

# National Energy Retail Rules

## Version 30

### **Status Information**

This is the latest electronically available version of the National Energy Retail Rules as at 21 October 2021.

This consolidated version of the National Energy Retail Rules was last updated on 21 October 2021 as a result of the commencement of the following amendments:

Schedule 2 of the National Energy Retail Amendment (Access, pricing and incentive arrangements for distributed energy resources) Rule 2021 No. 4

### **Application of the National Energy Customer Framework related Rule**

On 27 June 2012, the South Australian Minister introduced the National Energy Retail Rules under section 238 of the National Energy Retail Law (NERL) set out in the Schedule to the National Energy Retail Law (South Australia) Act 2011. These Rules commenced operation as a law of Tasmania, the Australian Capital Territory and the Commonwealth on 1 July 2012; South Australia on 1 February 2013, New South Wales on 1 July 2013 and Queensland on 1 July 2015.

These Rules do not apply in Victoria, Western Australia or the Northern Territory until the NERL is implemented as a law in that jurisdiction.

These Rules can also be found on the Australian Energy Market Commission's website under the 'National Energy Retail Rules', 'Rules made by the SA Ministers' tabs.

### **Provisions in force**

All provisions displayed in this consolidated version of the Rules have commenced. As at the date of this consolidation the Australian Energy Market Commission has made the following Rule under the National Energy Retail Law that has not yet commenced:

Schedule 3 of the National Energy Retail Amendment (Access, pricing and incentive arrangements for distributed energy resources) Rule 2021 No. 4 will commence operation on 31 March 2022.

Schedule 1 of the National Energy Retail Amendment (Bill contents and billing requirements) Rule 2021 No. 2 will commence operation on 4 August 2022.

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**Part 1 Preliminary .....1**

**Division 1 Introduction and definitions .....1**

1 Citation .....1

2 Commencement .....1

3 Definitions .....1

3A Savings and Transitional Rules .....4

**Division 2 Consumption threshold matters .....4**

4 Business premises—separate application of upper and lower consumption thresholds .....4

5 Business premises—aggregated application of upper consumption thresholds by agreement .....4

**Division 3 Classification of customers.....5**

6 Classification .....5

7 Retailer initial classification of customers .....6

8 Retailer reclassification of customers .....6

9 Distributor initial classification of business customers .....6

10 Distributor reclassification of business customers .....7

11 Distributor classification and reclassification—requirements .....7

**Part 2 Customer retail contracts .....9**

**Division 1 Standard retail contracts—terms and conditions generally .....9**

12 Model terms and conditions for standard retail contracts .....9

13 Application of provisions of these Rules to standard retail contracts .....9

**Division 2 Market retail contracts—terms and conditions generally .....9**

14 Terms and conditions of market retail contracts .....9

15 Application of provisions of these Rules to market retail contracts .....9

**Division 3 Customer retail contracts—pre-contractual procedures .....10**

16 Pre-contractual duty of retailers .....10

17 Pre-contractual duty of distributors .....10

18 Pre-contractual request to designated retailer for sale of energy (SRC) .....11

19 Responsibilities of designated retailer in response to request for sale of energy (SRC) .....12

**Division 4 Customer retail contracts—billing .....13**

20 Basis for bills (SRC and MRC) .....13

21 Estimation as basis for bills (SRC and MRC) .....13

22 Proportionate billing (SRC and MRC) .....17

23 Bill smoothing (SRC) .....17

24 Frequency of bills (SRC) .....18

25 Contents of bills (SRC and MRC) .....18

26 Pay-by date (SRC) .....19

27 Apportionment (SRC).....20

28 Historical billing information (SRC and MRC) .....20

29 Billing disputes (SRC and MRC) .....20

30 Undercharging (SRC and MRC) .....22

31 Overcharging (SRC and MRC) .....23

32 Payment methods (SRC and MRC).....24

33 Payment difficulties (SRC and MRC) .....25

34 Shortened collection cycles (SRC and MRC) .....25

35 Request for final bill (SRC).....27

**Division 5 Tariff changes.....27**

36 Obligations on retailers (SRC).....27

37 Customer request for change of tariff (SRC).....27

38 Change in use (SRC) .....28

**Division 6 Customer retail contracts—security deposits .....29**

39 Consideration of credit history .....29

40 Requirement for security deposit (SRC and MRC).....29

41 Payment of security deposit (SRC).....31

42 Amount of security deposit (SRC) .....32

43 Interest on security deposit (SRC and MRC) .....32

44 Use of security deposit (SRC) .....33

45 Obligation to return security deposit (SRC) .....34

**Division 7 Market retail contracts—particular requirements .....34**

45A Definitions .....34

46 Tariffs and charges .....36

46A Explicit Informed Consent – Variation of tariffs, charges or benefits to the customer.....37

