

Authorised Version

Water Legislation Amendment (Water Infrastructure Charges) Act 2011

No. 63 of 2011

TABLE OF PROVISIONS

<i>Section</i>		<i>Page</i>
PART 1—PRELIMINARY		1
1	Purposes	1
2	Commencement	2
PART 2—AMENDMENT OF THE WATER INDUSTRY ACT 1994		3
3	New section inserted after section 4	3
4AA	Parts 1A and 1B to prevail	3
4	New section inserted after section 4A	3
4AB	Non application to Basin water charges	3
5	Application of Essential Services Commission Act 2001	3
6	Insertion of new Part after Part 1A	4
PART 1B—APPROVAL OR DETERMINATION OF BASIN WATER CHARGES		4
4J	Interpretation	4
4K	Application of Commonwealth provisions	6
4L	Commission is State Agency	6
4M	Powers of Commission	6
4N	Cessation of effect of provisions	6
4O	Power of Commission to apply for accreditation	7
4P	Notification of accreditation etc.	7
4Q	Recovery of Commission's costs	8
PART 3—AMENDMENT OF THE ESSENTIAL SERVICES COMMISSION ACT 2001 AND THE WATER ACT 1989		10
7	Functions of the Commission— Essential Services Commission Act 2001	10
8	Insertion of new section after section 10— Essential Services Commission Act 2001	10
10A	Commission's functions in relation to particular Basin water charges	10
9	Insertion of definition in Water Act 1989	11
10	Objections to tariffs or fees— Water Act 1989	11
11	Objections to required payments— Water Act 1989	12

<i>Section</i>	<i>Page</i>
PART 4—REPEAL OF AMENDING ACT	13
12 Repeal of amending Act	13
ENDNOTES	14

Authorised Version



Victoria

Water Legislation Amendment (Water Infrastructure Charges) Act 2011[†]

No. 63 of 2011

[Assented to 15 November 2011]

The Parliament of Victoria enacts:

PART 1—PRELIMINARY

1 Purposes

The main purposes of this Act are—

- (a) to amend the **Water Industry Act 1994**—
 - (i) to apply certain provisions of the Water Charge (Infrastructure) Rules 2010 of the Commonwealth as a law of the State to enable the Essential Services Commission, established under the

Essential Services Commission Act 2001, to approve or determine charges for the provision of certain water services in the State; and

- (ii) to enable the Essential Services Commission to apply for accreditation of those arrangements by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission; and
- (b) to make related and consequential amendments to that Act and other Acts.

2 Commencement

This Act comes into operation on the day after the day on which this Act receives the Royal Assent.

**PART 2—AMENDMENT OF THE WATER INDUSTRY ACT
1994**

3 New section inserted after section 4

After section 4 of the **Water Industry Act 1994**
insert—

"4AA Parts 1A and 1B to prevail

If there is any inconsistency between a
provision of Part 1A or Part 1B and a
provision of the **Essential Services
Commission Act 2001** or the **Water Act
1989**, the provision of Part 1A or Part 1B
prevails to the extent of that inconsistency."

See:
Act No.
121/1994.
Reprint No. 6
as at
29 February
2008
and
amending
Act Nos
15/2008,
68/2009,
69/2009,
6/2010 and
29/2010.
LawToday:
www.
legislation.
vic.gov.au

4 New section inserted after section 4A

After section 4A of the **Water Industry Act 1994**
insert—

"4AB Non application to Basin water charges

- (1) This Part does not apply to any approving or
determining of a Basin water charge.
- (2) In this section *Basin water charge* has the
same meaning as in Part 1B."

**5 Application of Essential Services Commission Act
2001**

- (1) In section 4B(1)(a) of the **Water Industry Act
1994**, for "this Act" **substitute** "Part 1A of this
Act".
- (2) Section 4B(3) of the **Water Industry Act 1994** is
repealed.

