailer;10

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

(a) a service relating to a new connection for the premises;

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4 This definition is taken from the NERL but excludes references to distributors.
5 This definition is taken from ERC v10 and has been inserted following consideration of submissions from the Consumer Groups and the Energy and Water Ombudsman (Victoria) Ltd (EWOV).
6 This definition is substantially equivalent to the definition of business customer in the ERC v10.
7 This definition is taken from the NERL.
8 This definition has been inserted to address EWOV’s submission that a definition of ‘Commission’ should be inserted so that it is clear that it refers to the Essential Services Commission.
9 This definition is taken from the NERL.
10 This definition is based on the definition in section 5 of the NERL.
(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;\textsuperscript{11}

**customer retail contract** means a contract between a small customer and a retailer for the provision of customer retail services for particular premises;\textsuperscript{12}

**customer retail services** means the sale of energy by a retailer to a customer at premises;\textsuperscript{13}

**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;\textsuperscript{14}

**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*;\textsuperscript{15}

**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*;\textsuperscript{16}

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

**disconnection warning notice**—see clause 110;

\textsuperscript{11}This definition is taken from the NERL, with the deletion of subclause (d).

\textsuperscript{12}This definition is taken from the NERL, with the deletion of the words ‘and may include a dual fuel contract’. It is the equivalent of the term ‘energy contract’ in the ERC v10.

\textsuperscript{13}This definition is based on the equivalent term in the NERL.

\textsuperscript{14}This definition is taken from the NERL.

\textsuperscript{15}Deemed customer retail arrangements are dealt with in Division 9 of the NERL. The provisions are broadly similar to section 39 of the Electricity Industry Act and section 46 of the Gas Industry Act. However, as the existing Victorian requirements are statutory, retailers and the Commission will continue to comply with the requirements of the Electricity Industry Act and the Gas Industry Act in addition to the requirements of the Code.

\textsuperscript{16}This definition is taken from the NERL but has been amended to adopt the Victorian requirements under the Electricity Industry Act and the Gas Industry Act.
domestic or small business customer means a domestic or small business customer within the meaning of section 3 of the Electricity Industry Act or section 3 of the Gas Industry Act;

**Note:**

Under the Electricity Industry Act and the Gas Industry Act, this term 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.

**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 laws** includes:

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17 This definition is based on the definition in the ERC v10.
18 This definition is based on the definition in the ERC v10.
19 This definition is taken from the NERL.
20 This definition is taken from the NERL and corresponds with the definition in the ERC v10.
(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);\(^2^1\)

*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*;\(^2^2\)

*energy ombudsman* means the Energy and Water Ombudsman (Victoria) Limited;\(^2^3\)

*explicit informed consent*—see clause 3C;

*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;\(^2^4\)

*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*;\(^2^5\)

*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*;\(^2^6\)

\(^{2^1}\) This is equivalent to the definition of ‘energy laws’ in the NERL except that it excludes references to the NECF (ie the NERL and the NERR).

\(^{2^2}\) This definition is taken from the NERL.

\(^{2^3}\) This definition has been amended to address EWOV’s submission to its name being incorrectly listed.

\(^{2^4}\) This definition is taken from the NERL.

\(^{2^5}\) This definition is based on the definition in the ERC v10.

\(^{2^6}\) This definition is based on the definition in the ERC v10.
Gas Industry Act means the Gas Industry Act 2001 (Vic);

hardship customer means a residential customer of a retailer who is identified as a customer experiencing financial payment difficulties due to hardship in accordance with the retailer's customer hardship policy;\(^\text{27}\)

index read in relation to smart meters has the meaning given under section 3.3.4 of Meter Data File Format Specification NEM 12 and NEM 13 published by the Australian Energy Market Operator;\(^\text{28}\)

last resort event in respect of a retailer means when:

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

(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;\(^\text{29}\)

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 that a registered medical practitioner certifies is required for a person residing at the customer’s premises for life support;\(^\text{30}\)

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;\(^\text{31}\)

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\(^{27}\) This definition is taken from the NERL.

\(^{28}\) This definition is taken from the ERC v10 and has been inserted to address the Consumer Groups’ submission.

\(^{29}\) This definition is taken from the ERC v10 and has been inserted to address the Consumer Groups’ submission.

\(^{30}\) There is no definition of Life Support Equipment in the ERC v10.
**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;32

**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;33

**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**;34

**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**;

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31 This definition is adapted from the NERL and the ERC v10.
32 This definition is adapted from the ERC v10.
33 This definition is taken from Guideline 19 – Energy Price and Product Disclosure.
34 This definition is taken from the NERL.
**offer summary** means a statement prepared by a *retailer* pursuant to its obligations under clause 15C;\(^{35}\)

**pay-by date**—see clause 26;

**payment plan** means a plan for:

(a) a *hardship customer*; or

(b) a *residential customer* who is not a *hardship customer* but who is experiencing payment difficulties,

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*;\(^{36}\)

**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*;\(^{37}\)

**re energisation or reconnection** of premises means the *energisation* of the premises after their *de energisation*;\(^{38}\)

**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*;\(^{39}\)

**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 ‘*domestic and small business customers*’.

**reminder notice**—see clause 109;

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

\(^{35}\) This definition is taken from Guideline 19 – Energy Price and Product Disclosure. It is only used in clauses 15C and 15D.

\(^{36}\) This definition is taken from the NERL.

\(^{37}\) This definition is taken from Guideline 19 – Energy Price and Product Disclosure. It is only used in clauses 15B and 15D.

\(^{38}\) This definition is taken from the NERL.

\(^{39}\) This definition is taken from Orders in Council in force at the date of this Code.
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;

retail marketer means a retailer or an associate of a retailer;\textsuperscript{40}

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;\textsuperscript{41}

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 customer has the same meaning given to domestic or small business customer under section 3 of the Electricity Industry Act or section 3 of the Gas Industry Act;\textsuperscript{42} means a domestic or small business customer.

Note:

The term ‘small customer’ is used in this Code in place of the term ‘domestic and small business customer’ for consistency with the terminology used in the NERL and NERR.

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;\textsuperscript{43}

\textsuperscript{40} This definition is taken from the NERL.
\textsuperscript{41} This definition is taken from the NERL.
\textsuperscript{42} This definition has been amended to address the Consumer Groups’ submission that references to customer types should be simplified.
**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, which replaces Guideline No 19 – Energy Price and Product Disclosure.

smart meter means an interval meter designed to transmit data to a remote locality that meets the functionality requirements for advanced metering infrastructure set out in any relevant Order made under section 46D of the Electricity Industry Act;44

specified retailer has the meaning given by section 3 of the Electricity Industry Act and section 3 of the Gas Industry Act;45

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;46

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;47

supply capacity control product means the use, other than the emergency use, of a smart meter to temporarily interrupt electricity supply to a customer;48

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

3A Savings and Transitional Provisions

Schedule 3 applies.

3B Purpose and Application

(1) This Code applies to all small customers.

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43 This definition is taken from Orders in Council in force at the date of this Code.
44 This definition is the same definition used in the ERC v10.
45 This definition is taken from Orders in Council in force at the date of this Code.
46 This definition is based on the definition in the NERL, modified to reflect the draft instrument.
47 This definition is equivalent to the definition used in the ERC v10.
48 This definition is the same definition used in the ERC v10.
This code applies to, and must be complied with by, all retailers in accordance with their retail licences.

The provisions in Division 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. The parts of Division 2A of this Code concerned with offer summaries are prepared and issued under section 13 of the Essential Services Commission Act 2001 (Vic).

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.

3C Explicit Informed Consent

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 all matters relevant to the consent of the customer in plain English, 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

Any requirements prescribed by this Code for the purposes of this subclause have been complied with.

Explicit informed consent requires the consent to be given by the small customer:

(a) in writing signed by the customer; or

(b) except for the purposes of clause 20, 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

Guideline 19 refers to the offer summary requirement (referred to in clause 15C) as being a guideline issued under Essential Services Commission Act 2011 (Vic).

This definition is based on the definition in section 39 of the NERL. This definition is substantially similar to the definition of explicit informed consent contained in the ERC v10, except that the ERC v10 definition provides that explicit informed consent cannot be provided orally for the purposes of:

- clause 10.1 of the ERC v10, which provides that a retailer and a customer may negotiate a shorter billing cycle if the customer gives explicit informed consent.

This reflects the requirement outlined in subclause (b) of the definition of explicit informed consent outlined in clause 34 of the ERC v10.

This reflects the requirement outlined in subclause (c) of the definition of explicit informed consent outlined in clause 34 of the ERC v10.
(c) by electronic communication generated by the customer.

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.

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

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53 This reflects the requirement in the ERC v10 which does not allow explicit informed consent to be given verbally for bills to be based on a method other than a reading of the customer’s meter. The ERC v10 also requires written explicit informed consent in relation to negotiating a shorter billing cycle, however the Commission has not incorporated this requirement.

54 This definition is based on the definition in section 40 of the NERL. There is no requirement in the ERC v10 for a retailer to keep records of each customer's explicit informed consent.

55 This clause is taken from section 41 of the NERL.
(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 Code56

(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

56 This clause is taken from section 319 of the NERL.
(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

(a) 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.

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.57

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 provisions; 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.58

57 This provision gives retailers an incentive to use the model terms and conditions but does not make it mandatory as it is under the NECF.

58 This subclause is substantially equivalent to section 29 of the NERL and has been inserted to address the Consumer Groups' submission that clauses 51 and 52 of the draft ERC v11, which relate to liabilities and...
(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.\(^59\)

(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.\(^60\)

(6) In this clause alterations includes omissions and additions.\(^61\)

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;\(^62\) and

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\(^{59}\) This clause is equivalent to section 25(4) of the NERL.

\(^{60}\) This clause is based on section 25(5) of the NERL.

\(^{61}\) This is equivalent to section 25(6) of the NERL.

\(^{62}\) Sections 36(1) of the Electricity Industry Act and 43(1) of the Gas Industry Act provide that a term or condition of a contract for the supply or sale of energy to a relevant customer is void to the extent that it is inconsistent with terms or conditions decided by the Commission under these sections. Sections 36(2) of the Electricity Industry Act and 43(2) of the Gas Industry Act provide that a term or condition of a contract for the supply or sale of energy to a relevant customer is void to the extent that it is inconsistent with terms or conditions decided by the Commission under these sections.

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(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 and 43(2) of the Gas Industry Act provide that if a term or condition is void because it is inconsistent with a term or condition decided by the Commission, the term or condition decided by the Commission is deemed to form part of the contract in place of the void term or condition.

63 Clause 19 of the ERC v10 provides that where a retailer and a customer agree to a new term or condition that is inconsistent with specified provisions of the ERC v10, the existing energy contract terminates and the parties enter into a new market contract. There is no equivalent to clause 19 in the NERR. Instead section 33 of the NERL provides that a small customer and a retailer may enter into a market retail contract as agreed between the parties. Unlike the ERC v10, the NERR sets out whether a particular rule is applicable to standard retail contracts or market retail contracts on a rule by rule basis. Clause 19 will not be included in the new draft instrument. The minimum requirements for market retail contracts in Victoria are set out in the sections 36(1) of the Electricity Industry Act and 43(1) of the Gas Industry Act. Therefore references to these provisions of the Electricity Industry Act and Gas Industry Act are included in this instrument.
the Gas Industry Act in relation to relevant customers who purchase energy under a market retail contract;\textsuperscript{64} 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.

\textbf{Division 2A \hspace{1cm} Energy Price and Product disclosure\textsuperscript{65}}

\textbf{15A \hspace{1cm} Internet publication of standing offer tariffs}

(1) A retailer must:

(a) publish on its internet site details of its standing offers; and

(b) provide to the ESC details of its standing offer tariffs in the manner set out in Schedule 4.\textsuperscript{66}

(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.

\textsuperscript{64} Sections 36(1) of the Electricity Industry Act and 43(1) of the Gas Industry Act provide that a term or condition of a contract for the supply or sale of energy to a relevant customer is void to the extent that it is inconsistent with terms or conditions decided by the Commission under these sections. Sections 36(2) of the Electricity Industry Act and 43(2) of the Gas Industry Act provide that if a term or condition is void because it is inconsistent with a term or condition decided by the Commission, the term or condition decided by the Commission is deemed to form part of the contract in place of the void term or condition.

\textsuperscript{65} Division 2A incorporates the Commission’s Guideline 19 – Energy Price and Product Disclosure. Guideline 19 was made in accordance with sections 35C and 36A of the Electricity Industry Act and sections 42C and 43A of the Gas Industry Act, which impose obligations on retailers to publish standing offer and market contract tariffs, terms and conditions on their internet sites and provide information to the Commission in accordance with the Guidelines. Under sections 24 and 37 of the NERL, retailers are required to present standing offer or market offer prices in accordance with the AER Retail Pricing Information Guidelines. At this stage, Guideline 19 has been included in the new instrument in place of the AER requirements. However, the Commission is currently consulting on proposed amendments to Guideline 19. This consultation document can be found on the Commission’s website entitled ‘Proposed changes to regulatory instruments relating to flexible pricing – Draft Decision - June 2013’. Please refer to this consultation paper, and also chapter 8.2 of the Commission’s Harmonisation Draft Decision (Consultation Paper) for further discussion on this issue.

\textsuperscript{66} Schedule 4 replicates Schedule A of Guideline 19.
Relevant published offers (*P*rice and *P*roduct *I*nformation *S*tatement)

(1) A *specified retailer* must provide a link on the home page of the *specified retailer*’s internet site so that a *customer* can easily and logically access the *specified retailer*’s *P*rice and *P*roduct *I*nformation *S*tatement.

(2) The *specified retailer* must not:

(a) require the *customer* to provide technical information, such as the *customer*’s consumption, retail tariff, network tariff, distribution area, national metering identifier or meter installation registration number; or

(b) request personal information about the *customer*, such as driver’s licence number, address or date of birth;

before providing the *P*rice and *P*roduct *I*nformation *S*tatement.

**Note:**

This clause is not intended to prevent *retailers* from asking questions about these characteristics. However, it cannot be mandatory that the *customer* provide the information in order to proceed through the online process and obtain a *P*rice and *P*roduct *I*nformation *S*tatement.

(3) If the *specified retailer* requires the *customer*’s meter type, the *customer* must be provided with plain English explanations so that they can identify their meter type easily.

(4) A *specified retailer* must co-operate with the *Commission* in implementing a system to create and sustain reliable links from the *Commission*’s internet site so that the *customer* can:

(a) easily view the same or more offer information in the *retailer*’s website; and

(b) potentially accept that offer or another offer.

(5) Where the *specified retailer* is unable to determine, based on the information gathered about the *customer*, which of more than one *P*rice and *P*roduct *I*nformation *S*tatement applies, the *specified retailer* must either:

(a) present a *P*rice and *P*roduct *I*nformation *S*tatement for one of the potentially applicable tariffs; or

(b) present a *P*rice and *P*roduct *I*nformation *S*tatement for each of the potentially applicable tariffs.