46B Energy rates – discounting practices .....37

46C Conditional discounts .....39

47 Cooling off period and right of withdrawal—market retail contracts .....40

48 Retailer notice of end of fixed term retail contract.....40

48A Retailer notice of benefit change - market retail contracts .....41

48B Benefit change notice guidelines .....42

49 Termination of market retail contract .....43

49A Early termination charges .....44

50 Small customer complaints and dispute resolution information.....44

51 Liabilities and immunities .....45

52 Indemnities .....45

**Division 7A Customer retail contracts - conditional fees.....45**

52A Definitions .....45

52B Conditional fees .....45

**Division 8 Deemed customer retail arrangements .....46**

53 Obligations of retailers .....46

54 Formation of standard retail contract on incomplete request .....46

**Division 9 Other retailer obligations .....47**

55 Referral to interpreter services.....47

56 Provision of information to customers .....47

56A Energy consumption information - supply of electricity only .....47

56B Historical billing and energy consumption information - supply of electricity only .....48

56C Information on timeframes for installing electricity meters (SRC and MRC) .49

57 Retailer obligations in relation to customer transfer.....49

57A Retailer obligations in relation to correction of transfers without consent...49

58 Notice to small customers on transfer .....51

59 Notice to small customers where transfer delayed .....51

59A Notice to small customers on deployment of new electricity meters (SRC and MRC) .....51

**Division 9A Retailer interruption to supply - electricity.....54**

59B Definitions .....54

59C Retailer interruption to supply – electricity (SRC and MRC) .....54

**Division 10 Energy marketing .....55**

**Subdivision 1 Preliminary.....56**

60 Application of Division .....56

**Subdivision 2 Providing information to small customers .....56**

61 Overview of this Subdivision .....56

62 Requirement for and timing of disclosure to small customers .....56

63 Form of disclosure to small customers .....56

64	Required information.....	56
<b>Subdivision 3</b>	<b>Energy marketing activities .....</b>	<b>57</b>
65	No contact lists .....	57
66	No canvassing or advertising signs.....	57
67	Duty of retailer to ensure compliance.....	58
68	Record keeping .....	58
<b>Division 11</b>	<b>Miscellaneous .....</b>	<b>58</b>
69	Compliance by small customer who is not owner of premises .....	58
70	Termination of standard retail contract (SRC) .....	58
<b>Part 3</b>	<b>Customer hardship.....</b>	<b>61</b>
70A	Definitions .....	61
71	Obligation of retailer to communicate customer hardship policy.....	61
72	Payment plans .....	61
73	Waiver of late payment fee for hardship customer.....	62
74	Payment by Centrepay (SRC and MRC) .....	62
75	Hardship program indicators .....	63
75A	Customer hardship policy guideline .....	63
75B	Customer hardship policies.....	63
76	Waiver of debt for hardship customer .....	64
<b>Part 4</b>	<b>Relationship between distributors and customers .....</b>	<b>65</b>
<b>Division 1</b>	<b>Preliminary.....</b>	<b>65</b>
77	Application of this Part.....	65
78	Variation or exclusion of provisions of this Part by deemed AER approved standard connection contracts.....	65
<b>Division 2</b>	<b>Customer connection services.....</b>	<b>65</b>
79	Application for customer connection services.....	65
80	Provision of information to customers .....	66
<b>Division 3</b>	<b>Deemed standard connection contracts .....</b>	<b>67</b>
81	Model terms and conditions for deemed standard connection contracts.....	67
<b>Division 4</b>	<b>Negotiated connection contracts.....</b>	<b>67</b>
82	Small customer complaints and dispute resolution information.....	67
83	Liabilities and immunities .....	67
<b>Division 5</b>	<b>Distributor obligations to customers.....</b>	<b>68</b>
84	Distributor service standards and GSL schemes .....	68