6 Insertion of new Part after Part 1A

After Part 1A of the **Water Industry Act 1994**
insert—

"PART 1B—APPROVAL OR DETERMINATION OF BASIN WATER CHARGES

4J Interpretation

(1) In this Act—

accredited arrangements has the same meaning as in the Commonwealth Water Charge Rules;

applied Victorian provisions means the Commonwealth provisions as applied under section 4K;

Basin water charge means a regulated charge for a service in relation to Basin water resources provided by a Part 6 operator or Part 7 operator;

Basin water resources has the same meaning as *State water resources* has in the Commonwealth Water Charge Rules in relation to Victoria;

Commonwealth provisions has the same meaning as *applied provisions* has in rule 59(2) of the Commonwealth Water Charge Rules;

Commonwealth Water Charge Rules means the Water Charge (Infrastructure) Rules 2010 of the Commonwealth;

Part 6 operator has the same meaning as in the Commonwealth Water Charge Rules;

Part 7 operator has the same meaning as in the Commonwealth Water Charge Rules;

regulated charge has the same meaning as in the Commonwealth Water Charge Rules;

State Agency has the same meaning as in the Commonwealth Water Charge Rules.

- (2) Section 3(2) and (3) does not apply to this Part.
- (3) The **Interpretation of Legislation Act 1984** does not apply to the applied Victorian provisions.
- (4) The Acts Interpretation Act 1901 of the Commonwealth applies to the applied Victorian provisions to the same extent that that Act applies to the Commonwealth Water Charge Rules, and as if—
 - (a) that Act, as so applied, were enacted as a law of Victoria; and
 - (b) the applied Victorian provisions were an Act and each rule of the applied Victorian provisions were a section of an Act.

Note

See section 5 of the Water Act 2007 of the Commonwealth as to the application of the Acts Interpretation Act 1901 of the Commonwealth.

- (5) The following provisions apply to the applied Victorian provisions—
 - (a) any expressions used in the applied Victorian provisions have the same meaning as in the Water Act 2007 of the Commonwealth and the Water

Regulations 2008 of the
Commonwealth; and

- (b) the applied Victorian provisions must be read consistently with the Water Act 2007 of the Commonwealth and must be read so as not to exceed the rule making power in section 92 of that Act and any other ancillary rule making powers in that Act.
- (6) If a provision of the applied Victorian provisions would, but for subsection (4) or (5), be construed as exceeding the rule making powers referred to in subsection (5)(b), the provision is taken to have effect to the extent that it does not exceed that rule making power.

4K Application of Commonwealth provisions

In respect of Basin water charges, the Commonwealth provisions apply as a law of the State.

4L Commission is State Agency

For the purposes of rule 59(1)(b) of the Commonwealth Water Charge Rules and the applied Victorian provisions, the Commission is specified as the State Agency.

4M Powers of Commission

The Commission has all the powers that are necessary to perform its functions as a State Agency under the applied Victorian provisions.

4N Cessation of effect of provisions

Sections 4K, 4L and 4M do not have effect if this Part is not accredited arrangements.

4O Power of Commission to apply for accreditation

- (1) The Commission may apply to the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission for this Part to be accredited as accredited arrangements.
- (2) In addition to subsection (1), the Commission has the power to do anything necessary for this Part to be accredited as accredited arrangements.

4P Notification of accreditation etc.

- (1) If the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission approves this Part as accredited arrangements, within 7 days after that approval, the Commission must publish notice of that approval in the Government Gazette.
- (2) A notice under subsection (1) must include—
 - (a) publication of the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission's decision to approve the arrangements; and
 - (b) the date on which the decision of the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission came into effect.
- (3) If the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission revokes accreditation of this Part as accredited arrangements, within 7 days after that revocation, the Commission must publish notice of that revocation in the Government Gazette.

- (4) A notice under subsection (3) must include—
- (a) publication of the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission's decision to revoke accreditation of this Part as accredited arrangements; and
 - (b) the date on which the decision of the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission came into effect.
- (5) If accreditation of this Part as accredited arrangements ceases to have effect under the Commonwealth Water Charge Rules, within 7 days after that ceasing to have effect, the Commission must publish notice of that ceasing to have effect in the Government Gazette.
- (6) A notice under subsection (5) must include the date on which the accredited arrangements cease to have effect.

4Q Recovery of Commission's costs

- (1) The Minister administering the **Essential Services Commission Act 2001** must determine the amount to be contributed by each Part 6 operator or Part 7 operator towards the costs that are incurred or are likely to be incurred by the Commission in the exercise of its powers and the performance of its functions and duties under the applied Victorian provisions.
- (2) The amount that a Part 6 operator or Part 7 operator is to contribute under subsection (1) is payable at the intervals and in the amounts determined by the Minister administering the **Essential Services Commission Act 2001**.