In doing so, the *specified retailer* must electronically communicate to the *customer* that it is not clear, based on the information gathered about the *customer*, which of more than one *P*rice and *P*roduct *I*nformation *S*tatement applies.
(6) Each *price and product information statement* must at least include:

(a) all fees and charges separately disclosed, including the tariff and early termination fees, if applicable;

(b) the term of the contract and the termination notification required;

(c) an explanation of how the tariff and other fees and charges can change, if applicable;

(d) a description of the characteristics relevant to determining whether the tariff or term or condition is applicable to a customer;

(e) the following statement:

   "About this document
   This *price and product information statement* is presented in accordance with the requirements of the Essential Services Commission (ESC) - the independent regulator of the retail energy industry in Victoria. For information about choosing an energy retailer, visit [www.esc.vic.gov.au/yourchoice](http://www.esc.vic.gov.au/yourchoice)."

(f) details of, if applicable:

   (i) rebates, other than government-funded rebates;

   (ii) non-price incentives;

   (iii) where a different tariff is applicable at different times, when the different tariffs apply;

   (iv) where the specified retailer intends to make the tariff or any other element of the published details available only for a fixed period, the availability end date; and

   (v) how to get further information on the terms and conditions.

(7) Each *price and product information statement* must adhere to the following format requirements:

(a) the specified retailer must title and refer to the published information as "*Price and product information statement*";

(b) the specified retailer must specifically identify each *price and product information statement* with a unique name or reference code or both;

(c) all monetary amounts must be shown on both a GST-exclusive and GST inclusive basis;
(d) variable fees and charges that relate to energy consumed must be expressed as cents per kilowatt hour or megajoule, as appropriate; and

(e) any fixed fees or charges relating to the supply of energy must be expressed as either dollars per day or in a manner which shows how these fees or charges are billed and calculated.

An example price and product information statementPrice and Product Information Statement is set out in Schedule 5.67 The specified retailer may present its price and product information statementPrice and Product Information Statement in an alternative format to that set out in clause 15B(6) and clause 15B(7) with the Commission’s prior approval.

(8) A price and product information statementPrice and Product Information Statement must be updated within five business days of any change to the information presented in the statement.

15C Offer summary

(1) A retailer must provide an offer summary in writing to a small retail customer:

(a) on request by the customer; and

(b) when providing the customer the terms or information about the terms of any new retail contract, including when engaging in any marketing activity.

(2) Each offer summary must include at least:

(a) the information set out in clauses 15B(6)(a) to (c) and (f);

(b) in relation to any fixed fees or charges relating to the supply of energy, the number of days in the period to which the charge relates;

(c) the following statement:

“For information about choosing an energy retailer visit: www.esc.vic.gov.au/yourchoice”

(3) For the purpose of avoiding any confusion:

(a) the offer summary must be a separate document to the full contractual terms and conditions; and

(b) may include other information.

(4) All monetary amounts presented on the offer summary must be shown on both a GST-exclusive and GST-inclusive basis.

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67 Schedule 5 replicates Schedule B of Guideline 19.
15D Other requirements

(1) All information in a price and product information statement or offer summary must be written in plain English and be designed to be readily understandable by customers. Additional information included in an offer summary, beyond the requirements specified in this guideline, should be appropriate and not excessive.

(2) In presenting a price and product information statement or offer summary, a retailer must comply with all applicable legislative and regulatory requirements, including, but not limited to, the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth), the Competition and Consumer Act 2010 (Cth), the Australian Consumer Law and Fair Trading Act 2012 (Vic) and Division 10 of Part 2 of this Code.

Division 3 Customer retail contracts—pre-contractual procedures

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.\(^{68}\)

(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.\(^{69}\)

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\(^{68}\) The NECF includes a separate category of customers referred to as ‘small market offer customers’. These are small business customers who consume energy at or above the lower consumption threshold (currently 40Mwh per annum for electricity and 400GJ per annum for gas); see NERL section 5. For these customers retailers can satisfy the obligation to offer by offering a market contract and not a standing offer. The Electricity Industry Act and Gas Industry Act do not currently allow for ‘small market offer customers’ not to be entitled to a standing offer.
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); and
   (b) the customer has not within 10 business days of de-energisation rectified the matter that gave rise to the de-energisation,

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69 This obligation is taken from section 38(b) of the NERL.
70 This rule has been deleted on the basis that it imposes an obligation on distributors.
71 Rule 18 is substantially equivalent to clause 1 of the ERC v10 except that:
   - the NERR does not require the customer to pay any connection charge as and when required by their energy contract (clause 1(b) of the ERC v10), and
   - the NERR does not require the customer to provide contact details for the property owner where the request relates to a rental property; and
   - the NERR contains additional requirements to the ERC v10.
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:

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72 Rule 19, together with rule 64, is broadly consistent with clause 3.5 of the ESC Code of Conduct for Marketing Retail Energy in Victoria (Marketing Code). However, the NERR does not contain an equivalent provision to clause 3.5(a) bullet point two of the Marketing Code which provides that a retailer must give a consumer a notice advising the consumer of their rights to cancel the contract and a further notice setting out the name and address of the retailer which may be used to cancel the contract.

73 There is no direct equivalent to this sub-rule in the ERC v10 or the Marketing Code. However it is broadly consistent with the type of information that must be provided to consumers under clauses 3.3 and 3.5 of the Marketing Code.

74 There is no direct equivalent to this sub-rule in the ERC v10 or the Marketing Code; it is broadly consistent with the information required to be provided under clause 3.5(a) bullet points 4 and 5 of the Marketing Code which require the retailer to provide the consumer with information about making a complaint and the general scope of the Marketing Code and compliance procedures. Clause 26.2 of the ERC v10 also requires a retailer to give domestic customers a copy of the retailer’s charter and specifies the information that must be included in the charter. There is no direct equivalent in the NERR for a charter, however rule 19(1)(b) covers similar information to clause 26.2.

75 This sub-rule is broadly consistent with the information required to be provided under clause 3.5(a) bullet point 3 of the Marketing Code, which requires the retailer to provide information relating to government energy assistance schemes.
(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 and MRC)

(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 and clause 21; or

(ii) 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

76 There is no direct equivalent to clauses 7.5 (fees and charges for dishonoured payments and merchant service fees) and 7.6 (vacating a premises) of the ERC v10 in the NERR. The NERR contains some provisions relating to vacating premises in various sections.

77 Rules 20(1) and 20(2) are substantially equivalent to clause 5.1 of the ERC v10 except that the ERC v10 provides that a retailer will not be in breach of the requirement to use its best endeavours to read a customer’s meter if the retailer is unable to read the meter as a result of the customer breaching clause 25 of the ERC v10 (that is, allowing safe, convenient and unhindered access to the meter) or an event outside the retailer’s control.

78 After consideration of the submissions received and discussions with the Consumer Groups and EWOV, the Commission has decided to amend clause 20(1)(a)(ii) of the draft ERC v11 to require that a customer provide their explicit informed consent before a retailer can base a customer’s bill on a method other than a customer’s metering data. This reflects the requirements outlined in clause 5.1 of the ERC v10.
(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.

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;

79 After consideration of the submissions received and discussions with the Consumer Groups and EWQ, the Commission has decided to amend clause 20(1)(b)(iv) of the draft ERC v11 to require that a customer provide their explicit informed consent before a retailer can base a customer’s bill on a method other than a customer’s metering data. This reflects the requirements outlined in clause 5.1 of the ERC v10.

80 Rule 20(3) is substantially equivalent to clause 5.6 of the ERC v10 except that the ERC v10 refers to ‘applicable regulatory instruments’ instead of ‘applicable energy laws’. An appropriate definition of ‘energy laws’ has been included in the new draft instrument.

81 The ERC v10 contains detailed provisions in relation to bulk hot water charging which have been included in the new draft instrument.
(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 and MRC)

(1) A retailer may base a small customer’s bill on an estimation of the customer’s consumption of energy where:

(a) the customer consents 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 may be based on:

(a) the customer’s reading of the relevant meter; or

(b) historical metering data for the customer reasonably available to the retailer; or

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82 Rule 21 contains some of the same provisions as clause 5.2 of the ERC v10, however the ERC v10 contains additional matters that are not provided for in the NERR. In particular, there are no provisions in the NERR equivalent to clause 5.2(a), bullet point 2, which relates to second tier customers, or equivalent to clause 5.2(b) of the ERC v10 which relates to electricity customers that are transferring from one retailer to another retailer. Both clauses provide that these particular types of electricity customers may be provided with an estimated bill prepared on a basis used to determine the retailer's responsibility in the wholesale electricity market for electricity supply under applicable regulatory instruments. These provisions are not included in the new draft instrument.

83 Following the Commission’s consideration of the submissions received and discussions with the Consumer Groups and EWOV, and to reflect the requirement to obtain explicit informed consent under clause 20, the Commission has decided to amend clause 21(1)(a) to require retailers to obtain a customer’s explicit informed consent prior to basing their bill on estimation.

84 Rule 21 (1) is substantially equivalent to clause 5.2(a) of the ERC v10 except that the NERR also requires the customer to consent to the use of the estimation.
(c) the average usage of energy by a comparable customer over the corresponding period, if there is no historical metering data for the customer.\textsuperscript{85}

(2A) Despite clauses 20, 21(1) and 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;\textsuperscript{86} 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.\textsuperscript{87}

(3) The retailer must inform the small customer, on the bill, that the bill is based on an estimation.\textsuperscript{88}

(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.\textsuperscript{89}

\textsuperscript{85} Rules 21(2)(a) and (b) are substantially equivalent to clause 5.2, bullet point 1 of the ERC v10. However Rule 21(2)(c) differs to the ERC v10 which provides that an estimated bill may be based on the average consumption at the relevant tariff calculated over the period covered by the estimated bill instead of the average usage of energy by a comparable customer as provided for by the NERR. The intent of the two different forms of drafting appear to be the same, and so we have retained the NERR drafting.

\textsuperscript{86} The ERC v10 defines 'applicable regulatory instruments' in relation to electricity as: the National Electricity Rules; the Metrology Procedure: Part A (National Electricity Market); the Metrology Procedure: Part B (National Electricity Market); the Electricity Customer Transfer Code; and the Electricity Customer Metering Code. An appropriate definition of 'energy laws' has been included in the new draft instrument.

\textsuperscript{87} There are no provisions in the NERR equivalent to clause 5.2(c) of the ERC v10 which provides the basis for an estimate of a customer's bill in the case of smart meters. The obligations relating to smart meters are included in the new draft instrument.

\textsuperscript{88} The requirement in this sub-rule is equivalent to clause 4.2(e) and is also provided for in Rule 20 of the NERR.
(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.\(^{90}\)

(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\(^{91}\), but only to the extent (if any) a contract provides for estimation as the basis for the small customer’s bill.\(^{92}\)

**22 Proportionate billing (SRC and MRC)\(^{93}\)**

(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.

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\(^{89}\) This sub-rule is broadly equivalent to clause 5.4(a) of the ERC v10 except that the ERC v10 specifically requires the retailer to adjust the bill in accordance with clause 6 (which deals with overcharging and undercharging). The NERR, however, requires the retailer to include an adjustment on the bill to take into account any overcharging and offer the customer time to pay any undercharged amount by instalment. The NERR provisions therefore have the same effect as some aspects of clause 6 of the ERC v10 except that, in relation to the amount of time given to pay the undercharged amount, the ERC v10 provides that the time period must be at least equal to the period over which undercharging occurred, while the NERR provides that the period must be no longer than that period. Further, the NERR does not contain a provision equivalent to clause 5.4(b) of the ERC v10, which provides that clause 5.4(a) does not apply to an estimated bill prepared under clause 5.1(a), bullet point 2, which relates to second tier customers, or equivalent to clause 5.2(b) of the ERC v10 which relates to electricity customers that are transferring from one retailer to another retailer. In relation to these customers, the retailer may adjust a bill to the extent permitted by applicable regulatory instruments. The NERR also does not contain a provision equivalent to clause 5.4(c) which provides that clause 5.4(a) does not apply in respect of an estimated bill under a bill smoothing arrangement.

\(^{90}\) This sub-rule is substantially equivalent to clause 5.5 of the ERC v10.

\(^{91}\) See footnote in Part 8 regarding removal of references to prepayment meters.

\(^{92}\) Under the ERC v10, the estimated bill provisions cannot be varied in the formation of a market contract. Adjustment of a bill in relation to normal customers (ie, clause 5.4(a)) may be varied by agreement between the customer and the retailer in the formation of a market contract.

\(^{93}\) Rule 22 is substantially equivalent to clause 5.7 of the ERC v10.
23  Bill smoothing (SRC)⁹⁴

(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).

(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.

⁹⁴ Rule 23 is substantially equivalent to clause 5.3 of the ERC v10 except that the NERR requires the customer’s explicit informed consent.
24 Frequency of bills (SRC)\textsuperscript{95}

(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 2013.

(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.\textsuperscript{96}

(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.

25 Contents of bills (SRC and MRC)

(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:\textsuperscript{97}

(a) the customer’s name and account number;\textsuperscript{98}

(b) the address of the customer’s premises for the sale of energy and the customer’s mailing address (if different);\textsuperscript{99}

\textsuperscript{95}Rule 24(1) is equivalent to clause 3.1 of the ERC v10 in relation to electricity; however for gas the ERC v10 requires bills to be issued every 2 months. The Commission understands that DSDBI has indicated that it intends to retain the 2 month billing cycle for gas customers until 31 December 2013. The ERC v10 also provides for billing cycles for dual fuel customers to be agreed between the retailer and the customer. The new draft instrument will not maintain specific dual fuel obligations.

\textsuperscript{96}Rule 24(2) is substantially equivalent to clause 10.1 of the ERC v10 except that the ERC v10 provides that, in the case of electricity, a retailer and a customer may negotiate a billing cycle of less than 3 months and, for gas, less than 2 months. The ERC v10 also permits a retailer to impose an additional charge on the customer for making the different billing cycle available.

\textsuperscript{97}Rule 25(1) is substantially equivalent to clause 4.1 and 4.2 of the ERC v10 except where noted. Clause 4.2(h) of the ERC v10, which provides for additional information to be provided in a bill if the bill is derived from smart meter interval data, is not covered by the NERR. Clause 4.3 of the ERC v10, which relates to bundled charges, is also not covered in the NERR. However, rules 25(1)(g) and (h) will achieve the same effect as clause 4.3.

\textsuperscript{98}This sub-rule is equivalent to clause 4.2(a) of the ERC v10.

\textsuperscript{99}This sub-rule is equivalent to clause 4.2(a) of the ERC v10.
(c) the meter identifier;\textsuperscript{100}

(d) the billing period;\textsuperscript{101}

(e) the pay-by date for the bill and the bill issue date;\textsuperscript{102}

(f) the total amount payable by the customer, including amounts of any arrears or credits;\textsuperscript{103}

(g) tariffs and charges applicable to the customer;\textsuperscript{104}

(h) the basis on which tariffs and charges are calculated;\textsuperscript{105}

(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, an estimation; or

   (ii) in the case of a smart meter, an accumulated total of at least 48 hours of trading intervals are not billed on the basis of smart meter interval data; and,

if issued as a result of a meter reading, the date of the meter reading;\textsuperscript{106}

(j) subject to subclause (y),\textsuperscript{107} the values of meter readings (or, if applicable, estimations) at the start and end of the billing period;\textsuperscript{108}

\textsuperscript{100} In addition to the meter identifier, clause 4.2 (b) of the ERC v10 requires a bill to include 'checksum' and if there is no assigned meter identifier, the bill must include the customer's meter number or another unique identifying mark assigned to the customer's metering installation.