85 Fault reporting and correction .....68

86A Provision of information - supply of electricity .....68

86B Provision of information - supply of gas .....69

87 Referral to interpreter services.....69

**Division 6 Distributor interruption to supply .....69**

88 Definitions .....69

89 Distributor's right to interrupt supply .....70

90 Distributor planned interruptions.....70

91 Unplanned interruptions .....71

91A Metering coordinator and distributor to assist and cooperate - electricity ...71

**Division 7 Miscellaneous .....72**

92 Compliance by small customer who is not owner of premises .....72

**Part 5 Relationship between distributors and retailers—  
 retail support obligations.....73**

**Division 1 Preliminary.....73**

93 Application of this Part.....73

**Division 2 Assistance and cooperation.....73**

94 Assistance and cooperation.....73

**Division 3 Information requirements.....73**

95 Information about applicable tariffs, connection related information and  
 other information .....73

96 Requirements for information.....74

97 Distributor and retailer contact details.....74

98 Contact details for customers.....74

99 Information on distributor planned interruptions .....74

99A Information on retailer planned interruptions – electricity .....75

100 Information on unplanned interruptions .....75

**Division 4 Shared customer enquiries and complaints .....76**

101 Enquiries or complaints relating to the retailer.....76

102 Enquiries or complaints relating to the distributor .....76

**Division 5 De-energisation and re-energisation of shared customer's  
 premises .....77**

103 De-energisation of premises by the distributor.....77

104 Notification of de-energisation .....77

105 Liability for ongoing charges.....77

106	Re-energisation - gas .....	78
106A	Re-energisation - electricity .....	78
<b>Part 6</b>	<b>De-energisation (or disconnection) of premises—small customers .....</b>	<b>81</b>
<b>Division 1</b>	<b>Preliminary .....</b>	<b>81</b>
107	Application of this Part .....	81
108	Definitions .....	81
109	Reminder notices—retailers .....	82
110	Disconnection warning notices—retailers and distributors .....	82
<b>Division 2</b>	<b>Retailer-initiated de-energisation of premises .....</b>	<b>83</b>
111	De-energisation for not paying bill .....	83
112	De-energisation for not paying security deposit .....	84
113	De-energisation for denying access to meter .....	85
114	De-energisation for illegally using energy .....	86
115	De-energisation for non-notification by move-in or carry-over customers ..	86
116	When retailer must not arrange de-energisation .....	86
117	Timing of de-energisation where dual fuel market contract .....	88
118	Request for de-energisation .....	88
<b>Division 3</b>	<b>Distributor de-energisation of premises .....</b>	<b>88</b>
119	Grounds for de-energisation .....	88
120	When distributor must not de-energise premises .....	90
<b>Division 4</b>	<b>Re-energisation of premises .....</b>	<b>91</b>
121	Obligation on retailer to arrange re-energisation of premises .....	91
122	Obligation on distributor to re-energise premises .....	91
<b>Part 7</b>	<b>Life support equipment .....</b>	<b>93</b>
123	Application of this Part .....	93
123A	Definitions .....	93
124	Registration of life support equipment .....	93
124A	Confirmation of premises as requiring life support equipment .....	97
124B	Ongoing retailer and distributor obligations .....	97
125	Deregistration of premises .....	100
126	Registration and deregistration details must be kept by retailers and distributors .....	103
126A	Keeping medical confirmations .....	104

**Part 8                    Prepayment meter systems.....105**

127                    Definitions ..... 105

128                    Disclosure requirements at energy marketing stage ..... 105

129                    System requirements..... 106

130                    Trial period ..... 107

131                    Operating instructions to be provided..... 108

132                    Consumption information to be provided..... 108

133                    Limitation on recovery of debt ..... 109

134                    Credit retrieval ..... 109

135                    System testing..... 109

136                    Overcharging ..... 110

137                    Undercharging ..... 111

138                    Illegal energy use ..... 112

139                    Life support equipment..... 112

140                    Customer enquiries and complaints ..... 112

141                    Payment difficulties and hardship ..... 112

142                    Payment towards prepayment meter system account ..... 113

143                    Tariffs and charges ..... 114

144                    Billing for other goods and services ..... 115

145                    Customer termination of contract or request for removal..... 115

146                    Different retailer ..... 116

147                    Deemed customer retail arrangements..... 116

  

