

# National Competition Principles

## VICTORIAN IMPLEMENTATION TIMETABLE

Activity steps	Short description of activity	Expected delivery date	Contingencies
<b>Principle 1 - Governments should harness the benefits of competition</b>			
Implementation activity may involve the introduction or update of a competition (or broader) impact assessment framework (including a public interest exemption and review process), a review of existing barriers to competition (including any measures taken to address these barriers) and any other steps taken to actively promote competition.			
<b>Already aligned with revitalised principles</b>			
Regulatory Impact Assessments	The Victorian Government prepares <a href="#">impact assessments</a> that explain the expected impacts of proposed regulations or legislation. These impact assessments are required when proposed regulations or legislation is expected to impose a significant burden on the community relative to the base case. The impact assessments specifically require an assessment of impacts on competition in order to ensure competition issues can be considered by decision-makers. The adequacy of the impact assessments is independently assessed by the Commissioner for Better Regulation, with support from Better Regulation Victoria.	Ongoing	
<b>Work in progress</b>			

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Review and amendment of the <i>Planning and Environment Act 1987</i>	<p>Victoria's <i>Planning and Environment Act 1987</i> is being rewritten to build a modern, fit-for-purpose planning system. The Act currently prevents competition related considerations in appeals or objections by allowing decision-makers to reject an objection and direct a party to pay compensation if a proceeding has been brought to secure a commercial advantage.</p> <p>The Bill creates separate approvals processes based on the risk and complexity of projects, establishes common sense appeal rights and makes it easier for councils and the Victorian Government to update local planning rules or planning scheme amendments.</p>	Expected to be enacted in early 2026	The final Bill is currently being considered by Parliament.
<b>Work completed</b>			
Recycling Victoria has published a Strategic Procurement Framework to promote competition in procurement of waste and recycling services.	Recycling Victoria has published a <a href="#">Strategic Procurement Framework</a> that sets out how it will support local government and Alpine Resorts Victoria to procure waste and recycling services through competitive tender processes.	Published in April 2025	
Updating the <i>Subordinate Legislation Act 1994 Guidelines</i> to align with the Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA)	The guidance around preparing competition policy certificates in the <a href="#">Subordinate Legislation Act 1994 Guidelines</a> has been updated to align with updated wording in the latest IGA, providing the requirements for the preparation and making of statutory rules and legislative instruments in Victoria.	Published in the General Government Gazette on 18 December 2025.	

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The Victorian Guide to Regulation has been updated to align with the latest IGA.	<p>Better Regulation Victoria (BRV) assesses the adequacy of regulatory impact statements (RISs) and legislative impact assessments (LIAs).</p> <p>The <a href="#">Victorian Guide to Regulation</a> explains that competition impacts should be analysed in RISs and LIAs, and also explains our approach to reviewing RISs/LIAs (including the competition impacts). The VGR was updated by BRV to align with the latest requirements of the IGA.</p>	Published in May 2025	
Victoria has developed and published guidance on model provisions and fit and proper persons tests.	Through the review of the statute book to identify best practice provisions and vigorous stakeholder engagement, Victoria has developed guidance on model legislative provisions for fit and proper person's test. This guidance offers clear, consistent advice for developing effective and more streamlined legislation in Victoria.	Published May 2025	
Reducing the time taken for environmental effects statement (EES)	Victoria will reduce barriers to competition by making the EES system faster, cheaper and more predictable. It was agreed from 1 January 2025, that all EES statements submitted should be completed in under 18 months. This minimises delays and reduces regulatory costs.	Finalised 1 January 2025	
VicGrid has amended the contestability provisions within the National Electricity Rules	<p>VicGrid has amended the contestability provisions within the National Electricity Rules (NER) pursuant to the <i>National Electricity (Victoria) Amendment (VicGrid Stage 2 Reform) Act 2025</i> and via the proposed National Electricity (Victoria) (VicGrid) Regulations 2025.</p> <p>These include the development of Contestability Guidelines which determine how contestability is assessed for augmentations to Victoria's transmission network, with the aim of promoting competition and efficiency while also protecting system security.</p>	Amended regulations came into effect on 1 November 2025.	

Activity steps	Short description of activity	Expected delivery date	Contingencies
<b>Principle 2 - Governments should support consumers to benefit from competition</b>			
Implementation activity may involve the introduction of mechanisms to facilitate consumer empowerment. For example, by improving disclosure of information or lowering barriers to switching.			
<b>Already aligned with revitalised principles</b>			
Information provision to support consumer empowerment in the skills and training market	<p>In relation to skills and training, the Victorian Government keeps learners informed of the training market using an array of dedicated digital content and tools to support student and industry choice and empowerment. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Victorian Skills Gateway</a></li> <li>• TAFE and Training line: A dedicated call centre to support consumers with questions related to VET training</li> <li>• <a href="#">Find a TAFE platform</a></li> </ul>	No further action required	
Resources to support consumers make energy price comparisons	<p>The Victorian Government provides <a href="#">websites</a> including several fact sheets to support consumers with factual information on making household choices, including potential impacts on household energy bills.</p> <p>The Victorian Government's <a href="#">Victorian Energy Compare</a> is a free, independent online energy price comparison service that enables consumers to find the best gas and electricity retail deals.</p> <p>The <a href="#">Residential Efficiency Scorecard</a> provides consumers with targeted information to improve the performance of their homes, potentially reducing household energy bills, and access to a data base of energy assessors so they can choose the most appropriate approach to suit their specific needs.</p>	Published 2022 and updated annually	