\textsuperscript{101} This sub-rule is equivalent to clause 4.2(c) of the ERC v10.

\textsuperscript{102} Clause 4.2(k) of the ERC v10 requires the bill to include the ‘pay-by date’ but does not require the ‘bill issue date’ to be specified.

\textsuperscript{103} Clause 4.2(j) and clause 4.2(l) are substantially equivalent to rule 25(1)(f). Clause 4.2(l) also requires the bill to specify the amount of any refundable advance provided by the customer; this is provided for in rule 25 (1)(q).

\textsuperscript{104} This sub-rule is equivalent to clause 4.2(d) of the ERC v10 with respect to tariffs and clause 4.3 of the ERC v10 with respect to charges.

\textsuperscript{105} Sub-rule 25(1)(h) is similar to clause 4.3 of the ERC v10 except that the ERC v10 provides that on request a retailer must provide a customer with reasonable information on network charges, retail charges and any other charges relating to the sale or supply of energy comprised in the amount payable under the customer's bill.

\textsuperscript{106} This sub-rule is equivalent to clause 4.2(e), bullet point 1 of the ERC v10. Bullet point 2, provides that in the case of a smart meter, the bill must specify whether an accumulated total of at least 48 hours of trading intervals are not billed on the basis of smart meter interval data.

\textsuperscript{107} Clause 25(1)(j) has been made subject to clause 25(1)(y) to address that it is only applicable where there are no smart meters.

\textsuperscript{108} This sub-rule is substantially equivalent to clause 4.2(g) of the ERC v10, which requires that the bill state the total amount of electricity or gas consumed in each period. Clause 4.2(g) also provides that if a customer's meter measures and records consumption data only on an accumulation basis, the bill must provide the dates and total amounts of the immediately previous and current meter readings.
(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;\(^\text{109}\)

(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;\(^\text{110}\)

(m) the estimated date of the next scheduled meter reading (if applicable);\(^\text{111}\)

(n) details of consumption or estimated consumption of energy for each billing period over the past 12 months or, in the case of customers with a smart meter, consumption for each monthly period over the past 12 months;\(^\text{112}\)

(o) for reminder notices and electricity bills, bill benchmarking information to the extent required by section 40R of the Electricity Industry Act;\(^\text{114}\)

(p) any amount deducted, credited or received under a government funded energy charge rebate, concession or relief scheme or under a payment plan;\(^\text{115}\)

(q) if the customer has provided a security deposit, the amount of that deposit;\(^\text{116}\)

\(^{109}\) Clause 4.4 of the ERC v10 requires that comparative consumption information for the billing period be provided in the form of a graph. Additionally, the ERC v10 requires that, to the extent that data is available, the bill must include details of aggregate consumption for each billing period over the past 12 months and a comparison of consumption for the period covered by the bill with the consumption for the same period of the previous year. Whereas the NERR requires a comparison of average daily consumption. The ERC v10 also provides that for customers with smart meters, the bill must include the customer's consumption for each monthly period over the past 12 months. Under the ERC v10 this clause can be varied in market contracts however the NERR requirement cannot be varied in 'market contracts'. Clause 4.2(r) of the ERC v10 also requires that the average daily cost for each smart meter tariff component over the billing period be included in the bill. This is not provided for in the NERR.

\(^{110}\) Clause 4.4(a) of the ERC v10 at bullet point 2, requires a comparison of consumption for the period covered by the bill with the consumption for the same period of the previous year, whereas the NERR requires particulars of the average daily consumption.

\(^{111}\) This sub-rule is not provided for in the ERC v10.

\(^{112}\) Clause 4.4 of the ERC v10 requires details of consumption for each billing period over the past 12 months. Additionally, for customers with smart meters, the ERC v10 requires details of consumption for each monthly period over the past 12 months to be provided in a customer's bill.

\(^{113}\) The words 'reminder notices and' have been deleted from clause 25(1)(o) as the Electricity Industry Act only requires bill benchmarking information to be included on bills, not reminder notices.

\(^{114}\) The reference to Electricity Consumption Benchmarks has been deleted. Part 11 of the NERR requires the AER to provide electricity consumption benchmarks for residential customers to retailers. Retailers are required to include in a customer's bill a comparison of the customer's electricity consumption against the benchmarks and are required to represent the information in a graphical or tabular form. Energy consumption benchmarks are not required under the ERC v10. There is a Victorian requirement in relation to bill benchmarking under sections 40P and 40R of the Electricity Industry Act. These statutory requirements are not provided for in the ERC v10.

\(^{115}\) This sub-rule is not provided for in the ERC v10.

\(^{116}\) This sub-rule is equivalent to clause 4.2(l) of the ERC v10.
(r) details of the available payment methods;\textsuperscript{117}

(s) reference to the availability of government funded \textit{energy} charge rebate, concession or relief schemes;\textsuperscript{118}

(t) a telephone number for account enquiries, the charge for which is no more than the cost of a local call;\textsuperscript{119}

(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;\textsuperscript{120}

(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;\textsuperscript{121}

(w) contact details of interpreter services in community languages;\textsuperscript{122}

(x) any proportionate billing information in accordance with clause 22;\textsuperscript{123}

(y) if a customer's bill is derived from \textit{smart meter} interval data:

\begin{itemize}
  \item[(i)] the index read at the end of the billing period; and
  \item[(ii)] \textbf{from 1 July 2012}, the index read at the start of the billing period\textsuperscript{124}, and
  \item[(iii)] the actual tariffs; and
  \item[(iv)] the total amount of electricity (in kWh) or gas (in MJ) or of both consumed in each period or class of period in respect of which a relevant tariff applies to a customer.\textsuperscript{125}
\end{itemize}

\textsuperscript{117} This sub-rule is equivalent to clause 4.2(m) of the ERC v10. This requirement may be varied in a market retail contract under the ERC v10 but not under the NERR.

\textsuperscript{118} This sub-rule is substantially equivalent to clause 4.2(m) of the ERC v10 except that the ERC v10 provides that if the customer is a domestic customer, the bill must include details about the availability of concessions.

\textsuperscript{119} This sub-rule is substantially equivalent to clause 4.2(o).

\textsuperscript{120} The ERC v10 does not require a telephone number specifically for complaints to be included in a customer's bill. Clause 4.2(q) of the ERC v10 requires that if the bill is a reminder notice, contact details for the retailer's complaint handling processes be included in the bill.

\textsuperscript{121} This sub-rule is substantially equivalent to clause 4.2(o).

\textsuperscript{122} This sub-rule is substantially equivalent to clause 4.2(p) except that under the ERC v10 this requirement is applicable to domestic customers only.

\textsuperscript{123} This sub-rule is equivalent to clause 5.7 of the ERC v10.

\textsuperscript{124} The words 'from 1 July 2012' have been deleted from clause 25(1)(y)(ii) as the Commission considers the timing of the clause is redundant.

\textsuperscript{125} The reference to gas was removed in response to submission from Origin Energy that smart meter minimum functionality does not include remote interval reading of gas meters.

\textsuperscript{126} This sub-rule is taken from clause 4.2(h) of the ERC v10.
Note:
Additional obligations in relation to the provision of metering information to customers are contained in the Electricity Metering 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.\(^{127}\)

(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**.

### 25A Greenhouse Gas Disclosure on electricity customers' bills\(^{128}\)

(1) **In this clause,**\(^{129}\)

`co-efficient` means:

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

(b) for each subsequent calendar year – a figure to be calculated by DSDBI 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).

`DSDBI` means the Victorian Department of State Development, Business and Innovation.

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

\[
\text{co-efficient} \times (\text{MWh of electricity} - \text{MWh of green power})
\]

(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).

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127 This sub-rule is equivalent to the first part of clause 4.6 of the ERC v10 except that the ERC v10 also requires that a description of the other goods or services be included.

128 There is no equivalent to Guideline 13: Greenhouse Gas Disclosure on Electricity Customers’ Bills in the NERR. Therefore, we have included a new rule 25A which incorporates the provisions contained in Guideline 13. Clause 25A has been updated to reflect the current version of Guideline 13 dated January 2013. In addition, all references to DPI have been replaced with DSDBI, the department’s new name.

129 The definitions within clause 25A have been moved to the beginning of the clause to address EWOV’s submission.
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 EIA, 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 a retailer must include at least the following information must be included in a customer’s electricity bill:

(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.climatechangeswitchon.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 DSDBPI before giving or refusing its approval.

(2A4A) 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).

(35) DSDBPI 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

130 New subclause 25A(2) has been inserted to reflect section 40R of the Electricity Industry Act which provides that a licence to sell electricity is deemed to include a condition requiring the licensee to include on a customer’s bill either information concerning greenhouse gas emissions or provide bill benchmarking information to a customer.

131 The Commission has amended this clause to make it clear that retailers have the option to either include greenhouse gas information or bill benchmarking on their customers’ bills.

132 The DSDBPI has advised that they would like these graphical formats to be included in the new draft instrument.
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 DSCBPI.

(4) SV will use best endeavours to ensure the maintenance of the “www.climatechange.vic.gov.au” website containing up-to-date and readily accessible information which includes the following information:

(i) the rationale of the scheme for increasing customer awareness through electricity bills;

(ii) the means of calculation of greenhouse gas emission information;

(iii) action which customers can take to reduce energy use and emissions;

(iv) information about green power; and

(v) website links to retailers’ and other relevant websites.

(6) DSCBPI 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 DPI or SV decision taken under or pursuant to this guideline clause 25A, or it has an unresolved customer complaint which properly relates to such a Commission or DPI or SV decision, it must raise the matter with the Commission (after first attempting to resolve the matter with DPI or SV in the case of a decision made by DPI or SV).

If a retailer has a complaint about a Commission or DSDBI decision taken under or pursuant to this clause 25A, or it has an unresolved customer complaint which properly relates to such a Commission or DSDBI decision, it must:

(a) attempt to resolve the matter with DSDBI if the matter relates to a DSDBI decision; or

(b) raise the matter with the Commission if the retailer is unsuccessful in resolving the matter with DSDBI or if the matter relates to a decision made by the Commission.
Note:
Neither the Commission nor this Code can bind DSDBI in the discharge of its functions, however, subclauses (5) and (6) have been included following consultation with DSDBI to properly inform retailers and customers of the role which DSDBI proposes to undertake in the scheme for increasing customer awareness through electricity bills which is set out in this Code.

In this clause:

eco-efficient means:
(a) for 2002—1.39 tonnes CO2e/MWh; and
(b) for each subsequent calendar year—a figure to be calculated by DPI 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).

DPI means the Victorian Department of Primary Industries.
SV means Sustainability Victoria.
disclosable emissions means the number of tonnes for the period calculated by applying the formula:

c = x (MWh of electricity – MWh of green power)

and where the period encompasses two calendar years the formula is to be applied using the eco-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 conducted by SV and other authorities.

26 Pay-by date (SRC)

(1) The pay-by date for a bill must not be earlier than 13 business days from the bill issue date. 133

(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.

133 Clause 7.1(a) of the ERC v10 provides that the pay by day on the initial bill must not be less than 12 business days from the date of dispatch. However, the 13 day time period will be included in the new Draft instrument as per the NERR.
27 Apportionment (SRC)\textsuperscript{134}

(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.\textsuperscript{135}

27A In Home Displays (SRC and MRC)\textsuperscript{136}

(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.

28 Historical billing information (SRC and MRC)\textsuperscript{137}

(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.

\textsuperscript{134} Rule 27(1) (in addition to rule 25(2)) is substantially similar to clause 4.6 of the ERC v10. Clause 4.5 is not included in the new draft instrument as there is no intention to maintain specific dual fuel obligations in the new draft instrument.

\textsuperscript{135} Under the ERC v10, the apportionment of payment provisions cannot be varied by agreement between the customer and the retailer in the formation of a market contract.

\textsuperscript{136} The NERR does not contain an equivalent provision to clause 4.7 of the ERC v10. However, this provision will be included in the new draft instrument.

\textsuperscript{137} Rule 28 is substantially similar to clause 27.2(a) of the ERC v10. There is no equivalent to clauses 27.2(b) or (d) of the ERC v10. However, clause 27.2(c) has been included at Rule 28(1) of the new draft instrument.
(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 information 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.

29 Billing disputes (SRC and MRC)\(^{140}\)

(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

(b) any other bills that are properly due.

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\(^{138}\)Following the submission from the Consumer Groups, the Commission has amended subclause 28(2A) to include a reference to ‘metering data’ and correct the drafting error by amending ‘historical billing information’ to ‘historical billing data’.

\(^{139}\)Clause 27.2(e) of the ERC v10 is not provided for in the NERR. However, the existing ERC v10 provisions that relate to smart meters will be included in the new draft instrument.

\(^{140}\)Rule 29 of the NERR is substantially equivalent to clause 6.1 of the ERC v10 except that sub-rules (2) and (3) of the NERR are not provided for in the ERC v10.
(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) subject to subclause (c), the customer must pay for the cost of the check or test (which the retailer may not request be paid in advance); and

(c) if the meter or metering data proves to be faulty or incorrect, the customer must not be required to pay the cost of the check or test.

Note: Additional obligations in relation to meter testing are contained in the Electricity Metering Code.

(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; and
   (iii) must refund (or set off against the amount in subparagraph (ii) any amount paid in advance under subclause (5)).

(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.

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141 Clauses 29(5)(b) and 29(6)(b)(iii) have been amended to make the clause subject to clause 29(5)(c) to address submissions that it was incorrectly drafted as it placed an obligation on customers to pay for the cost of a check or test when the metering data proves to be faulty or inconsistent.

142 Paragraph (c) has been amended to prohibit retailers from requesting up-front payment for meter testing as provided for in the ERC v10. The deletion of paragraph (b) is a consequential change. Clause 29(5)(c) has been amended for consistency with clause 29(5)(b).
(9) **Application of this clause to market retail contracts**

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

30 **Undercharging (SRC and MRC)**

(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*.

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143 Rule 30 is substantially equivalent to clause 6.2 of the ERC v10 except that the amount of time which the retailer must offer the customer to pay the undercharged amount must be at least equal to the period over which the undercharging occurred (clause 6.2(d), bullet point 3 of the ERC v10), while under rule 30 of the NERR, it must be a period nominated by the customer being no longer that this period.

144 Rule 30(2A) has been included to reflect clause 6.2(c) of the ERC v10. The wording has been amended to more accurately reflect its intended operation.
31 Overcharging (SRC and MRC)\(^{145}\)

(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.

\(^{145}\) Rule 31 is substantially equivalent to clause 6.3 of the ERC v10 except that the NERR contains additional provisions relating to circumstances where a customer has ceased to obtain services from the retailer. The ERC v10 also does not include an equivalent provision to sub-rule (4), which prohibits the payment of interest on an overcharged amount, or sub-rule (5), which relates to overcharging as a result of a customer's unlawful act or omission. The NERR also permits the AER to determine a different overcharge threshold. The Commission reserves the right to determine these thresholds.
Application of this clause to standard retail contracts
This clause applies in relation to *standard retail contracts*.

Application of this clause to market retail contracts
This clause applies in relation to *market retail contracts*.

