



Draft National Energy Retail Amendment (Bill contents and billing requirements) Rule 2021

under the National Energy Retail Law as applied by:

- (a) the National Energy Retail Law (South Australia) Act 2011 of South Australia;
- (b) the National Energy Retail Law (ACT) Act 2012 of the Australian Capital Territory;
- (c) the National Energy Retail Law (Adoption) Act 2012 of New South Wales;
- (d) the National Energy Retail Law (Queensland) Act 2014 of Queensland;
- (e) the National Energy Retail Law (Tasmania) Act 2012 of Tasmania; and
- (f) the Australian Energy Market Act 2004 of the Commonwealth.

The Australian Energy Market Commission makes the following Rule under the National Energy Retail Law.

Merryn York
Acting Chairperson
Australian Energy Market Commission

Draft National Energy Retail Amendment (Bill contents and billing requirements) Rule 2021

1 Title of Rule

This Rule is the *Draft National Energy Retail Amendment (Bill contents and billing requirements) Rule 2021*.

2 Commencement

Schedule 1 of this rule commences on [4 August 2022].

Schedule 2 of this rule commences on [25 March 2021].

3 Amendment to the National Energy Retail Rules

The National Energy Retail Rules are amended as set out in Schedule 1.

4 Savings and Transitional Amendment to the National Energy Retail Rules

The National Energy Retail Rules are amended as set out in Schedule 2.

Schedule 1 Amendment to the National Energy Retail Rules

(Clause 3)

[1] Rule 3 Definitions

In rule 3, insert the following new definition:

interconnected national electricity system has the same meaning as in the National Electricity Law.

[2] Rule 3 Definitions

In rule 3, in the definition of "*bill issue date*", omit "25(1)(e)" and substitute "25(1)".

[3] Rule 24 Frequency of bills (SRC)

In rule 24, omit subrule (1) and substitute:

- (1) A retailer must issue bills to a small customer at least once every 100 days, or at such other time specified in the billing guidelines under rule 25A.

Note

The AEMC proposes to recommend that rule 24(1) remains classified as a civil penalty provision under the National Energy Retail Regulations. (See clause 6 and Schedule 1 of the National Energy Retail Regulations.)

[4] Rule 25 Contents of bills (SRC and MRC)

In rule 25, omit subrule (1) and substitute:

- (1) In preparing and issuing a bill to a small customer, a retailer must comply with the billing guidelines under rule 25A.

Note

The AEMC proposes to recommend that rule 25(1) remains classified as a civil penalty provision under the National Energy Retail Regulations. (See clause 6 and Schedule 1 of the National Energy Retail Regulations.)

[5] New Rule 25A Billing guidelines

After rule 25, insert the following:

25A Billing guidelines

- (1) The AER must, in accordance with the retail consultation procedure, make guidelines (billing guidelines) in relation to how retailers prepare and issue bills to small customers.
- (2) The objectives of the billing guidelines are to enable small customers to easily understand:

- (a) payment amounts, dates and methods for their bill;
 - (b) how their bill is calculated and whether it conforms to their customer retail contract;
 - (c) their energy consumption and production, and related costs and revenue, to assist with:
 - (i) using energy efficiently;
 - (ii) comparing their customer retail contract with other energy offers available to them;
 - (iii) considering options for energy supply other than through the *interconnected national electricity system*;
 - (d) how to dispute or raise a query in relation to their bill;
 - (e) how to access interpreter services and seek financial assistance, (billing objectives).
- (3) The AER may, from time to time, amend the billing guidelines in accordance with the retail consultation procedure.

Developing the billing guidelines

- (4) In making and amending the billing guidelines, the AER:
- (a) must take into account the following:
 - (i) the need for consumer protections for small customers, while also enabling retail market innovation, competition and consumer choice;
 - (ii) the costs of compliance by retailers with the billing guidelines and the potential resulting costs for small customers;
 - (iii) whether the requirements in the billing guidelines are effective and proportionate to the expected benefits that result from achieving the relevant billing objectives; and
 - (iv) the potential benefits of standardising language and terminology across bills, customer retail contracts and energy offers;
 - (b) may take into account any other matters that the AER, in its reasonable opinion, considers relevant to the billing objectives.

Schedule 2 Savings and Transitional Amendment to the National Energy Retail Rules

(Clause 4)

[1] New Part 15 Rules consequential on making of the National Energy Retail Amendment (Bill contents and billing requirements) Rule 2021

In Schedule 3, after Part 14, insert:

Part 15 Rules consequential on the making of the National Energy Retail Amendment (Bill contents and billing requirements) Rule 2021

1 Definitions

(1) In this Part:

Amending Rule means the National Energy Retail Amendment (Bill contents and billing requirements) Rule 2021.

effective date means [4 August 2022].

New rule 25A means rule 25A of the Rules as in force on the effective date.

2 Billing guidelines

(1) By 1 April 2022, the AER must make the billing guidelines under new rule 25A in accordance with the retail consultation procedure.