Activity steps	Short description of activity	Expected delivery date	Contingencies
Enabling consumers to save money through switching energy retail plans	The Essential Services Commission has amended the Energy Retail Code of Practice (ERCoP) to require energy retailers to automatically switch customers who are either experiencing payment difficulty or who are on contracts longer than a determined period. The amendments will reduce energy bill costs for affected customers.	2 October 2025	
Enabling consumers to save money through comparing real-time fuel prices	Victoria's Fair Fuel Plan will introduce new regulations to improve transparency and access to real-time fuel prices across the state for Victorian consumers. Fuel retailers in Victoria are required to register and share their fuel price data within the Service Victoria Servo Saver app. Servo Saver compares fuel prices from more than 1,200 fuel retailers across the state. This helps Victorians make informed choices about where to refuel. The <a href="#">new regulations</a> have been made under the <i>Australian Consumer Law and Fair Trading Act 2012</i> . They follow 6 months of <a href="#">public consultation</a> with industry and the community.	3 October 2025	
<b>Principle 3 - Reform of public monopolies, including privatisation, should not harm consumers</b>			
Implementation activity may involve the introduction or amendment of guidance or a legislative framework for the structural reform of public monopolies, to require an independent and transparent review before this can occur.			
<b>Already aligned with revitalised principles</b>			
Reform of public monopolies require Cabinet approval	The privatisation, leasing or structural reform of a public monopoly must first receive Cabinet approval prior to any changes taking place. Cabinet submissions in Victoria are already required to consider the economic benefits and costs of such a proposal such as how it may relate to the provision of a public good as well as regulation or taxation considerations.	No further action required	
<b>Work in progress</b>			

Activity steps	Short description of activity	Expected delivery date	Contingencies
Review of Victoria's internal policy framework relating to state-regulated assets	The Victorian Government applies an internal policy framework when reviewing and assessing reform opportunities for state-regulated assets. This framework supports internal government decision-making and would be applied to proposed reforms of public monopolies to ensure that the proposal does not lead to adverse outcomes for consumers among other things. This internal document is expected to be reviewed and updated over time, to ensure this framework remains appropriate and aligns with best practice.	TBC	
<b>Work completed</b>			
Victoria's internal policy framework relating to state-regulated assets	The Victorian Government applies an internal policy framework when reviewing and assessing reform opportunities for state-regulated assets. This framework supports internal government decision-making and would be applied to proposed reforms of public monopolies to ensure that the proposal does not lead to adverse outcomes for consumers among other things.	No further action required	
<b>Principle 4 - Government and private businesses should compete on a level playing field</b> Implementation activity may involve the amendment of competitive neutrality policies, complaints mechanisms and community service obligation arrangements.			

Activity steps	Short description of activity	Expected delivery date	Contingencies
<b>Already aligned with revitalised principles</b>			
Victoria's water corporations are subject to debt neutrality adjustments and competitive neutrality policy	<p>Water corporations and the Victorian Environmental Water Holder (as the largest Victorian government agencies holding water) publicly report on any trades they participate in (some also publish trade strategies).</p> <p>Victoria's water corporations are subject to the National Tax Equivalent Regime, a debt neutrality adjustment (the Financial Accommodation Levy) and are required to submit full statutory accounts covering regulated and unregulated business. Water market and trade rules are the same for everyone, regardless of how they intend to use water.</p> <p>Water corporations are generally fully funded through fees and charges from customers. Grants from government are a line item in the water corporations' annual reports and grants made by DEECA are itemised in its annual report. Complaints about competitive neutrality can be made to Better Regulation Victoria.</p> <p>Water market rules are set in a legislative instrument. DEECA and rural water corporations provide avenues for participants to raise concerns with the process. In some markets there is an avenue via VCAT to object to trade decisions.</p>	No further action required	
SEC Victoria operates in compliance with Victoria's competitive neutrality policy	In 2023 the Victorian Government reestablished the State Electricity Commission (SEC) as a government-owned renewable energy company. SEC complies with the Victorian Government's competitive neutrality policy, to ensure it competes fairly in the market. Competitive neutrality principles are embedded in SEC's structure and governance as demonstrated in their 2023-2035 strategic plan.	No further action required	
<b>Principle 5 - Governments should promote a single national market</b>			
<b>Implementation activity may involve the introduction or update of processes for assessing impacts on interstate trade (including for regulators), and a review of existing barriers to trade (including any measures taken to address these barriers).</b>			
<b>Already aligned with revitalised principles</b>			