32 Payment methods (SRC and MRC)\textsuperscript{146}

(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 74, 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

\textsuperscript{146} Rule 32 is substantially equivalent to clause 7.2 of the ERC v10, except that rule 32 contains additional payment methods to those required under the ERC v10. Clause 7.2(b) of the ERC v10 also contains additional requirements in relation to direct debit arrangements (noted below).
(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.147

(5) A retailer must accept payments by a small customer for a bill in advance.148

(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.

33 Payment difficulties (SRC and MRC)149

(1) A retailer must offer and apply payment plans for:

   (a) hardship customers; and

   (b) other residential customers experiencing payment difficulties if the customer informs the retailer in writing or by telephone that the customer is experiencing payment difficulties, or the retailer otherwise believes the customer is experiencing repeated difficulties in paying the customer's bill or requires payment assistance.150

(2) However, a retailer is not required to offer a payment plan to a customer referred to in subclause (1) if the customer:

   (a) has had 2 payment plans cancelled due to non-payment in the previous 12 months,151 or

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147 Clause 7.2(b)(6) bullet point 5 of the ERC v10 has been included in rule 32(4)(c) of the new draft instrument.

148 This sub-rule is substantially equivalent to clause 7.3 of the ERC v10.

149 Clauses 11.1 and 11.2 of the ERC v10 are broadly equivalent to rule 33 except that NERR includes less obligations than the ERC v10. In particular clauses 11.2(1) and (2) of the ERC v10 include obligations in relation to assessments of a customer's capacity to pay.

150 Unlike the NERL, the Electricity Industry Act and Gas Industry Act do not specifically require retailers to enter into payment plans with customers experiencing financial difficulties. Section 43(2) of the Electricity Industry Act and section 48G of the Gas Industry Act require retailers to prepare a customer hardship policy which includes flexible bill payment options. Clause 33(1)(b) has been amended to include the additional text in clause 72(1A)(b) to address the Consumer Groups’ submission that the drafting of clauses 33(1) and 72(1A) was inconsistent. Clause 72(1A) has been deleted to remove duplication.

151 This sub-rule is substantially similar to clause 11.2(3) of the ERC v10 except that the ERC v10 further requires that the customer has not provided a reasonable assurance to the retailers that the customer is willing to meet payment obligations under a further instalment plan in addition to failure to comply with the instalment plans.
(b) has been convicted of an offence involving illegal use of energy in the previous 2 years.

(3) A retailer must provide information to a customer referred to in subclause (1) about the availability of government funded energy charge rebate, concession or relief schemes, including the Utility Relief Grant Scheme.

(3A) A retailer must not require the payment of any amount as a condition of providing the customer with an application form for a Utility Relief Grant.\textsuperscript{152}

(4) Clause 72 applies to a residential customer referred to in subclause (1) (b) in the same way as it applies to a hardship customer.

(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.

34 Shortened collection cycles (SRC and MRC)\textsuperscript{153}

(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 experiencing payment difficulties;\textsuperscript{154} and

(b) the retailer has given the customer a reminder or warning notice for 2 consecutive bills;\textsuperscript{155} and

\textsuperscript{152} This sub-rule is similar in effect to clause 11.2(4) of the ERC v10 except that the ERC v10 specifically refers to the Utility Relief Grant Scheme and also requires the retailer to provide the customer with telephone information about energy efficiency and advice on the availability of an independent financial counsellor. Clause 11.2(5) of the ERC v10 specifically prohibits the retailer from requiring the payment of any amount as a condition of providing the customer with an application form for the Utility Relief Fund. Clause 11.2(5) has been included in the new draft instrument.

\textsuperscript{153} Rule 34 is substantially equivalent to clause 9.1 of the ERC v10 except where noted.

\textsuperscript{154} Clause 9.1(a) of the ERC v10 requires a retailer to comply with clause 11.2, which relates to assessment and assistance for domestic customers experiencing payment difficulties, before placing a domestic customer on a shortened collection cycle. There is no direct equivalent provision in the NERR, however rule 34(2)(a) prohibits a customer being placed on a shortened collection cycle if the customer is experiencing payment difficulties, which achieves a similar outcome.

\textsuperscript{155} Clause 9.1(b) of the ERC v10 requires reminder notices for three consecutive bills or disconnection warnings for two consecutive bills. The NERR only requires two reminder or disconnection warning notices. The NERR position has been adopted.
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.156

(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.

156 Rule 34(3)(a) is substantially equivalent to clause 9.2 of the ERC v10, except that the NERR includes additional requirements to the ERC v10 under sub-rules (b) and (c).
35 Request for final bill (SRC) ¹⁵⁷

(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.

35A Additional Retail Charges (SRC and MRC) ¹⁵⁸ ¹⁵⁹

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

(a) if their energy contract is a market retail contract¹⁶⁰, 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

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¹⁵⁷ There is no equivalent provision in the ERC v10 to Rule 37. The ERC v10 only provides for the finalisation of a customer's account if the customer has requested disconnection, which is equivalent to Rule 118 of the NERR.

¹⁵⁸ This rule has been included to reflect clause 30 of the ERC v10. There is no equivalent provision in the NERR.

¹⁵⁹ The wording of clause 35A(4) has been incorporated into clause 35C to reflect the current drafting of clause 7.5 of the ERC v10.

¹⁶⁰ This clause has been amended to include the word 'retail' in market retail contract to address the Consumer Groups' submission that it was omitted from the original draft ERC v11.
applicable to the customer and which must be calculated in accordance with clause 30.35A161 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, excluded 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 energy contract, whether under an agreed damages term or otherwise, is not an additional retail charge.

(4) 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.

Application of this clause to standard retail contracts

This clause applies in relation to standard retail contracts.

Application of this clause to market retail contracts

This clause applies in relation to market retail contracts.

35B Merchant Service Fees (SRC and MRC)162

(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 apply163 in relation to standard retail contracts.

(3) Application of this clause to market retail contracts

This clause applies in relation to market retail contracts.

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161 This clause has been amended to address a drafting error.
162 This rule has been included to reflect clause 7.5(b) of the ERC v10. There is no equivalent provision in the NERR.
163 This clause has been amended to address the Consumer Groups’ and EWOV’s submissions that merchant fees are only recoverable under market retail contracts.
35C Dishonoured Payments (SRC and MRC)\(^\text{164}\)

(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.

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**Division 5 Tariff changes**

36 Obligations on retailers (SRC)\(^\text{165}\)

(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:

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\(^{164}\) This clause has been included to reflect clause 7.5(a) of the ERC v10. There is no equivalent provision in the NERR.

\(^{165}\) There is no equivalent to rule 36 or rule 37 of the NERR in the ERC v10.
(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]166

(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) If a reclassification is necessary as a result of a change of use under subclause (4), the reclassification takes effect on the date on which the new tariff applies under subclause (4).167 [Not used].

166 This subclause has been deleted because it relies on clauses 8 and 10 which are not included in the new draft instrument.
167 This clause has been deleted to address a drafting error as provisions relating to classification and
(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**\(^{168}\)

(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*.

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\(^{168}\) There is no direct equivalent to rule 39 in the ERC v10. Rule 39 permits more extensive consideration of a customer’s credit history than under clause 8 of the ERC v10. Under clause 8.1(a) bullet point 4 of the ERC v10, the retailer's assessment of a customer's credit history is limited to consideration of a 'relevant default' by the customer (broadly, being a default that relates to a failure to pay a bill for the supply of energy or water with a retailer that is greater than $120 and a retailer has taken steps to recover the amount; or where the debt has resulted in court judgement or the customer has been declared bankrupt. The more extensive consideration of a customer’s history as per the NERL provision has been adopted.
(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*.

### 40 Requirement for security deposit (SRC and MRC)\(^{169}\)

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*.\(^{170}\)

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;\(^{171}\) or
   - (b) the *customer* has fraudulently acquired or intentionally consumed *energy* otherwise than in accordance with the *energy laws* within the past 2 years;\(^{172}\) or
   - (c) the *customer* has refused or failed to provide *acceptable identification* to the *retailer*;\(^{173}\) or
   - (d) the *retailer* reasonably considers that the *customer* has an unsatisfactory credit history;\(^{174}\) or

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\(^{169}\) The NERR requirements in relation to security deposits are organised and drafted differently to the ERC v10 but achieve broadly consistent outcomes to clause 8 of the ERC v10, except where noted below. The NERR includes a number of additional requirements that are not provided for in the ERC v10. Conversely, there are some obligations under the ERC v10 that have not been picked up in the NERR.

\(^{170}\) The ERC v10 does not restrict the time when a retailer can request a security deposit from the customer.

\(^{171}\) Unlike the NERR, a retailer can only request a security deposit from a customer if the customer has left a previous supply address or has transferred to the retailer and still owes the retailer or former retailer more than $120. There is no equivalent provision to rules 40(2)(a)(i) and (ii) in the ERC v10.

\(^{172}\) Rule 40(2)(b) is substantially equivalent to clause 8.1(a), bullet point 2 of the ERC v10.

\(^{173}\) Rule 40(2)(c) is substantially equivalent to clause 8.1(a) bullet point 3 of the ERC v10 except that the ERC v10 provision applies to new customers.
(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;\(^{175}\) or

(f) the customer has refused or failed to provide the retailer with the permission or other information requested under clause 39 (1) (a).\(^{176}\)

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

(a) is identified as a hardship customer by the retailer in relation to any premises; or

(b) advises the retailer that the customer was identified as a hardship customer by another retailer in relation to any premises; or

(c) if the retailer has not complied with Clause 33; or

(d) if the small customer has formally applied for a Utility Relief Grant and a decision on the application has not been made.\(^{178}\)

(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 clause 33.\(^{179}\)

\(^{174}\) Rule 40(2)(d) is substantially equivalent to clause 8.1(a) bullet point 4 of the ERC v10 except that the ERC v10 limits the circumstances in which a customer's credit history may be considered to 'relevant defaults' (see note above).

\(^{175}\) Rule 40(2)(e) is similar to clause 8.2 of the ERC v10, except that clause 8.2 permits a retailer to request a security deposit from a business customer if it is fair and reasonable in all the circumstances whereas the NERR specifies that the business customer must have no history of paying energy accounts or an unsatisfactory record in relation to the payment of energy accounts.

\(^{176}\) There is no equivalent provision to rule 40(2)(f) in the ERC v10.

\(^{177}\) The previous subclause 40(3)(c) stating "if the retailer has not complied with Clause 33" has been inserted into clause 40(4) to address the Consumer Groups' submission that clauses 40(3)(c) and 40(4) appear to achieve the same outcome.

\(^{178}\) There is no direct equivalent provision to rule 40(3) in the ERC v10. However, clause 8.1(b) bullets points 3 and 4 provide that a retailer cannot require a security deposit if the retailer has not complied with clause 11.1 (which relates to payment difficulties), or if the customer has formally applied for the Utility Relief Grant and a decision on the application has not been made. Clause 8.1(b) bullet points 3 and 4 have been included in the new draft instrument.

\(^{179}\) Rule 40(4) is substantially equivalent to clause 8.1(b) bullet point 1 of the ERC v10. This clause has been amended to address the Consumer Groups' submission that clauses 40(3)(c) and 40(4) appear to achieve the same outcome.
(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.180

(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.181

(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.182

(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.183

41 Payment of security deposit (SRC)

(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.184

(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 112.185

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180 There is no equivalent provision to rule 40(5) in the ERC v10.
181 There is no equivalent provision to rule 40(6) in the ERC v10.
182 There is no equivalent provision to rule 40(7) in the ERC v10.
183 The ERC v10 does not permit a market retail contract to be varied to exclude provisions relating to security deposits.
184 There is no equivalent provision to rule 41(1) in the ERC v10.
185 There is no equivalent provision to rule 41(2) in the ERC v10.
(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.\(^{(3)}\)

(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.

**42 Amount of security deposit (SRC)\(^{(4)}\)**

(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.

**43 Interest on security deposit (SRC and MRC)\(^{(3)}\)**

(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

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\(^{(3)}\) There is no equivalent provision to rule 41(3) in the ERC v10.

\(^{(4)}\) Rule 42 is substantially equivalent to clause 8.1(c) of the ERC v10 with respect to a contract, other than a dual fuel contract. However the ERC v10 provides that for a dual fuel contract, if the retailer requires the security deposit because the customer has an unsatisfactory credit rating, the security deposit must not be more than 25%. The new draft instrument does not maintain specific dual fuel obligations.

\(^{(3)}\) Rule 43 is substantially equivalent to clause 8.3(a) of the ERC v10.
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.

44 **Use of security deposit (SRC)**

(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.\(^{189}\)

(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.\(^{190}\)

(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.\(^{191}\)

(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.

\(^{189}\) Rule 44(1) is substantially equivalent to clause 8.3(c) of the ERC v10.

\(^{190}\) There is no equivalent provision to rule 44(2) in the ERC v10.

\(^{191}\) Rule 44(3) is substantially equivalent to clause 8.3(d) of the ERC v10.
Application of this clause to market retail contracts

This clause does not apply in relation to market retail contracts.192

Obligation to return security deposit (SRC)193

(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.

Application of this clause to standard retail contracts

This clause applies in relation to standard retail contracts.

Application of this clause to market retail contracts

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

Division 7 Market retail contracts—particular requirements

Definitions

In this Division:

fixed term retail contract means a market retail contract 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.

192 A market retail contract cannot be varied with respect to security deposits under the ERC v10.

193 Rule 45 is substantially equivalent to clause 8.3(b) of the ERC v10.
**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.

### 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*.

2. A *retailer* must set out in a *market retail contract* 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*.\(^{194}\)

4. The notice must be given as soon as practicable, and in any event, in the case of *customers* with *smart meters*, 20 business days prior to the variation, and otherwise no later than the *customer’s* next bill.\(^{195}\)

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*.\(^{196}\)

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\(^{194}\) Rule 46(3) is similar in effect to clause 20(a) of the ERC v10 which provides that the structure and nature of tariffs may only be varied by agreement in writing between the customer and the retailer. However the ERC v10 applies not only to variations of tariffs but also more broadly in relation to terms and conditions and it relates to energy contracts rather than being limited to market retail contracts. The NERR does not provide for variation to standard retail contracts or variation to terms and conditions more broadly. There is no equivalent in the NERR to clauses 20(b) and 20(c) of the ERC v10, which relate to inferred customer consent to a variation. The NERR also does not provide for gazette based variations set out in clause 21 of the ERC v10.

\(^{195}\) Rule 46(4) is similar in effect to clause 26.4(b) of the ERC v10 which requires a retailer to give a customer notice of variations to the amount and structure of the retailer’s tariffs as soon as practicable and, in the case of smart meters, 20 business days prior to the variation, and otherwise no later than the customer’s next bill. There is no equivalent in the NERR to clause 26.4(a) of the ERC v10, which provides that a retailer must provide a customer with reasonable information on tariffs within 10 business days of the customer’s request. Sections 23(1) and 37 of the NERL require standing offer tariffs and market offer prices to be published on a retailer’s website. Rules 23(1) and 37 of the NERL have been included in the new draft instrument. The publication of standing offer prices is contained in Guideline 19, and is included in Division 2A of the new instrument.