**Part 8A                    Electricity generation in the distribution system .....119**

147A                    Information about small generator connections - electricity ..... 119

147B                    Immunity for failure to take supply of electricity from premises..... 120

  

**Part 9                    Exempt selling regime.....121**

**Division 1                    Preliminary.....121**

148                    Definitions ..... 121

**Division 2                    AER power to exempt .....121**

149                    Individual exemptions ..... 121

150                    Deemed exemptions..... 121

151                    Registrable exemptions and registered exemptions..... 121

152                    Conditions generally ..... 122

153                    Conditions for deemed exemptions and registered exemptions ..... 122



**Division 3      AER Exempt Selling Guidelines .....123**  
154      AER Exempt Selling Guidelines .....123

**Division 4      Provisions relating to individual exemptions .....123**  
155      Application for individual exemption or variation of individual exemption 123  
156      Public notice and submissions .....124  
157      Deciding application .....124  
158      Conditions for individual exemptions .....124  
159      Form of energy to be specified .....125  
160      Notice of decision to grant application .....125  
161      Deemed refusal .....125  
162      Issue and public notice of individual exemption .....126  
163      Notice of refusal .....126

**Division 5      Public Register of Authorised Retailers and Exempt Sellers .....126**  
164      Public Register of Authorised Retailers and Exempt Sellers .....126

**Part 10      Retail market performance reports.....129**  
165      Purpose of this Part .....129  
166      Contents of retail market performance report—retail market overview....129  
167      Contents of retail market performance report—retail market activities report 129

**Part 11      Customer retail contracts—electricity consumption  
benchmarks.....131**  
168      Purpose of this Part .....131  
169      AER administration of electricity consumption benchmarks .....131  
170      Retailer obligations—electricity consumption benchmarks .....131  
171      Distributor obligations—electricity consumption information .....132

**Part 12      National energy retail consultation.....133**  
172      Customer Consultative Group .....133  
173      Retail consultation procedure .....133

**Schedule 1      Model terms and conditions for standard retail  
contracts .....135**

**Schedule 2      Model terms and conditions for deemed standard  
connection contracts.....153**

- Schedule 3 Savings and Transitional Rules.....169**
- Part 1 Transitional Rules—NSW gas distributors.....169**
- Division 1 Application and definitions .....169**
- 1 Application .....169
- 2 Definitions .....169
- Division 2 Interim deemed standard connection contract .....170**
- 3 Required Alterations .....170
- 4 Inconsistency with access arrangements and reference services agreements.170
- 5 Retailer interface.....170
- Division 3 Deemed and existing contractual arrangements with customers and NSW gas distributors .....171**
- 6 Formation of interim deemed standard connection connect contracts on start date.....171
- 7 Existing contracts with large customers .....171
- Division 4 Transitional arrangements after the expiry date.....171**
- 8 Deemed standard connection contract to replace interim contract .....171
- Part 2 Transitional Rules —ACT gas distributor .....172**
- Division 1 Application and definitions .....172**
- 1 Application .....172
- 2 Definitions .....172
- Division 2 Interim deemed standard connection contract .....172**
- 3 Required Alterations .....172
- 4 Retailer interface.....173
- Division 3 Deemed and existing contractual arrangements with customers and ACT gas distributors.....173**
- 5 Formation of interim deemed standard connection connect contracts on start date.....173
- 6 Existing contracts with large customers .....173
- Division 4 Transitional arrangements after the expiry date.....174**
- 7 Deemed standard connection contract to replace interim contract .....174
- Part 3 Billing-related transitional rules .....174**
- 1 Definitions .....174
- 2 Bill smoothing arrangement (Rule 23 NERR).....174
- 3 Bill frequency (Rule 24) .....175
- 4 Undercharging (Rule 30) .....175
- 5 Overcharging (Rule 31 NERR) .....175