Activity steps	Short description of activity	Expected delivery date	Contingencies
Victoria is a signatory to the National Water Initiative and is involved in the development of the National Water Agreement	<p>Victoria is a signatory to the National Water Initiative and is participating in the development of the new National Water Agreement. This aims for consistency of approach to water related economic and regulatory matters across states and territories.</p> <p>Interstate trade in the Murray-Darling Basin is facilitated in accordance with the 2004 National Water Initiative, including the intergovernmental commitment to minimise barriers to trade.</p>	TBC	Subject to decision of the Minister on the draft of the NWA

#### Principle 6 - Government pricing practices should be efficient and transparent

Implementation activity may involve the introduction or update of an efficient charging guide for government-provided goods and services and any updates to the independent prices oversight framework for government-owned significant business enterprises (noting the prices oversight principle is largely unchanged).

#### Already aligned with revitalised principles

Skills First and Free TAFE – course subsidies and fee waiver lists	<p>Course subsidies and fee waiver lists under Skills First and Free TAFE are regularly updated to reflect changing course versions. The Lists are published and publicly available, offering transparent practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Skills First</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Free TAFE program</a></li> </ul> <p>All Skills First training providers are also required to provide students with a Statement of Fees prior to enrolment that summaries indicative costs of training, as well as approximate government contributions to their training.</p>	No further action required
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Victoria has an independent regulatory regime for water services	<p>Victoria has a well-established, independent regulatory regime for water services consistent with this principle, including consultation and transparency.</p> <p>The ESC has established pricing principles to guide efficient pricing.</p> <p>Water trade application fees not covered by the ESC model are set in the Water Resource Management Regulations 2017 following a Regulatory Impact Statement.</p> <p>Work is in progress to review Victorian Water Register pricing principles, in line with the sunseting of the Water Resource Management Regulations in November 2027.</p>	No further action required	
<b>Work in progress</b>			
Review of Victoria's Pricing for Value Guide	Work is underway to review Victoria's <a href="#">Pricing for Value Guide</a> in line with the latest requirements of the IGA.	Expected to be finalised by 1 July 2026	
Setting access fees for generators to locate in a Renewable Energy Zone (REZ)	VicGrid is proposed to be responsible for setting access fees for generators to locate in a Renewable Energy Zone (REZ). The fees will be calculated in accordance with regulations and will consider investment impacts and flow-on impacts to energy consumer bills. VicGrid will set fees that are efficient and transparent.	Anticipated late 2025	
<b>Work completed</b>			
Review of transmission use of system frameworks	VicGrid has developed transmission use of system (TUoS) and Investment Governance frameworks, ensuring a transparent process for setting annual TUoS charges. The process includes comprehensive open engagement and <a href="#">publication of TUOS charges</a> .	Finalised November 2025	
<b>Principle 7 - Access to significant infrastructure facilities should be on reasonable terms and prices</b> <b>Implementation activity may involve any updates to the access regime(s) (noting this principle is largely unchanged).</b>			

Activity steps	Short description of activity	Expected delivery date	Contingencies
<b>Already aligned with revitalised principles</b>			
Port of Melbourne – Pricing Order	The Essential Services Commission oversees the Port of Melbourne’s compliance with the <a href="#">2016 pricing order</a> every five years. The pricing order sets out the requirements for the Port of Melbourne when setting prices for prescribed services to ensure port users and Victorian consumers are protected. The ESC is required under the <i>Port Management Act 1995</i> to conduct an inquiry into the Port of Melbourne’s compliance with the Pricing Order every five years. The last inquiry into the Port of Melbourne’s compliance with the 2016 pricing order covered the review period 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2021.	No further action required	
Port of Melbourne – Market Rent Inquiry	The Port of Melbourne <a href="#">market rent inquiry</a> assesses the use of power in setting and reviewing land rents at the Port of Melbourne over a 5-year period. The inquiry considers whether the Port of Melbourne has market power in relation to the process of setting and reviewing land rents or has exercised market power in a way that causes material detriment to Victorian consumers. The most recent market rent inquiry assessed the setting and reviewing of land rents at the Port of Melbourne over the period 1 November 2019 to 31 October 2024.	Delivered 18 June 2025	
<b>Work in progress</b>			
Review of the <i>Essential Services Commission Act 2001</i>	A review is underway to evaluate the <i>Essential Services Commission Act 2001</i> . The <a href="#">Terms of Reference</a> for the review will consider, amongst other things, the range of regulatory issues and regulated sectors that fall under the auspices of the Essential Services Commission (ESC), whether the ESC is achieving its objectives, if the functions and responsibilities are still appropriate, and if it has appropriate powers to regulate. This will all be considered in the context of the ESC’s current role in regulating the terms and prices of access to the Port of Melbourne.	Expected to be published in 2027	