\(^{196}\) Rule 35 of the NERL provides that any variation of the terms and conditions of a market retail contract must not be inconsistent with the Rules in relation to variation of market retail contracts. Section 28 of the NERL also provides for limited ‘permitted alterations’ to standard retail contracts. The wording of sections 28 and 35 of the NERL have been included in the new draft instrument. ‘Permitted alterations’ are incorporated in Rule 12.
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 an energy contract previously agreed between the customer and the retailer, 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 energy 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 small customer’s gas in accordance with and as contemplated by a disconnection warning, no further agreement is required.

47 Cooling off period and right of withdrawal—market retail contracts

1. Right of withdrawal
A small customer who enters into a market retail contract 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 receives the required information under clause 64 about the contract.

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.

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197 This clause has been incorporated to include provisions of clause 20 of the ERC v10 in response to submissions from the Consumer Groups.

198 Rule 47 is similar to clause 3.4 of the Marketing Code except that clause 3.4(b) bullet point 1 provides that for an electricity contract that is an energisation contract or for a gas contract in respect of a supply point which requires only unplugging or installation of a meter to allow the flow of gas, the cancellation period is only 5 business days including the date the contract is entered into. Appendix 1 of the Marketing Code contains additional provisions in relation to cooling off where the Fair Trading Act 1999 does not apply. The Fair Trading Act 1999 has been repealed and replaced by the Australian Consumer Law and Fair Trading Act 2012.
(4) **How right of withdrawal may be exercised**

The small customer withdraws from the contract by informing the retailer orally or in writing of the customer’s intention to withdraw from the contract.\(^{199}\)

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

A retailer must include in each market retail contract it enters into with a small customer express provisions setting out the rights and obligations provided for by this clause.\(^{200}\)

(6) **Record of withdrawal**

A retailer must create a record of each withdrawal, and the provisions of clause 3D of the Code\(^{201}\) 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 operates as a rescission of the contract.

48 **Retailer notice of end of fixed term retail contract**\(^{202}\)

(1) This clause applies to a fixed term retail contract.

(2) A retailer must, in accordance with this clause, notify a small customer with a fixed term retail contract that the contract 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.

(4) The notice must state:

(a) the date on which the contract 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); and

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\(^{199}\) Under clause 3.4 of the Marketing Code, a consumer can cancel a marketing contract by giving the retailer a cancellation notice whereas the NERR also permits a consumer to cancel a contract by providing notice verbally.

\(^{200}\) This sub-rule is not provided for in the Marketing Code.

\(^{201}\) Section 40 of the NERL sets out certain format requirements for records of informed consent including that the record must be kept for 2 years. Section 40 of the NERL has been incorporated into clause 3B of the Code.

\(^{202}\) Rule 48 is substantially equivalent to clause 24.3 of the ERC v10 except that the timing requirements for the notice period are different: the ERC v10 requires a retailer to notify a customer no sooner than 2 months before, and no later than one month before the expiration date and the NERR refers to 40 business days and 20 business days respectively.
(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.

(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.

49 Termination of market retail contract

(1) A market retail contract 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

203 The NERR provisions in relation to termination of a retail contracts are organised and drafted differently to clause 24 of the ERC v10. However rule 49, with respect to market retail contracts, and rule 70, with respect to standard retail contracts have substantially similar effect. The key differences are: the NERR provides a number of circumstances in which a market retail contract terminates, whereas clause 24.1(a) does not provide any circumstances and only states that a customer can terminate the contract. Clause 24.1(b) of the ERC v10 requires the customer to give the retailer 28 days notice whereas sub-rule (2) prohibits a contract from requiring more than 20 business days notice. Clause 24.1(c) of the ERC v10 provides that a deemed customer does not need to give notice to terminate an energy contract, however this is not specifically provided for in the NERR. There is no equivalent in the NERR to clause 24.2 of the ERC v10 which specifies the time at which a deemed contract under section 39(5)(b) of the Electricity Industry Act or 46(5)(b) of the Gas Industry Act comes to an end, being the period covered by the second bill issued by the retailer. Under section 54(3) of the NERL, deemed customer contracts continue until a new customer retail contract is formed in relation to the premises. There is no equivalent provision in the NERR to clause 24.5 of the ERC v10, which specifies the time at which termination of an energy contract is effective. There is no equivalent provision in the NERR to clause 24.6 of the ERC v10, which sets out the consequences of a last resort event on energy contracts. Section 141 of the NERL has substantially the same effect as clause 24.6(a) of the ERC v10, however there is no equivalent to clauses 24.6(b) and (c) of the ERC v10 which deal with dual fuel contracts. None of these additional aspects of the ERC v10 have been included in the new draft instrument.

204 Rules relating to prepayment meters have been removed.
(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;206 or

(f) subject to subclause (2), on another date or event specified in the market retail contract,

whichever first occurs.

(2) A term or condition of a market retail contract has no effect to the extent that it requires a customer to give more than 20 business days notice to terminate the contract.

(3) Termination of a market retail contract 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.

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.

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205 This sub-rule is similar in effect to clause 24.2(b) which permits a retailer to terminate if the customer and retailer enter into a new energy contract.

206 This sub-rule is similar in effect to clause 24.2(a) of the ERC v10, except the ERC v10 does not specify a 10 day time period. Instead clause 24.2(a) provides that retailer can terminate if a customer breaches their energy contract and it confers a right on the retailer to disconnect the customer and the customer no longer has a right to be reconnected.

207 Rule 49A is broadly equivalent to clause 24.1(d) of the ERC v10 which provides that a retailer may impose an early termination fee on the customer if the contract includes details of the amount or manner of the calculation of the early termination fee and the imposition of a fee is not prohibited by any guideline. The NERR contains a number of additional requirements that are not covered by the ERC v10. Rule 49A also incorporates clause 31 of the ERC v10.
(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).208

(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) $20:

which comprises:

(i) the additional costs of giving effect to the early termination of the contract, final billing and ceasing to be responsible for the supply address; and

(ii) 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*.

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208 Clause 24.1(d) bullet point 2 permits an early termination fee to be imposed on a customer who is party to an evergreen contract which is terminated by the customer before the maturity date.

209 This clause has been amended to address the typographical error.
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;

(d) 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.

Liabilities and immunities

A retailer must not include any term or condition in a market retail contract with a small customer that limits the liability of the retailer for breach of the contract or negligence by the retailer.

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210 Rule 50 is substantially equivalent to clause 28 of the ERC v10 except that clause 28.1 requires the retailer to handle a complaint in accordance with the relevant ‘Australian Standard in Complaints Handling’ and to include the information on the complaint handling process in the retailer’s charter. The NERR requires this information to be published on the retailer’s website. Clause 28.2(a) of the ERC v10 also requires the retailer to inform the customer that they have the right to raise the complaint to a higher level within the retailer’s management structure in addition to referring the complaint to the Ombudsman.

211 Rule 51 is substantially equivalent to clause 16(a), bullet point 1 of the ERC v10 except that the NERR relates only to market retail contracts whereas the ERC v10 relates to all energy contracts. There are no equivalent provisions in the NERR to the remaining provisions of the ERC v10 which provide at clause 16(b) bullet point 2 that the retailer must not include a term in its energy contract requiring a business customer to take precautions to minimise risk of loss resulting from poor quality or reliability of energy supply. Also at clause 16(b) the retailer may include a term of the sort contemplated by section 64A of the Australian Consumer Law under which the customer acknowledges the extent of the retailer’s responsibility for the quality and reliability of energy supply, confirming that there is no variation or exclusion of the operation of specified provisions of energy legislation, and requiring a business customer to take precautions to minimise risk of loss resulting from poor quality or reliability of energy supply. However, the NERR Standard Retail Contract is in accordance with the provisions of the Code despite not being set out directly in the Rules.
Indemnities

A retailer must not include any term or condition in a market retail contract 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.\textsuperscript{212}

Division 8  Deemed customer retail arrangements\textsuperscript{213}

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 48 relating to a market retail contract and containing that information.

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

\textsuperscript{212} Rule 52 is substantially equivalent to clause 17 of the ERC v10 except that the NERR relates only to market retail contracts whereas the ERC v10 relates to all energy contracts.

\textsuperscript{213} There is no direct equivalent in the ERC v10.
(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

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.

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:
   (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:

214 Rule 55 is not directly included in the ERC v10 however it is similar in intent to clause 26.2(c) of the ERC v10.

215 Clause 26.2 of the ERC v10 requires a retailer to give domestic customers a copy of the retailer's charter and specifies the information that must be included in the charter. There is no direct equivalent in the NERR for a charter, however rule 56 covers similar information to clause 26.2. Similarly clause 26.3 of the ERC v10 requires retailers to provide a copy of the code to customers on request, however there is no equivalent in the NERR. Rule 56(4) similarly requires the information to be provided to customers on request. Clause 26.5 of the ERC v10 requires a retailer to provide domestic customers with information on concessions and clause 26.6 requires a retailer to provide information regarding energy efficiency on request. There is no equivalent to these provisions in the NERR. The Commission has included these provisions in the new draft instrument.

216 Rule 57(1)(a) of the NERR is substantially equivalent to clause 33(a) of the ERC v10. There is no equivalent to clauses 33(b) of the ERC v10 in the NERR, which provides that clause 33(a) does not apply if the assignment forms part of the transfer to the same third party of all or substantially all of the retailer's retail sales business.
(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.\(^{217}\)

59A Standard complaints and dispute resolution procedures

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

\(^{217}\) This note was inserted to address the submission by the Consumer Groups that there is no discussion of transfer timeframes or particular provisions relating to smart meters as there is in the Electricity Customer Transfer 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

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218 This subclause is equivalent to clause 81 of the NERL and was inserted to address inconsistencies between the Electricity Metering Code, the NERL and this Code.

219 Division 10 of the NERR is drafted substantially differently to the Marketing Code. There are also provisions of the Marketing Code which are not contained in the NERR but are instead covered in the NERL. The DSDBI commented in its Discussion Paper on ‘Victorian-specific regulatory requirements under the National Energy Customer Framework’ that the NECF contains significant protections for consumers which obviate the need for additional Victorian energy-specific regulation. Sections of the Marketing Code that are not included in the NERR are: clause 1, Training of marketing representatives; clause 3.7, Off retailer business premises contracts, clause 5, commencement of retail service; clause 6, marketing and consumer information, Appendix 1, cooling-off where the Fair Trading Act does not apply. Sections of the Marketing Code that are not in the NERR but are contained in the NERL are, clause 4.1 consumer transfer, clause 4.2 contract terms, and clause 7, dispute resolution. The sections of the Marketing Code that are not covered in the NERR will not be included in the new draft instrument.

220 Clause 3.3 of the Marketing Code refers to ‘pre-contractual information’ which must be provided to a consumer before entering into a contract. Clause 3.5 of the Marketing Code provides for contract information which must be provided to a consumer on or before the second business day after the relevant date in respect of a contract. The contract information set out in clause 3.5 does not have an equivalent in the NERR. Instead there are various requirements regarding contract information, for example, see rule 19 of the NERR.
(b) as soon as practicable after 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.\(^{221}\)

(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.\(^{222}\)

(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.\(^{223}\)

64 Required information\(^{224}\)

(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;\(^{225}\)

(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;\(^{226}\)

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\(^{221}\) Clause 3.1 of the Marketing Code requires that information provided to consumers must be written in plain English and designed to be readily understood by consumers.

\(^{222}\) There is no equivalent provision to this sub-rule in Marketing Code.

\(^{223}\) There is no equivalent provision to this sub-rule in Marketing Code.

\(^{224}\) There are broad similarities between pre-contractual information under clause 3.3 of the Marketing Code and required information under the NERR. However there are a number of provisions in the Marketing Code that are not covered by the NERR. These provisions are as follows: clause 3.3.(b) bullet point 1: the type, frequency of bills and payment methods the consumer will receive; clause 3.3.(b) bullet point 3: the full name, address and telephone number of the retailer; clause 3.3.(b) bullet point 5: that the consumer may be contacted as part of an audit procedure to confirm their understanding of the contract; clause 3.3.(b) bullet point 6: all relevant information about any difference between the contract's terms and the basic terms and conditions under the Energy Retail Code; and clause 3.3.(b) bullet point 8: whether the marketing representative will receive a commission if the customer enters into a contract. Additionally, the Marketing Code only requires limited pre-contractual information to be provided to consumers entering a standard offer and more detailed information to be provided to consumers entering a market contract whereas the NERR does not make a distinction between information to be provided to consumers entering standard retail contracts or market retail contracts.

\(^{225}\) Clause 3.3(a) and (b) bullet point 1 and bullet point 2 of the Marketing Code are broadly equivalent to rule 64(1)(a).
(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; 227

(d) the rights that a customer has to withdraw from the contract during the cooling off period, including how to exercise those rights; 228

(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. 229

(2) The required information, when given in a written disclosure statement, must include or be accompanied by a copy of the market retail contract. 230

Subdivision 3 Energy marketing activities

65 No contact lists 231

(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. 232

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226 Clause 3.3(b) bullet point 4 of the Marketing Code contains similarities to rule 64(1)(b) in relation to contract termination. The NERR contains additional requirements to provide information about the commencement date and duration of the contract and the availability of extensions.

227 Clause 3.6 of the Marketing Code similarly deals with electronic commerce information, however it specifically requires the retailer to have online processes to ensure the consumer has received the information required by clause 3.5 and prior to entering the contract the retailer must supply the required information by email immediately after entering the contract. This additional requirement is broadly consistent with rule 63(1) of the NERR which requires retailers to provide information after the formation of the contract if they had previously received verbal or electronic information.

228 There is no direct equivalent to this sub-rule in the Marketing Code, however it is likely to be captured by the requirement under clause 3.3(b) bullet point 4 of the Marketing Code which requires the retailer to provide information about the rights the consumer has to cancel the contract.

229 There is no equivalent provision to sub-rule 64(1)(e) in the NERR.

230 Sub-rule 64(2) is broadly consistent with clause 3.5 bullet point 1 of the Marketing Code which requires that on or before the second business day after the contract is entered into by the consumer, the retailer must give the consumer a copy of the contract. Sub-rule 64(2) is also broadly consistent with clause 3.3(1) bullet point 7 of the Marketing Code except that under the Marketing Code the full terms of the contract must be provided to a consumer in the case of contracts formed by marketing representatives in person off the business premises.

231 Rule 65 is substantially equivalent to clause 2.3 of the Marketing Code except where noted.

232 The NERR provisions in relation to no contact lists apply to marketing in person or at a person’s premises but not to telemarketing calls or e-marketing activities. By contrast, clause 2.3 of the Marketing Code relates to marketing in person, by email, by telephone or by post.
(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.\(^2\)

(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.\(^2\)

**66 No canvassing or advertising signs\(^2\)**

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.\(^2\)

**68 Record keeping\(^2\)**

(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.238

Division 11 Miscellaneous

69 Compliance by small customer who is not owner of premises239

If a small customer is unable to fulfill an obligation in respect of:

(a) premises (including, but not limited to, access to premises) under a customer retail contract; 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.

70 Termination of standard retail contract (SRC)240

(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;

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238 Under the Marketing Code, a retailer must also make records available for an independent audit as required.
239 No direct equivalent in ERC v10.
240 Refer to comments at footnote 199.
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,*

241 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.242

### 70B Termination in the event of a last resort event243

1. Where a *retailer* and a *customer* have entered into an *energy contract,* other than a dual fuel contract, and a *last resort event* occurs in relation to the *retailer,* that *energy contract* 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 *energy contract* 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 *energy 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.

