

## **CHAPTER 6B**



## 6B. Retail markets

### Part A Retail support

#### Division 1 Application and definitions

##### 6B.A1.1 Application of this Part

This Part:

- (a) applies to a *Distribution Network Service Provider* and a *retailer* who have *shared customers*; and
- (b) applies to the exclusion of Part J of Chapter 6 to a *Market Customer* who is a *retailer*; and
- (c) prevails over any inconsistent provisions in a distribution determination.

##### 6B.A1.2 Definitions

In this Part:

**customer connection service** has the same meaning as in the *NERL*.

**date of issue** of a *statement of charges* means the date on which the *Distribution Network Service Provider* sends the statement to the *retailer*.

**default rate** means the *bank bill rate* (as in force from time to time) plus two percentage points per annum.

**due date for payment** means 10 *business days* from the *date of issue* specified on a *statement of charges*.

**network charges** means charges that a *Distribution Network Service Provider* is entitled to claim for *customer connection services* in respect of *shared customers* under these *Rules*.

**retail billing period** means a calendar month or any other period agreed between a *Distribution Network Service Provider* and a *retailer*.

**shared customer** has the same meaning as in the *NERL*.

**statement of charges** —see clause 6B.A2.4.

#### Division 2 Billing and payment rules

##### 6B.A2.1 Obligation to pay

Subject to this Part, a *retailer* must pay to a *Distribution Network Service Provider* the *network charges* payable in respect of each *shared customer* by the *due date for payment*.

**Note:**

This clause is a conduct provision for the purpose of the *NEL*.

### 6B.A2.2 Direct customer billing and energy-only contracts

- (a) Where a *Distribution Network Service Provider* and a *shared customer* agree that the *customer* will be responsible for paying *network charges* directly to the *Distribution Network Service Provider* (a **direct billing arrangement**), the *Distribution Network Service Provider* may issue a bill to that *customer* for any or all of the *customer connection services* provided to that *customer's* premises.
- (b) The *Distribution Network Service Provider* must notify the *retailer* of the *direct* billing arrangement as soon as reasonably practicable after commencement of the agreement.
- (c) A *retailer* has no liability to pay *network charges* that have been, or are to be, billed to the *shared customer* under a *direct* billing arrangement.
- (d) Where a *retailer* and a *shared customer* enter into a contract for the sale of electricity only, the *retailer* must notify the relevant *Distribution Network Service Provider* as soon as reasonably practicable after commencement of the contract.

### 6B.A2.3 Calculating network charges

*Network charges* must be calculated in accordance with these *Rules* and a *Distribution Network Service Provider's* distribution determination.

### 6B.A2.4 Statement of charges

- (a) A *Distribution Network Service Provider* must provide a statement of *network charges* (a **statement of charges**) to a *retailer* as agreed between the parties but no later than the 10th *business day* of the *retail billing period* next following the *retail billing period* to which the charges relate.
- (b) The *statement of charges* must include:
  - (1) the *network charges*, separately identified, in respect of each *shared customer's* premises for which *metering data* was received, or a service request was completed, during that *retail billing period*;
  - (2) the *date of issue* of the *statement of charges*, and the *due date for payment*;
  - (3) where applicable, the *metering data* for each *shared customer's* premises;
  - (4) any adjustments to *network charges* from previous *retail billing periods*; and

**Note:**  
See clause 6B.A3.1.

  - (5) where applicable, any credits for GSL payments that the *Distribution Network Service Provider* is required to make in respect of a *shared customer's* premises.
- (c) Subject to these *Rules* and the *Retail Market Procedures*, the format of the *statement of charges* must be as agreed between the *retailer* and

*Distribution Network Service Provider* or, in default of agreement, as reasonably determined by the *Distribution Network Service Provider*.

- (d) In this rule:

**GSL payment** means a payment by a *Distribution Network Service Provider* in respect of non-compliance with a *distribution service* standard or *distribution reliability* standard.

**service request** means a request by a *retailer* to a *Distribution Network Service Provider* for a *customer connection service*.

#### **6B.A2.5 Time and manner of payment**

- (a) Subject to clause 6B.A3.3(c), a *retailer* must, by the *due date for payment*, pay the full amount specified in a *statement of charges* without set-off.
- (b) Payment must be made into the *Distribution Network Service Provider's* nominated bank account.