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- (3) The Minister administering the **Essential Services Commission Act 2001** must give notice in writing of any determination made by the Minister under subsection (1) or (2) to a Part 6 operator or Part 7 operator to whom the determination applies.
- (4) The Minister administering the **Essential Services Commission Act 2001** must not make a determination under subsection (1) or (2) unless the Minister has first consulted with the Minister administering this section.

_____".

**PART 3—AMENDMENT OF THE ESSENTIAL SERVICES
COMMISSION ACT 2001 AND THE WATER ACT 1989**

**7 Functions of the Commission—Essential Services
Commission Act 2001**

See:
Act No.
62/2001.
Reprint No. 3
as at
1 July 2008
and
amending
Act Nos
70/2007,
6/2010 and
40/2011.
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vic.gov.au

In section 10 of the **Essential Services
Commission Act 2001**—

(a) in paragraph (l), for "**2007.**" substitute
"**2007;**";

(b) after paragraph (l) **insert**—

"(m) if, under Part 1B of the **Water
Industry Act 1994**, the
Commonwealth provisions (within the
meaning of that Part) are applied as a
law of the State, to perform the
functions conferred on the Commission
as the State Agency under those
provisions."

**8 Insertion of new section after section 10—Essential
Services Commission Act 2001**

After section 10 of the **Essential Services
Commission Act 2001** **insert**—

**"10A Commission's functions in relation to
particular Basin water charges**

The following provisions do not apply to the
functions of the Commission referred to in
section 10(m)—

(a) sections 8, 8A and 26; and

(b) Part 4 (other than sections 37 and 38 to
the extent necessary for the operation of
Part 5); and

(c) Part 7 (other than sections 61 and 64).

Note

Parts 3, 3A and 6 do not apply to the Commission's function under section 10(m) because that function does not relate to a regulated industry."

9 Insertion of definition in Water Act 1989

Insert the following definition in section 3(1) of the **Water Act 1989**—

"*Essential Services Commission* means the Essential Services Commission established under the **Essential Services Commission Act 2001**;"

See:
Act No.
80/1989.
Reprint No. 10
as at
1 January
2011
and
amending
Act Nos
50/2010 and
29/2011.
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www.
legislation.
vic.gov.au

10 Objections to tariffs or fees—Water Act 1989

After section 266(7) of the **Water Act 1989**
insert—

"(8) A person is not entitled to object under subsection (1) to a tariff or the imposing of a fee under a tariff set by an Authority, if the tariff or the fee is a Basin water charge.

(9) In this section—

Basin water charge means a regulated charge for a service in relation to Basin water resources provided by an Authority;

Basin water resources has the same meaning as ***State water resources*** has in the Water Charge (Infrastructure) Rules 2010 of the Commonwealth in relation to Victoria;

regulated charge has the same meaning as in the Water Charge (Infrastructure) Rules 2010 of the Commonwealth."

11 Objections to required payments—Water Act 1989

After section 271(4) of the **Water Act 1989**
insert—

- "(5) A person is not entitled to object under subsection (1) to a payment the person is required to make under section 268, 269 or 270, if the payment is a Basin water charge.
- (6) In this section—

Basin water charge means a regulated charge for a service in relation to Basin water resources provided by an Authority;

Basin water resources has the same meaning as *State water resources* has in the Water Charge (Infrastructure) Rules 2010 of the Commonwealth in relation to Victoria;

regulated charge has the same meaning as in the Water Charge (Infrastructure) Rules 2010 of the Commonwealth."

PART 4—REPEAL OF AMENDING ACT

12 Repeal of amending Act

This Act is **repealed** on the first anniversary of its commencement.

Note

The repeal of this Act does not affect the continuing operation of the amendments made by it (see section 15(1) of the **Interpretation of Legislation Act 1984**).

ENDNOTES

† *Minister's second reading speech—*

Legislative Assembly: 12 October 2011

Legislative Council: 27 October 2011

The long title for the Bill for this Act was "A Bill for an Act to amend the **Water Industry Act 1994** to apply certain provisions of the Water Charge (Infrastructure) Rules 2010 of the Commonwealth as a law of Victoria to enable the Essential Services Commission to approve or determine charges for the provision of certain water services in the State and to make related and consequential amendments to that Act and other Acts and for other purposes."