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241 This clause is taken from clause 24.4 of the ERC v10.

242 This clause was amended to address the submission by EWOV that there is an inconsistency between the *Electricity Industry Act* and the *Gas Industry Act* and the draft ERC v11. In addition, the amended clause addresses Origin’s submission that it is unclear what would happen to a deemed contract if the customer continues to take supply after being issued a second bill, but refuses to enter into a supply contract.

243 This subclause is equivalent to clause 24.6 of the ERC v10 and was inserted to address the Consumer Groups’ submissions that provisions relating to a last resort event should be included in the draft ERC v11.
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 energy 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 energy 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 energy 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 energy 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 energy contract for the other fuel will continue on the same terms and conditions.
Part 3  Customer hardship

71  Obligation of retailer to communicate customer hardship policy

(1) A retailer must inform a hardship customer of the retailer of the existence of the retailer’s customer hardship policy as soon as practicable after the customer is identified as a hardship customer.

(2) The retailer must provide a customer or a financial counsellor with a copy of the customer hardship policy on request and at no expense.

(3) A retailer must publish details of its customer hardship policy on its website

(a) as soon as practicable after it has been approved by the Commission; and

(b) in a way that is easy for a customer to access.

71A  Approval by the Commission of a customer hardship policy

(1) A customer hardship policy must include the matters set out in section 43(2) of the Electricity Industry Act or section 48G(2) of the Gas Industry Act.

(2) In determining whether to approve a retailer’s customer hardship policy, the Commission will consider whether it is appropriate and will have regard to:

(a) the factors set out in section 45(2) of the Electricity Industry Act or section 48I of the Gas Industry Act; and

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244 Section 43 of the Electricity Industry Act and section 48G of the Gas Industry Act require retailers to prepare a financial hardship policy. Section 44 of the Electricity Industry Act and 48H of the Gas Industry Act permit the Commission to prepare guidelines in relation to financial hardship policies. Guideline 21 relates to Energy Retailers Financial Hardship Policies. The equivalent requirement under the NECF for a retailer to have a customer hardship policy is set out in section 43 of the NERL, and section 49 of the NERL permits Rules to be made with respect to hardship customers. In addition to the requirements set out in rule 72 of the NERR, section 44 of the NERL sets out the minimum requirements for a customer hardship policy. The NERL requirements are broadly equivalent to the clause 2.2 of Guideline 21. As there are no requirements relating to the content of a customer hardship policy in the NERR. The requirements outlined on clauses 2.1-2.4 of Guideline 21 have been included to ensure that the Commission satisfies its obligations under the Electricity Industry Act and the Gas Industry Act and to create less confusion for industry by included elements of the NERR and the Guideline 21. The Commission notes that while this chapter is predominately based on Guideline 21, we have used the NERR terminology.

245 Clause 2.3 of Guideline 21 requires a retailer to provide details of the hardship policy to a customer or a financial counsellor.

246 Section 43(2) of the NERL requires a retailer to publish its customer hardship policy on its website as soon as practicable after it is approved. Clause 2.3 of Guideline 21 requires a retailer to publish details of the hardship policy on its website in a way that is easy for a customer to access.

247 This clause has been inserted to correct a drafting error and respond to the Consumer Groups’ submission that some aspects of clause 2.1 of Guideline 21 were not incorporated in the ERC v11. The Commission has decided to incorporate all of the provisions from clause 2.1 of Guideline 21 instead of adopting the NERL drafting.
(b) the objects set out in section 42 of the Electricity Industry Act or section 48F of the Gas Industry Act, including the promotion of best practice in energy delivery.

71AB Minimum requirementsContents for a customer hardship policy 248

(1) Nothing in this clause requires a retailer to offer all the options covered by its customer hardship policy to all of its hardship customers. The retailer must however, provide its customers in financial hardship with equitable access to the options appropriate to their individual circumstances.

(2) In meeting the obligations set out in clause 71A, the Commission expects a retailer’s customer hardship policy to:

(a) reflect that a customer in financial hardship is a customer who has the intention but not the capacity to make a payment within the timeframe required by the retailer’s payment terms;

(b) enable customers in financial hardship:

(i) to identify themselves to the retailer,

(ii) to be identified by financial counsellors to the retailer; or

(iii) to be identified by the retailer;

(c) provide details of the processes and criteria the retailer will use to identify customers in financial hardship;

(d) provide details of the options that will be provided to customers in financial hardship and how customers will be assisted to maintain their participation in payment plans or any other option offered to them;

(e) provide details of the processes the retailer will use to work with the customer and where appropriate a financial counsellor to assess the appropriate options to be provided by the retailer;

(f) offer fair and reasonable payment options with fair and reasonable instalment intervals that accommodate the particular circumstances of customers in financial hardship and to monitor the customer’s payments, including the accumulation of debt;

(g) provide details of:

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248 Clause 2.2 of Guideline 21 has been incorporated into the Code to address a drafting omission and the Consumer Groups’ submission.
(i) how and in what circumstances the retailer will make field audits of electricity or gas usage available to customers experiencing financial hardship;

(ii) in what circumstances the field audits will be available at partial or no cost to the customer, and

(iii) how the customer’s agreement to partially fund a field audit will be obtained and how the benefits of the customer’s expenditure will be demonstrated;

(h) provide details of how and in what circumstances the retailer will provide assistance to customers in financial hardship to replace electrical and gas appliances, including whether the retailer will sell or supply the appliances itself or nominate a third party to do so;

(i) provide for the referral of customers in financial hardship to other support agencies and schemes where appropriate;

(j) set out the process retailers will follow to advise customers of their rights and obligations in respect of their agreement under the retailer’s hardship program;

(k) set out the circumstances in which a hardship arrangement between a customer and the retailer will cease;

(l) require the retailer’s staff to be made aware of the policy and require all staff involved in the administration of the customer hardship program to have the necessary skills to sensitively engage with customers about their payment difficulties and in offering assistance;

(m) be transparent, accessible and communicate to customers, financial counsellors and community assistance agencies;

(n) recommend the most appropriate tariff at the time of entry to the customer hardship program, bearing in mind:

(i) cost effectiveness; and

(ii) whether the customer has dedicated off peak appliances; and

(iii) the customer’s previous tariff (including network charge); and

(iv) the customer’s overall power usage; and

(v) the customer’s previous bills, if available; and

(vi) any other relevant information provided by the customer; and
(p) require the retailer to monitor their behaviour and consumption during their participation in the customer hardship program to ensure that they continue on the most appropriate tariff and facilitate a change if necessary.

(3) This clause 71B does not limit the requirements of section 43(2) of the Electricity Industry Act or section 48G(2) of the Gas Industry Act or the requirements of this Code.

(1) The minimum requirements for a customer hardship policy of a retailer are that it must contain:

(a) the matters set out in section 43(2) of the Electricity Industry Act or section 48G of the Gas Industry Act; and

(b) processes to identify residential customers experiencing payment difficulties due to hardship, including identification by the retailer, financial counsellors and self-identification by a residential customer; and

(c) processes for the early response by the retailer in the case of residential customers identified as experiencing payment difficulties due to hardship; and

(d) flexible payment options (including a payment plan and Centrepay) for the payment of energy bills by hardship customers; and

(e) processes to identify appropriate government concession programs and appropriate financial counselling services and to notify hardship customers of those programs and services; and

(f) an outline of a range of programs that the retailer may use to assist hardship customers; and

(g) processes to ensure hardship customers are provided with assistance to replace electrical and gas equipment.

(i) how and in what circumstances the retailer will make field audits of electricity or gas usage available to customers experiencing financial hardship;

(ii) in what circumstances the field audits will be available at partial or no cost to the customer; and

(iii) how the customer’s agreement to partially fund a field audit will be obtained and how the benefits of the customer’s expenditure will be demonstrated; and

(h) provide details of how and in what circumstances the retailer will provide assistance to customers in financial hardship to replace electrical and gas equipment.

- 90 -
appliances, including whether the *retailer* will sell or supply the appliances itself or nominate a third party to do so; and

(i) any variations specified or of a kind specified by the Commission; and

(ii) any other matters required by this Code.

71B Approval and variation of customer hardship policy

(1) The Commission must approve a customer hardship policy (or variation) submitted to the Commission for approval if the Commission is satisfied that the policy (or the policy as varied):

(a) contains the minimum requirements for a customer hardship policy set out in clause 71A; and

(b) is appropriate having regard to:

(i) the factors set out in section 45(2) of the Electricity Industry Act or section 48I of the Gas Industry Act; and

(ii) the objects set out in section 42 of the Electricity Act or section 48F of the Gas Industry Act, including the promotion of best practice in energy delivery.

(2) If it is not so satisfied, the Commission may:

(a) indicate to the retailer in what respects it considers the customer hardship policy (or variation) as submitted is deficient and request the retailer to submit another customer hardship policy (or variation); or

(b) approve the customer hardship policy (or variation) with alterations agreed to by the retailer so that the Commission is satisfied as to the matters referred to in subclauses (1)(a) and (b).

(3) If the Commission forms the view that a retailer's customer hardship policy requires review:

(a) the Commission may direct the retailer to review the policy and make variations in accordance with any requirements set out by the Commission and;

(b) the retailer must:

(i) vary the policy in accordance with the Commission's requirements;

(ii) submit it to the Commission for approval; and

(iii) publish the policy, as approved by the Commission, on its website as soon as practicable after it has been approved.
(4) A retailer may vary its customer hardship policy independently of a direction referred to in subclause (3) but only if the variation has been approved by the Commission and the varied policy has been published on the retailer’s website after the Commission has approved the variation.

(5) A reference in this Part 3 to varying a customer hardship policy extends to replacing the policy with another customer hardship policy.

(6) Any request by a retailer for the Commission to approve a new or amended customer hardship policy must include a statement as to the nature, impact and reason for the change.

71C Changes to customer hardship policies

(1) The Commission expects retailers to periodically review their customer hardship policies in accordance with normal business practice.

(2) Any request by the retailer for the Commission to approve a new or amended customer hardship policy under section 45(4) of the Electricity Industry Act or section 48I(4) of the Gas Industry Act must include a statement as to the nature, impact and reason for the change.

72 Payment plans

(1A) A retailer must offer and apply payment plans for:

(a) hardship customers; and

(b) residential customers experiencing payment difficulties if the customer informs the retailer in writing or by telephone that the customer is experiencing payment difficulties or the retailer otherwise believes the customer is experiencing repeated difficulties in paying the customer’s bill or requires payment assistance.

(1) A payment plan for a hardship customer must:

(a) be established having regard to:

249 This new clause responds to the Consumer Groups’ submission that clause 2.4 of Guideline 21 should be incorporated into the draft ERC v11. It was a drafting omission by the Commission that clause 2.4 of Guideline 21 was not included.

250 Clause 72 incorporates section 50 of the NERL and rule 72 of the NERR. It is substantially equivalent to clause 12.1 and 12.2 of the ERC v10, except that there are no equivalent provisions to clauses 12.2(b) and 12.2(c) of the ERC v10 in the NERR. Clause 12.2(b) requires the retailer to make provision for recalculating the amount of instalments where the difference between the customer’s estimated consumption and actual consumption will result in the customer being significantly in credit or debit. Clause 12.2(c) requires the retailer to monitor the customer’s consumption while on the instalment plan and to have in place fair and reasonable procedures to address payment difficulties while on the plan. There is no equivalent in the NERR to clause 12.3 of the ERC v10. Clause 12.3 will be included in the new draft instrument.

251 Subclause 72(A) has been deleted following submissions from the Consumer Groups that clauses 33 and 72 were inconsistent. The additional text from clause 72(1A)(b) has been included in clause 33(1)(b).
(i) the customer’s capacity to pay; and

(ii) any arrears owing by the customer; and

(iii) the customer’s expected energy consumption needs over the following 12 month period; and

(b) include an offer for the customer to pay for their energy consumption in advance or in arrears by instalment payments.

(2) A retailer who offers a payment plan under this clause for a customer must inform the customer of:

(a) the duration of the plan; and

(b) the amount of each instalment payable under the plan, the frequency of instalments and the date by which each instalment must be paid; and

(c) if the customer is in arrears—the number of instalments to pay the arrears; and

(d) if the customer is to pay in advance—the basis on which instalments are calculated.

(32A) A retailer must consider any reasonable request from a business customer for, and may impose an additional retail charge on the business customer if they enter into, an instalment payment plan.

Note: Subclause (1) of clause 72 must be read in light of subclause 33(4) of this Code which provides that clause 72 applies to a residential customer experiencing payment difficulties in the same way as it applies to a hardship customer. 252

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72A Debt recovery 253

A retailer must not commence proceedings for the recovery of a debt relating to the sale and supply of energy from a residential customer if:

(a) the customer continues to adhere to the terms of a payment plan or other agreed payment arrangement; or

(b) the retailer has failed to comply with the requirements of:

252 The Commission has inserted this note to assist with the interpretation of the draft ERC v11.

253 This clause is based on section 51 of the NERL. It is substantially equivalent to clause 11.4 of the ERC v10. The ERC v10 contains an additional requirement that a retailer must comply with guidelines issued by the ACCC concerning section 50 of the Australian Consumer Law. This additional requirement is included in the new draft instrument.
(i) its customer hardship policy in relation to that customer; or

(ii) the Electricity Industry Act or Gas Industry Act and this Code relating to non-payment of bills, payment plans and assistance to hardship customers or residential customers experiencing payment difficulties.

c) the retailer has failed to comply with guidelines on debt collection issued by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission concerning section 50 of the Australian Consumer Law as set out in Schedule 2 of the Competition and Consumer Act 2010 (Cth).

73 [Not used] 255

74 Payment by Centrepay (SRC and MRC) 256

(1) This clause applies where a hardship customer requests a retailer to permit payment by using Centrepay as a payment option (see clause 32).

(2) If the hardship 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 hardship 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 hardship 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 hardship 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 hardship customer’s existing market retail contract.

254 This clause was amended to correct a drafting error.

255 Rule 73 of the NERR requires retailers to waive late payment fees for hardship customers. Under Victorian law, a retailer is prohibited from including a term or condition in a customer retail contract in relation to fees for the late payment of bills. The term in the standard retail contract which permits late payment fees has been removed. Consequently, a rule that provides for the waiver of late fees for hardship customers is not required.

256 There is no equivalent provision in the ERC v10 or the guidelines to Rule 74. It will be included in the new draft instrument.
(8) The retailer must not charge the customer for the review, for any transfer to an alternative retail contract or any early termination charge or other penalty for the early termination of the customer’s previous customer retail contract.

**75 Hardship program indicators**

(1) The Commission may, in consultation with retailers and other interested stakeholders, determine hardship program indicators.

(2) The hardship program indicators may cover the following:
   (a) entry into hardship programs;
   (b) participation in hardship programs;
   (c) assistance available to and assistance provided to customers under customer hardship policies.

(3) The Commission may from time to time amend the hardship program indicators in consultation with retailers and other interested stakeholders.

(4) In this clause:
   hardship program means a program outlined in a customer hardship policy.

**76 Waiver of debt for hardship customer**

Nothing in this Part prevents a retailer from waiving any fee, charge or amount of arrears for the provision of customer retail services to a hardship customer in accordance with the retailer’s customer hardship policy.