### **Division 3 Matters incidental to billing and payment**

#### **6B.A3.1 Adjustment of network charges**

- (a) If a *retailer* is not permitted to recover *network charges* from a *shared customer* under the *NERL* or the *NERR*, then neither is the *Distribution Network Service Provider* permitted to recover those charges from the *retailer*.
- (b) Subject to paragraph (a), *network charges* contained in a *statement of charges* may be adjusted to account for any error in, or correction or substitution of:
  - (1) *metering data*; or
  - (2) any other amount or factor that affects the calculation of the *network charges*.
- (c) An adjustment under paragraph (b) may be made by a *Distribution Network Service Provider* by including, in a subsequent *statement of charges*, the amount required to be paid by, or credited to, the *retailer* together with an explanation of the adjustment.

**Note:**

See also clause 6B.A3.3.

#### **6B.A3.2 Tariff reassignment**

- (a) A *retailer*:
  - (1) must, if a *shared customer* informs the *retailer* of a *change* in use of electricity consumption at the *customer's* premises as a result of which the *retailer* reasonably considers that the existing tariff applying to the *customer* should no longer apply; and
  - (2) may, for any other reason, but not more than once in any 12 *month* period in respect of the same premises,

request the *Distribution Network Service Provider* to review the tariff to which the *customer* is assigned.

- (b) The request is to include:
  - (1) the reasons for the request; and
  - (2) any relevant information provided by the *customer*; and
  - (3) the tariff proposed by the *retailer*.
- (c) On receipt of the request, the *Distribution Network Service Provider* must decide whether the tariff should be *changed*.
- (d) The *Distribution Network Service Provider* must inform the *retailer* of its decision and, if the decision is not to *change* the tariff or to assign a tariff other than that proposed by the *retailer*, the *Distribution Network Service Provider* must also inform the *retailer* of its reasons for the decision.
- (e) If the *Distribution Network Service Provider* decides to *change* the tariff, it must make the *change* in accordance with:
  - (1) the requirements of the *NERL* and the *NERR*;
  - (2) any provisions of the *Distribution Network Service Provider's* distribution determination governing the assignment or re-assignment of *retail customers* to tariffs; and

**Note:**

See clause 6.18.4.

- (3) the *Rules* and the *Retail Market Procedures*.

### 6B.A3.3 Disputed statements of charges

If a *retailer* disputes an amount (the **disputed amount**) set out in a *statement of charges*, the following provisions apply:

- (a) The *retailer* must give written notice to the *Distribution Network Service Provider* of the disputed amount and the reasons for disputing payment.

**Note:**

A *retailer* may also give notice pursuant to this clause if it seeks an adjustment under clause 6B.A3.1 or where it disputes an adjustment made under that clause.

- (b) Payment by the *retailer* of all or part of an amount set out in a *statement of charges* does not affect the right of the *retailer* to dispute the amount.
- (c) If the *retailer* has given notice under paragraph (a) and payment of the charges to which the statement relates has not yet been made, the *retailer* must pay the *Distribution Network Service Provider* by the *due date for payment* (unless the *Distribution Network Service Provider* agrees otherwise) the greater of:
  - (1) the undisputed component of the *statement of charges*; or
  - (2) 80% of the total amount due under the disputed *statement of charges*;
- (d) The *retailer* must, if the dispute is not resolved by agreement of the parties within 10 *business days* after the date the *retailer* gave notice under

paragraph (a), immediately submit the dispute for resolution or determination in accordance with Chapter 8.

- (e) If the *retailer* fails to submit the dispute for resolution or determination in accordance with paragraph (d), the *Distribution Network Service Provider* may submit the dispute for resolution or determination in accordance with Chapter 8.
- (f) Subject to any determination of the *DRP*, if following resolution or determination of the dispute in accordance with Chapter 8, the amount due to the *Distribution Network Service Provider* is:
  - (1) more than the amount already paid by the *retailer*, the *retailer* must pay the difference to the *Distribution Network Service Provider* within 3 *business days* of the resolution or determination of the dispute, together with interest on the amount of the difference at the *default rate* for each *day* from the original *due date for payment* to the actual date of payment; or
  - (2) less than the amount already paid by the *retailer*, the *Distribution Network Service Provider* must pay the difference to the *retailer* within 3 *business days* of the resolution or determination of the dispute, together with interest on the amount of the difference at the *default rate* for each *day* from the date the *retailer* made the overpayment to the *Distribution Network Service Provider* to the actual date of repayment of the amount of the excess by the *Distribution Network Service Provider*.