6	Payment methods (Rule 32 NERR).....	176
7	Shortened collection cycles (Rule 34 NERR) .....	176
8	Enforcement of payment.....	176
<b>Part 4</b>	<b>Miscellaneous transitional rules—initial NERR.....</b>	<b>176</b>
1	Definitions .....	176
2	Life support arrangements .....	177
3	Classification of customers.....	177
4	Existing aggregation arrangements (Rule 5 NERR).....	177
5	Energy consumption benchmarks.....	177
6	Electricity consumption benchmarks not to apply in NSW.....	177
7	Interim bill benchmarks where legacy billing arrangements.....	177
8	Application of start and end meter reads on small customer bills.....	178
<b>Part 5</b>	<b>Rules consequential on the making of National Energy Retail Amendment (Customer access to information about their consumption) Rule 2014.....</b>	<b>178</b>
1	Definitions .....	178
2	Variation date.....	178
3	Effective date.....	179
<b>Part 6</b>	<b>Rules consequential on the making of the National Energy Retail Amendment (Expanding competition in metering and related services) Rule 2015.....</b>	<b>179</b>
1	Definitions .....	179
2	Variation Date.....	179
<b>Part 7</b>	<b>Rules consequential on the making of the National Energy Retail Amendment (Improving the accuracy of customer transfers) Rule 2017.....</b>	<b>179</b>
1	Definitions .....	179
2	Retail Market Procedures .....	179
<b>Part 8</b>	<b>Rules consequential on the making of the National Energy Retail Amendment (Notification of end of fixed benefit period) Rule 2017 .....</b>	<b>180</b>
1	Definitions .....	180
2	Benefit change notice guidelines .....	180
3	Benefit change notice requirements.....	180
<b>Part 9</b>	<b>Rules consequential on the making of the National Energy Retail Amendment (Strengthening protections for customers requiring life support equipment) Rule 2017.....</b>	<b>180</b>
1	Definitions .....	180

2	Application of Part 7 of Rules during the transition period.....	182
3	Application of new Part 7 of Rules to existing life support customers .....	182
4	Variation date.....	184
<b>Part 10</b>	<b>Rules consequential on the making of the National Energy Retail Amendment (Advance notice of price changes) Rule 2018.....</b>	<b>184</b>
1	Definitions .....	184
2	Variation date.....	184
<b>Part 11</b>	<b>Rules consequential on the making of the National Energy Retail Amendment (Strengthening protections for customers in hardship) Rule 2018.....</b>	<b>184</b>
1	Definitions .....	184
2	The first customer hardship policy guideline .....	185
3	Application of new rules 75A and 75B to customer hardship policies .....	185
4	AER approval of updated customer hardship policy .....	185
<b>Part 12</b>	<b>Rules consequential on the making of Schedule 2 of the National Energy Retail Amendment (Metering installation timeframes) Rule 2018.....</b>	<b>185</b>
1	Definitions .....	185
2	Variation date.....	186
<b>Part 12A</b>	<b>Rules consequential on the making of the National Energy Retail Amendment (Reducing customers' switching times) Rule 2019 .....</b>	<b>186</b>
1	Definitions .....	186
2	Variation date.....	186
<b>Part 12B</b>	<b>Rules consequential on the making of the National Energy Retail Amendment (Regulating conditional discounting) Rule 2020 No. 1 .....</b>	<b>186</b>
1	Definitions .....	186
2	Existing contracts with small customers.....	186
<b>Part 13</b>	<b>Rules consequential on the making of Schedule 2 of the National Energy Retail Amendment (Minor changes) Rule 2019.....</b>	<b>187</b>
1	Definitions .....	187
2	Variation date.....	187
<b>Part 14</b>	<b>Rules consequential on the making of the National Energy Retail Amendment (Introduction of metering coordinator planned interruptions) Rule 2020.....</b>	<b>187</b>
1	Definitions .....	187
2	Variation date.....	187

**Part 15**      **Rules consequential on the making of the National Energy Retail Amendment (Maintaining life support customer registration when switching) Rule 2021.....188**

1              Definitions .....188

2              Application of New rule 126A .....188

**Part 16**      **Rules consequential on the making of the National Energy Retail Amendment (Bill contents and billing requirements) Rule 2021 No. 2 .....188**

1              Billing guideline .....188

**Part 17**      **Rules consequential on the making of the National Energy Retail Amendment (Access, pricing and incentive arrangements for distributed energy resources) Rule 2021 .....188**

1              Definitions .....188

2              Variation date.....189

3              Existing contracts – application of immunity .....189

4              Small generator information .....189