**76A Supply capacity control product**

A retailer must not offer a supply capacity control product to a customer for any credit management purpose before a date to be determined by the Minister for Energy and Resources. 1 January 2014.

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257 There is no equivalent requirement under Victorian law to determine hardship program indicators.

258 There is no equivalent provision in the ERC v10 or Guideline 21 to rule 76.

259 This clause is based on clause 12A of the ERC v10 and will be included in the new Draft instrument. There is no equivalent to this clause in the NECF.

260 The Commission has been advised by the Minister for Energy and Resources that this current prohibition will be extended beyond 1 January 2014. The draft ERC v11 will be updated when the Commission has been notified of the new expiry date for the prohibition by the Minister.
Part 4 [Not used] 261

Division 1 [Not used]
77 [Not used]
78 [Not used]

Division 2 [Not used]
79 [Not used]
80 [Not used]

Division 3 [Not used]
81 [Not used]

Division 4 [Not used]
82 [Not used]
83 [Not used]

Division 5 [Not used]
84 [Not used]
85 [Not used]
86 [Not used]
87 [Not used]

Division 6 [Not used]
88 [Not used]
89 [Not used]
90 [Not used]

261 Part 4 of the NERR deals with the relationship between distributors and customers. This Part has been deleted on the basis that it relates to obligations of distributors.
Part 5 [Not used]\(^{262}\)

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\(^{262}\) Part 5 of the NERR deals with the relationship between distributors and retailers. This Part has been deleted on the basis that the relationship between retailers and distributors is governed by use of system agreements under the Victorian regime.
105 [Not used]
106 [Not used]
Part 6  De-energisation (or disconnection) of premises—small customers

Division 1  Preliminary

107  Application of this Part

(1) This Part applies to small customers only, and references to a customer are to be construed accordingly.

(2) A retailer must not arrange de-energisation of a customer’s premises except in accordance with Division 2.

(3) [Not used]263

(4) [Not used]264

108  Definitions265

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;266

extreme weather event means an event [declared by a local instrument as an extreme weather event in the jurisdiction in which the customer’s premises are located];

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

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263 This rule has been removed because it relates to distributor's obligations.
264 This rule has been removed because it relates to distributor's obligations.
265 The definition of extreme weather event has been deleted to address AGL's submission that a local instrument is required to declare the applicability of Extreme Weather Events in Victoria and if no such instrument is declared then the obligations surrounding Extreme Weather Events will not be effective.
266 Clause 13.1(b) of the ERC v10 provides for a different method for the calculation of the time period for a disconnection warning notice. The NERR time periods will be adopted.
(d) the days between 20 December and 31 December (both inclusive) in any year;\(^{267}\)

**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** means the period that starts on the date of issue 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 from the date of issue of the **reminder notice**.\(^{268}\)

### 109 Reminder notices—retailers

1. **Nature of reminder notices**

A **reminder notice** is a notice issued by a **retailer** after the **pay-by date** for a bill to remind the **customer** that payment is required.

2. **Particulars to be included in reminder notices**

A **reminder notice** must:\(^{269}\)

(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 must be made during the **reminder notice period**; and

(d) include details of the **retailer**’s telephone number for complaints and disputes.

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\(^{267}\) Clause 14(d) of the ERC v10 provides that a domestic customer is not to have their premises disconnected after 2pm, whereas the NERR provides that a protected period in relation to de-energisation commences at 3pm. The DSDR has indicated that Victorian timeframes in relation to disconnection are to be retained and therefore the NERR has been amended to reflect the Victorian provision. Also the NERR includes additional requirement that disconnection must not occur between 20 December and 31 December.

\(^{268}\) The ERC v10 provides for a different method for the calculation of the time period for a warning notice. Clause 13.1 (b) of the ERC v10 provides that a reminder notice must be given to a customer not less than 14 business days from the date of dispatch of the bill and must include a new ‘**pay-by date**’ not less than 20 business days from the date of dispatch of the bill. Clause 7.1 of the ERC v10 provides that the ‘**pay-by date**’ must be not less than 12 business days from the date of dispatch of the bill. The NERR time periods in relation to issuing reminder notices have been adopted.

\(^{269}\) The NERR provides for more particulars to be included in a reminder notice than clause 13.1(b) of the ERC v10. The ERC v10 requires a new ‘**pay-by date**’ to be included in a reminder notice, whereas the NERR requires a statement that payment must be made during the reminder notice period.
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.

(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

(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;

(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;

(g) include details of the telephone number of the retailer for payment assistance enquiries; and

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270 Rule 109 broadly corresponds to clauses 13.1(b) and (c) of the ERC v10. It is drafted differently to the ERC v10, but achieves broadly equivalent outcomes except where noted in the drafting notes.

271 The ERC v10 requires that only the ‘pay-by date’ must be included in disconnection warning except in the case of dual fuel contracts which must also contain a statement in relation to variation of tariffs and terms and conditions. Customers who have a dual fuel contract are also entitled to a further disconnection warning under clause 13.1(e) which is not provided for in the NECF. However, there will be no requirement to maintain a separate regime for dual fuel customers in the new draft instrument.

272 The ERC v10 does not distinguish between matters relating to non-payment of a bill and matters other than non-payment of a bill. Clause 13.1(c) of the ERC v10 at bullet point 2 provides that for non-dual fuel customers, a retailer may disconnect a customer no fewer than 7 business days after the receipt of the disconnection warning.

273 This sub-rule is substantially equivalent to clause 28.3 of the ERC v10.

274 The ERC v10 refers to the telephone number as being ‘for payment assistance enquiries’. These words will be included in the new draft instrument.
(h) for a customer with a smart meter, state that de-energisation could occur remotely.

**Division 2**

**Retailer-initiated de-energisation of premises**

**111 De-energisation for not paying bill**

(1) A retailer may arrange de-energisation of a customer’s premises 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) if the customer is a residential customer, the customer:

   (i) has not paid a bill by the pay-by date; and

   (ii) has not agreed to an offer to pay the bill by instalments or, having agreed to the offer, has failed to adhere to an instalment arrangement; and

(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 agree to the offer or to adhere to the payment plan or instalment arrangement as referred to in paragraphs (a) (ii) and (b) (ii), in one of the following ways:

   (i) in person;

   (ii) by telephone (in which case contact is, if the telephone is unanswered, taken to have occurred only if the customer acknowledges receipt of a message);

   (iii) by facsimile or other electronic means (in which case contact is taken to have occurred only if the customer acknowledges receipt of the message).

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275 This Rule is drafted differently to the ERC v10, however it achieves broadly equivalent outcomes except where noted in the drafting notes.

276 Clause 13.1(d) of the ERC v10 provides that disconnection cannot occur until the customer has called the retailer and the retailer has provided advice on financial assistance. The NERR does not contain an equivalent provision. However, the NERR does require that contact be made with the customer.

277 The Commission has removed the information in brackets as it is the Commission's opinion that this conflicts
(f) the customer has refused or failed to take any reasonable action towards settling the debt.

(2) Where a customer is a hardship customer or a residential customer who has informed the retailer in writing or by telephone that the customer is experiencing payment difficulties, a retailer must not arrange for de-energisation of the customer’s premises under subclause (1), unless the retailer has offered the customer 2 payment plans in the previous 12 months and:

(a) the customer has agreed to neither of them within 5 business days of the retailer’s offer, or

(b) the customer has agreed to one but not the other of them but the plan to which the customer agreed has been cancelled due to non-payment by the customer; or

(c) the customer has agreed to both of them but the plans have been cancelled due to non-payment by the customer.

(3) A retailer may arrange de-energisation of a customer’s premises, 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 agree to the offer or to adhere to the payment plan or instalment with requiring a retailer to use their ‘best endeavours’. The Commission has included a reference to the Operating Procedure Compensation for Wrongful Disconnection to provide further guidance.

Rule 111(2) has the same effect as clause 13.1(a) of the ERC v10 which provides that a retailer must not disconnect a customer if the failure to pay relates to an instalment under the customer's first instalment plan with the retailer.

The imposition of a 5 business day time restriction has been deleted as its inclusion was a drafting error as the Commission is adopting the NERR drafting for this clause. The Commission notes that the NERR drafting offers greater consumer protection as customers are not limited to 5 days to accept a retailer’s offer of a payment plan.

Clause 13.2(a) of the ERC v10 provides that a retailer can disconnect a customer's energy supply provided the retailer has complied with clause 11.2, used its best endeavours to contact the customer, and the customer has not accepted an instalment plan within 5 business days. Clause 13.2(b) of the ERC v10 provides for remote disconnection which is not specifically covered by the NERR. The additional requirements in relation to remote disconnection under the ERC v10 are, first, that if the retailer is unable to contact the customer after attempting once in person and twice by telephone, it must contact the customer by mail, email, or SMS, and, second, that when contacting the customer, the retailer must set out all the options for the customer. The DSDBI has requested that we retain an equivalent to clause 13.2(b) of the ERC v10.
arrangement as referred to in subclause (1) (a) (ii) and (b) (ii), in one of the following ways:281

(i) in person;

(ii) by telephone (in which case contact is, if the telephone is unanswered, taken to have occurred only if the customer acknowledges receipt of a message);

(iii) by facsimile or other electronic means (in which case contact is taken to have occurred only if the customer acknowledges receipt of the message); and

(d) the customer has refused or failed to take any reasonable action towards settling the debt.

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.

The Commission notes that "other electronic means" includes email.282

(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.

112 De-energisation for not paying security deposit or refusal to provide acceptable identification283

(1) A retailer may arrange for the de-energisation of a customer’s premises if the customer has failed to pay a security deposit or 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

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281 Clause 3.1(f) of the ERC v10 provides that a retailer must contact the customer on a shortened collection cycle in person or by telephone to inform them of the disconnection. However, the NERR provides equivalent protection by requiring that any messages left by the retailer must be acknowledged by the customer.

282 The Commission has inserted the above notes to provide further guidance when interpreting the requirements of clause 111.

283 Clause 13.4 of the ERC v10 is similar to NERR 112 except that the ERC v10 allows a retailer to disconnect premises if a customer refuses to provide a refundable advance as well as for failure to provide acceptable identification.
(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)\(^\text{284}\); and

(c) the customer has continued not to provide a security deposit or acceptable identification.

(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.\(^\text{285}\)

### 113 De-energisation for denying access to meter\(^\text{286}\)

(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 (in which case contact is, if the telephone is unanswered, taken to have occurred only if the customer acknowledges receipt of a message); or

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\(^{284}\) Clause 13.4(a) of the ERC v10 provides for a 10 day notice period. However, DSDBI have confirmed that the policy intent in relation to preserving Victorian timeframes was limited to timeframes with respect to protected periods and not timeframes more broadly. Accordingly, the NERR timeframe of 5 days has been reinstated.

\(^{285}\) The Victorian Government has indicated that prepayment meters will continue to be prohibited. Further, under the ERC v10, the provision of a security deposit is not a matter which can be varied in a market retail contract.

\(^{286}\) Clause 13.3 of the ERC v10 is substantially equivalent to Rule 113 of the NERR except that the disconnection warning notice under the ERC v10 must specify a date for disconnection being no less than 7 business days after the receipt of the notice, whereas the NERR allows 5 business days after the date of issues of the notice (see comments regarding the differences in calculation of time periods above).
(iii) by facsimile or other electronic means (in which case contact is taken to have occurred only if the customer acknowledges receipt of the message); 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.

114 **De-energisation for illegally using energy**[^287]

(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.

[^287]: There is no equivalent ground for disconnection under the ERC v10; instead section 29 of the ERC v10 permits the retailer to take debt recovery action. Rule 114 of the NERR will be included in the new draft instrument.
115  De-energisation for non-notification by move-in or carry-over customers

(1) The financially responsible retailer 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 as soon as practicable.\footnote{289}

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

(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, not being less than 5 business days after the notice of its intention was given.

(3) The financially responsible retailer 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.

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.\footnote{290}

\footnote{288} There is no equivalent ground for disconnection under the ERC v10. Move-in and carry-over customers are dealt with in section 39 of the Electricity Industry Act and section 46 of the Gas Industry Act. Rule 115 of the NERR will be included in the new draft instrument.

\footnote{289} The wording in section 54 (6) of the NERL has been included.

\footnote{290} Clause 115(4) was inserted into the draft instrument to provide that if a customer's premises are de-energised in accordance with the carry-over or move-in provisions, a deemed contract between a retailer and a customer under section 39 of the EIA or section 46 of the GIA will come to an end. We recognise that amendments may be required to retailers' licences so that clause 115(4) is effective.
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 hardship customer or residential customer and is adhering to a payment plan under clause 33 or 72; 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 amount outstanding is less than $120 (exclusive of GST); or

(h) where the customer’s premises are to be de-energised under clause 111—during an extreme weather event; or

(i) during a protected period.

291 Rule 116 of the NERR is organised differently to the ERC v10, however it achieves broadly equivalent outcomes except where noted in the drafting notes.

292 Clause 14(b)(c) of the ERC v10 refers to a life support machine in relation to electricity and a ‘medical exemption supply address’ for gas.

293 Clause 14(a) of the ERC v10 refers only to domestic customers rather than ‘customers’. Further the ERC v10 only refers to an application to the Utility Relief Grant.

294 Clause 14(a) of the ERC v10 prohibits disconnection for non-payment of an amount less than $120.

295 This clause has been deleted to address AGL’s submission that a local instrument is required to declare the applicability of ‘extreme weather events’ in Victoria and if no such instrument is declared then the obligations surrounding ‘extreme weather events’ will not be effective.

296 Clause 14(d) of the ERC v10 prohibits disconnection after 2pm for domestic customers and 3pm for business customers.
(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.

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 22 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 remotely disconnected and the retailer believes it can do so safely, the retailer must arrange for de-energisation of the customer's supply address within two hours of the customer's request.

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

This clause applies in relation to standard retail contracts.

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298 This clause has been amended to correct a drafting error.

299 Clause 13.1(c)(A) of the ERC v10 provides that a retailer may disconnect a customer’s gas supply no sooner than seven business days after the date of receipt of the disconnection warning and the customer’s electricity supply on a day no sooner than 22 business days after the date of receipt of the disconnection warning.

300 Rule 118 is substantially equivalent to clause 13.5 of the ERC v10 except that under clause 13.5, where a customer can be remotely disconnected and the retailer believes it can do so safely, the retailer must disconnect the customer's supply address within two hours.
(3) **Application of this clause to market retail contracts**

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

**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*.  

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301 Division 3 deals with the de-energisation of premises by distributors. This Division has been omitted as the new draft instrument is limited to retailers requirements.

302 Rule 121 is substantially equivalent to clause 15.1 of the ERC v10.

303 This rule has been included to reflect clause 15.1(a) bullet point 2 of the ERC v10. There is no equivalent
(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*.

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-energise 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-energise 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.
Part 7  Life support equipment

123  Application of this Part

This Part applies in relation to a customer who is a party to a contract with a retailer for the sale of energy, and prevails to the extent of any inconsistency with Part 6.

124  Retailer obligations

(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.