#### 6B.A3.4 Interest

If requested, a *Distribution Network Service Provider* and a *retailer* must pay interest at the *default rate* on any amount due to the other under this Chapter that remains unpaid after the *due date for payment*, until the date on which that amount is paid in full.

#### 6B.A3.5 Notification of changes to charges

- (a) A *Distribution Network Service Provider* must notify a *retailer* of:
  - (1) any proposed *changes* in the *Distribution Network Service Provider's* price lists under Chapter 6 (**preliminary information**) no later than 2 *business days* after the date on which the *changes* are notified to the *AER* under these *Rules*; and
  - (2) any *changes* in the *Distribution Network Service Provider's* price lists approved by the *AER* no later than 2 *business days* after the date on which the *AER* notifies the *Distribution Network Service Provider* of the approval; and
  - (3) any *change* in the level of a *network charge* (other than a *network tariff*) as soon as reasonably practicable after the *Distribution Network Service Provider* becomes aware of that *change* and, if the *change* requires the approval of the *AER* under these *Rules*, no later than 2 *business days* after the *AER* advises the *Distribution Network Service Provider* that the *change* (or the resulting charge) is approved by the *AER*.

- (b) A *retailer* must treat preliminary information notified under paragraph (a)(1) as *confidential information*.
- (c) A *Distribution Network Service Provider* has no liability where proposed *changes* contained in preliminary information provided under paragraph (a)(1) are subsequently not approved, or are modified, by the *AER*.

## **Part B Credit support required for late payment**

### **Note:**

The *credit support* rules set out in Part B are conduct provisions for the purpose of the *NEL*.

## **Division 1 Application and definitions**

### **6B.B1.1 Application of Part B**

This Part B (to be known as the *credit support rules*) applies to a *Distribution Network Service Provider* and a *retailer*:

- (a) in respect of *shared customers*;
- (b) in respect of charges for services for which the *retailer* pays the *Distribution Network Service Provider* in arrears in accordance with a *statement of charges* under clause 6B.A2.4.

### **6B.B1.2 Definitions**

In this part:

**date of issue** has the meaning given in clause 6B.A1.2.

**default rate** has the meaning given in clause 6B.A1.2.

**due date for payment** has the meaning given in clause 6B.A1.2.

**network charges** has the meaning given in clause 6B.A1.2.

**shared customer** has the meaning given in clause 6B.A1.2.

**statement of charges** —see clause 6B.A2.4.

## **Division 2 Requirements for credit support**

### **6B.B2.1 Distribution Network Service Provider may require credit support in limited circumstances**

- (a) A *Distribution Network Service Provider* may only require a *retailer* to provide *credit support* if within the previous 12 months, the *retailer* has failed to pay in full:
  - (1) the charges contained in 3 *statements of charges* by the *due date for payment*; or
  - (2) the charges contained in 2 consecutive *statements of charges* by the *due date for payment*; or
  - (3) the charges contained in 1 *statement of charges* within 15 *business days* of the *due date for payment*.



and then only in accordance with the *credit support* rules.

- (b) A *Distribution Network Service Provider* may only require a *retailer* to provide *credit support* up to an amount equal to the charges contained in the most recent *statement of charges* that gave rise to the requirement for the *retailer* to provide *credit support* under clause 6B.B2.1(a).
- (c) If a *retailer* fails to pay charges contained in a *statement of charges*, but the charges are disputed, and the *retailer* has complied with the requirements of clause 6B.A3.3 in respect of the dispute, the *retailer* will not be considered in default in payment of the disputed charges and the *Distribution Network Service Provider* will not be entitled to require the *retailer* to provide *credit support*.

## **Division 3                    Provision of credit support by retailers**

### **6B.B3.1    Retailer to provide credit support**

- (a) A *retailer* must, on request by a *Distribution Network Service Provider*, under clause 6B.B2.1 provide *credit support* to a *Distribution Network Service Provider* in accordance with the *credit support* rules.
- (b) The *credit support* provided by a *retailer* must be:
  - (1) for an amount requested by the *Distribution Network Service Provider*, not exceeding an amount equal to the charges contained in the most recent *statement of charges* that gave rise to the requirement for the *retailer* to provide *credit support* under clause 6B.B2.1; and
  - (2) provided within 5 *business days* of the *Distribution Network Service Provider's* request; and
  - (3) an acceptable form of *credit support* in favour of the *Distribution Network Service Provider* (see clause 6B.B3.2).
- (c) A *retailer* must ensure that at all times the aggregate undrawn amount of the *credit support* is not less than the amount requested by a *Distribution Network Service Provider* in accordance with clause 6B.B2.1.

### **6B.B3.2    Acceptable form of credit support**

- (a) A *retailer* required to provide *credit support* under these *Rules* must provide the *credit support* in an acceptable form.
- (b) An acceptable form of *credit support* is:
  - (1) a form of *credit support* that the *retailer* agrees to provide, and the *Distribution Network Service Provider* agrees to accept; or
  - (2) an undertaking:
    - (i) substantially in the form set out in Schedule 6B.1; and
    - (ii) issued by a financial institution acceptable to the *Distribution Network Service Provider*.

## **Division 4            Other Rules relating to credit support**

### **6B.B4.1    Application of credit support**

- (a) A *Distribution Network Service Provider* may only apply or draw on the *credit support* if:
  - (1) the *Distribution Network Service Provider* has given not less than 3 *business days'* notice to a *retailer* that it intends to apply or draw on the *credit support* in respect of an amount due and payable by the *retailer* to the *Distribution Network Service Provider*, and that amount remains *outstanding*; and
  - (2) there is no unresolved dispute under clause 6B.A3.3 about the *retailer's* liability to pay that amount.

### **6B.B4.2    Return of credit support**

- (a) If:
  - (1) a *Distribution Network Service Provider* and a *retailer* no longer have any *shared customers*; or
  - (2) in the 12 *months* since the *credit support* was provided, the *retailer* has paid in full the charges contained in each *statement of charges* issued in that 12 *month* period by the due date for payment,the *Distribution Network Service Provider* must pay, cancel or return to a *retailer* as appropriate, any balance of *credit support outstanding* after payment of all amounts owing by the *retailer* to the *Distribution Network Service Provider*.

### **6B.B4.3    Other retailer obligations**

- (a) A *retailer* must not take any steps to restrain (by injunction or otherwise):
  - (1) an issuer of *credit support* from paying out, or otherwise satisfying, a claim properly made by the *Distribution Network Service Provider* under the terms of the *credit support*; or
  - (2) the *Distribution Network Service Provider* from making a claim on the *credit support* in accordance with the *credit support rules*; or
  - (3) the *Distribution Network Service Provider* using the money obtained by calling on the *credit support*.
- (b) A *Distribution Network Service Provider* may disclose to its financiers, the *AER* or *AEMO* that it has required or called on *credit support* provided by the *retailer* under the *credit support rules*.

## **Schedule 6B.1    Prescribed form of unconditional undertaking for credit support**

(Clause 6B.B3.2)

In this deed:

- (a) ABC Ltd (ACN ... ..) is the *retailer*; and

- (b) DEF Ltd (ACN ... ..) is the *Distribution Network Service Provider*; and
- (c) GHI Ltd (ACN ... ..) is the Financial Institution.

The Financial Institution unconditionally undertakes to pay, on demand by the *Distribution Network Service Provider*, to the *Distribution Network Service Provider* any sum or sums up to a maximum aggregate of \$.....

The payment or payments are to be made forthwith and unconditionally, without reference to the retailer, and despite any instruction from the retailer not to make the payment or payments.

A demand for payment under this deed is to be made on behalf of the *Distribution Network Service Provider* by .....[*name of person authorised to act on behalf of the Distribution Network Service Provider*]

This deed is terminated if:

- (a) the *Distribution Network Service Provider* notifies the Financial Institution that it no longer requires the Financial Institution's undertaking; or
- (b) the Financial Institution pays to the *Distribution Network Service Provider* a sum or sums amounting to its maximum aggregate liability under this deed; or
- (c) the parties agree to terminate it.

Executed as a deed at ..... this ..... day of ..... 20.....