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307 Part 7 of the NERR is substantially equivalent to clause 26.7 of the ERC v10, except that clause 26.7(c) of the ERC v10 specifically requires a retailer to inform a distributor if the customer’s supply address is affected by a fault.
Rules 125 and 126 have been removed, as they relate to distributor’s obligations. Rules 123 and 124 which relate to retailer’s obligations need to be reviewed as to whether existing distributor obligations in other Victorian instruments are consistent with the new retailer obligations.
Part 8 [Not used]^{309}

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]

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^{309} Part 8 of the NERR regulates pre-payment meter systems. Pre-payment meters are not currently permitted in Victoria. Part 8 will be deleted and prepayment meter provisions be introduced only if and when government policy changes.
[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] 310

165  [Not used]
166  [Not used]
167  [Not used]

Part 11  [Not used] 311

168  [Not used]
169  [Not used]
170  [Not used]
171  [Not used]

Part 12  [Not used] 312

172  [Not used]
173  [Not used]

310 Part 10 of the NERR deals with the requirement of retail market performance reports by the AER. This is outside the scope of the new draft instrument.

311 Part 11 of the NERR requires the AER to provide electricity consumption benchmarks for residential customers to retailers. Retailers are required to include in a customer’s bill a comparison of the customer’s electricity consumption against the benchmarks and are required to represent the information in a graphical or tabular form. Energy consumption benchmarks are not required under the ERC v10. There is a Victorian requirement in relation to bill benchmarking under sections 40P and 40R of the Electricity Industry Act. These statutory requirements are not provided for in the ERC v10.

312 Part 12 of the NERR deals with national energy retail consultation. This is outside the scope of the new draft instrument.
Schedule 1  Model terms and conditions for standard retail contracts
(Clause 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 Energy Retail Code ('The Code') sets out specific rights and obligations about energy marketing, payment methods and arrangements for customers experiencing payment difficulties.

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.

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 Code. 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 Code, the definitions in the Code 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 Code.
3.2 **Application of these terms and conditions**

These terms and conditions apply to you if:

(a) you are a small customer; and

(b) [Not used]

(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 Code, 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 Code 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.

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.
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 we notify you of the new tariff; or

(b) if you have not notified us of the change of use—retrospectively from the date the change of use occurred.

(c) This clause does not limit the obligations we have concerning variations to our standing offer prices contained in the energy laws.

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313 Clause 7(c) refers to the limitation of liability contained in the NERL. This clause has been omitted as the NERL is not operative in Victoria.

314 This clause has been amended to address the Consumer Groups' submission that it was unclear when clause 8.3(a) applied.

315 This clause has been amended to correct a drafting error.

316 This clause has been included to clarify that retailers remain bound by the statutory requirements for variation contained in the Electricity Industry Act and Gas Industry Act.
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

(a) Amounts specified in the standing offer prices from time to time and other amounts payable under this contract may be stated to be exclusive or inclusive of GST. Paragraph (b) applies unless an amount is stated to include GST.

(b) Where an amount paid by you under this contract is payment for a “taxable supply” as defined for GST purposes, to the extent permitted by law, that payment will be increased so that the cost of the GST payable on the taxable supply is passed on to the recipient of that taxable supply.

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 Code); 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 give us your explicit informed consent.

(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.

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317 This subclause has been amended to reflect the inclusion of a requirement for ‘explicit informed consent’ in clause 21.
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

(a) If you have difficulties paying your bill, you should contact us as soon as possible. We will provide you with information about payment options.

(b) If you are a residential customer and have told us that you have difficulty paying your bill, we must offer you the option of paying your bill under a payment plan. However, we are not obliged to do so if you have had 2 payment plans cancelled due to non-payment in the previous 12 months or have been convicted of an offence involving the illegal use of energy in the previous 2 years.

(c) Additional protections may be available to you under our Customer Hardship Policy and under the Code if you are a customer experiencing payment difficulties due to hardship. A copy of our Customer Hardship Policy is available on our website.

10.4 [Not used]318

11  METERS

(a) You must allow safe and unhindered access to your premises for the purposes of reading and maintaining the meters (where relevant).319

(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.

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318 Clause 10.4 provides for late payment fees. In Victoria, section 40C of the Electricity Industry Act and section 48B of the Gas Industry Act prohibit a retailer from including a term or condition in a customer retail contract in relation to fees for late payment of bills.

319 Standard Retail Contract clause 11(a) is substantially equivalent to clause 25 of the ERC v10 except that the Standard Retail Contract does not require the retailer's representative to carry identification.
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 may be liable for the cost of the check or test, however we cannot request payment in advance.320 and we may request payment in advance. However,

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320 This clause has been amended to address the Consumer Groups’ submission that clause 29(5)(b) of the draft ERC v11 and clause 12.3(b) of Schedule 1 were contradictory.
if the meter or metering data proves to be faulty or incorrect, we must reimburse you for the amount paid.

(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 Code.

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 Code.

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.
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 Code, we may arrange for the disconnection of your premises if:

(a) you do not pay your bill by the pay-by date and, if you are a residential customer, you:

   (i) fail to comply with the terms of an agreed payment plan; or

   (ii) do not agree to an offer to pay the bill by instalments, or having agreed, you fail to comply with the instalment arrangement;

(b) you do not provide a security deposit or acceptable identification 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 Code 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 Code. 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 2.00pm for a residential customer or 3.00pm for a business customer; or

   (ii) on a Friday or the day before a public holiday; or

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321 This subclause has been amended to address Consumer Groups' submission that clause 14.1 inadequately reflected when a retailer can disconnect a customer.
(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[Not used].

(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 permitted under your customer connection contract or under the energy laws;322 or

(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.

15.1 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).

15.2 Timeframes for re-energisation

If you ask us to re-energise your premises:

(a) before 3 pm on a business day, we must arrange for re-energisation of your premises on the day of the request; or

322 This clause has been amended to reflect the fact that distributor regulatory arrangements have not been aligned with the NECF.
(b) after 3 pm on a business day, we must arrange for re-energisation of your premises on the next business day or, if the request also is made before 9 pm and you pay any applicable additional after hours reconnection charge, on the day of the request; or

(c) where we are able to reconnect you by re-energising your premises remotely and reasonably believe that we can do so safely:

(i) we must use our best endeavours to re-energise your premises within two hours; or

(ii) in any event, we must pass on the request to the relevant distributor within one hour of the request.

unless you agree otherwise. 323

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 Code; or

(e) tamper with, or permit tampering with, any meters or associated equipment.

17 NOTICES AND BILLS 324

(a) Notices and bills under this contract must be sent in writing, unless this contract or the Code say otherwise.

323 This clause has been inserted to address the Consumer Groups' submission that there is no clause in the Standard Retail Contract model terms that sets out the reconnection times.

324 Clause 17 of the Standard Retail Contract is substantially equivalent to clause 32 of the ERC v10 which sets out the acceptable methods of providing notice.
(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].
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.

APPLICABLE LAW

The laws of Victoria govern this contract.

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 energy

325 The NERR does not contain a rule in relation to force majeure events like the ERC v10. However, clause 20 of the Standard Retail Contract is very similar to clause 18 of the ERC v10 except that the ERC v10 does permit the suspension of the obligation to pay money. The NERR does not contain equivalent provisions to clause 18(c) of the ERC v10 which permits the retailer and customer to agree that the retailer is not to have the benefit of the force majeure provisions or clause 18(e) which clarifies that clause 188 does not exclude the operation of section 120 of the National Electricity Law or for gas, sections 232 or 233 of the Gas Industry Act or section 33 of the Gas Safety Act 1997.
laws 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 Electricity Industry Act and 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;

Code means the Energy Retail Code made by the Essential Services Commission;

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 relating to the distribution or supply of energy by the distributor to your premises and includes a deemed distribution contract arising under section 40A of the Electricity Industry Act or section 48 of the Gas Industry Act;

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;

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

**force majeure event** means an event outside the control of a party;

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

**GST** has the meaning given in the *GST Act (A New Tax System (Goods and Services Tax) Act 1999)* (Cth);

**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 energy laws;

**security deposit** means an amount of money paid to us as security against non-payment of a bill in accordance with the Code;

**small customer** means:

(a) a residential customer; or

(b) a business customer who consumes energy at or below a level determined under 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]\(^\text{326}\)

\(^{326}\) Schedule 2 has been deleted on the basis that connection contracts relate to obligations of distributors.
(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.

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327 The Commission has inserted transitional arrangements into Schedule 3 to provide for the transition of existing standing offer and market contracts.
(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.

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.
### Schedule 4 - Residential Electricity Standing Offer

[RETAILER NAME]

STANDING/RELEVANT PUBLISHED OFFER – ELECTRICITY RESIDENTIAL DISTRIBUTION ZONE –

DATE OF PUBLICATION –

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328 Schedule 4 is taken from Schedule A in Guideline 19.
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<td></td>
<td>Off-peak – Balance kWh/qtr</td>
<td>c/kWh</td>
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<td></td>
<td>All consumption</td>
<td>c/kWh</td>
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<td>Supply charge</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Small business, time-of-use</strong></td>
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<td>Powercor and SPAusNet DB only</td>
<td>Farm 7 Days Time of Use</td>
<td>Peak - First kWh/qtr</td>
<td>c/kWh</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Peak - Next kWh/qtr</td>
<td>c/kWh</td>
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<td>Peak – Balance kWh/qtr</td>
<td>c/kWh</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Off-peak - First kWh/qtr</td>
<td>c/kWh</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Off-peak - Next kWh/qtr</td>
<td>c/kWh</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Supply charge</td>
<td>$/day</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All consumption</td>
<td>c/kWh</td>
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<td>Supply charge</td>
<td>$/day</td>
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## Residential

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tariff</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Ex GST</th>
<th>Inc GST</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Domestic – General Peak</td>
<td>c/MJ</td>
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<tr>
<td>Domestic – General Peak – Next</td>
<td>c/MJ</td>
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<tr>
<td>Domestic – General Peak – Balance</td>
<td>c/MJ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Off-peak - First [ ] MJ / 2 months</td>
<td>c/MJ</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Off-peak - Next [ ] MJ / 2 months</td>
<td>c/MJ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Off-peak – Balance MJ / 2 months</td>
<td>c/MJ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All consumption</td>
<td>c/MJ</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supply charge</td>
<td>$/day</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Domestic – Bulk Hot Water to Flats All gas - MJ / 2 months</td>
<td>c/MJ</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Hot water charge</td>
<td>c/Litre</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hot water conversion factor</td>
<td>MJ/Litre</td>
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</table>

## Small Business

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tariff</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Ex GST</th>
<th>Inc GST</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business – General Peak</td>
<td>c/MJ</td>
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<tr>
<td>Business – General Peak – Next</td>
<td>c/MJ</td>
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<tr>
<td>Business – General Peak – Balance</td>
<td>c/MJ</td>
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<tr>
<td>Off-peak - First [ ] MJ / 2 months</td>
<td>c/MJ</td>
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<td>Off-peak - Next [ ] MJ / 2 months</td>
<td>c/MJ</td>
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<tr>
<td>Off-peak – Balance MJ / 2 months</td>
<td>c/MJ</td>
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<tr>
<td>All consumption</td>
<td>c/MJ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supply charge</td>
<td>$/day</td>
<td></td>
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## Gas Distribution Zones

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Envestra Victoria</th>
<th>Multinet</th>
<th>SPI AusNet</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Central 1</td>
<td>Main 1</td>
<td>Central 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central 2</td>
<td>Main 2</td>
<td>Central 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>Yarra Valley</td>
<td>West</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murray Valley</td>
<td>South Gippsland</td>
<td>Adjoining Central</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bairnsdale</td>
<td></td>
<td>Adjoining West</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Envestra Albury</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cardinia</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mildura</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Schedule 5

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
As set out in Schedule A
Supply Charge ($/Day) (or how billed and calculated)

Excluding GST Including GST
XX.xxx XX.xxx
XX.xxx XX.xxx

GAS

Gas Tariffs
As set out in Schedule A
Supply Charge ($/Day) (or how billed and calculated)

Excluding GST Including GST
XX.xxx XX.xxx
XX.xxx 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 www.esc.vic.gov.au/yourchoice.

329 Schedule 5 is taken from Schedule B in Guideline 19.
Schedule 6

**Bulk Hot Water Formulae**

**Bulk Hot Water Charging**

*Gas bulk hot water* Pricing Formulae

A.  

*Gas bulk hot water rate* (cents per litre) =  

\[ CF \text{ (MJ per litre)} \times \text{gas bulk hot water tariff (cents per MJ)} \]

Where *customers* are charged by their *retailer* for *energy* in delivering *gas bulk hot water*:

\[ CF = \text{the gas bulk hot water conversion factor} = 0.49724 \text{ MJ per litre} \]

\[ \text{gas bulk hot water tariff} = \text{the standing offer tariff applicable to the gas bulk hot water unit (gas tariff 10/11)} \]

Where *customers* are charged for *energy* in delivering *gas bulk hot water* pursuant to a *market contract*:

\[ CF = \text{the gas bulk hot water conversion factor} = 0.49724 \text{ MJ per litre} \]

\[ \text{gas bulk hot water tariff} = \text{the market tariff applicable to the bulk hot water unit} \]

B.  

*Retailer* provided *gas bulk hot water* per customer supply charge (cents) = the supply charge under the tariff applicable to the relevant *gas bulk hot water* unit divided by the 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)

---

330 Schedule 6 is taken from Appendix 2 of the ERC v10.
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 standing offer contract or pursuant to a market retail contract the:

Customer electricity bulk hot water charge (cents) = the customer’s metered consumption of hot water (kilolitres) * electricity tariff rate(s) applicable to the customer for the applicable electric bulk hot water unit (cents per kWh) * 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.

331 Schedule 6 has been amended to reflect the terminology used in the draft ERC v11.
Schedule 7 – Acceptable formats of greenhouse gas disclosure on customers’ bills.

EXAMPLE 1: GREENHOUSE GAS DISCLOSURE

ACCOUNT SUMMARY 17 Jan 2001–19 Apr 2001
Peak Use 740 kWh
Other Charges
Total of Current Charges (see note for details)
GST (refer note of EWR for calculation)
TOTAL AMOUNT DUE

Total greenhouse emissions for this bill: 0.75 tonnes

EXAMPLE 2: GREENHOUSE GAS DISCLOSURE

ACCOUNT SUMMARY 17 Sep 2001–19 Oct 2001
Electricity Charges
Usage
Peak 7072.4 kWh
Off Peak 3814.8 kWh
Accurate Adjustments
GST
TOTAL AMOUNT DUE

Total greenhouse emissions for this bill: 13.672.0 tonnes

www.switchon.vic.gov.au

332 The graphs in Schedule 7 have been amended to list the new website, which is www.switchon.vic.gov.au.
EXAMPLE 3: GREENHOUSE GAS DISCLOSURE

ACCOUNT SUMMARY 17 Feb 2003 – 19 Mar 2001

| Electricity Charges | | |
|---------------------|------------------|
| Opening Balance     | $0.00             |
| Energy Charges      |                  |
| Peak                | 92,113.8 kWh     |
| Off-Peak            | 68,354.2 kWh     |
| Network Charges     |                  |
| Other Charges       |                  |
| GST                 |                  |
| TOTAL AMOUNT DUE    | $130,147.18      |

Total greenhouse emissions for this bill: 208,592.6 tonnes

www.switchon.vic.gov.au