



3 November 2025

Scott Chapman
Director, Independent Pricing Regulatory Tribunal
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Proposed Updated IPART Guidelines for Scheme-Specific Price Reviews

Dear Scott

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on proposed changes to IPART's *Guidelines for scheme-specific price review requests*.

IPART's 2017 wholesale determination deals with situations where a licensee under the *Water Industry Competition Act 2006* (WICA) requires connection to the water and/or sewer network of a public utility so the licensee can provide its own water services.

While the 2017 determination set regulated prices for some types of wholesale connections, it also provided a mechanism for IPART to set prices for other types of connections if requested by either a licensee or the public utility.

In 2018, IPART published guidelines that describe how a scheme-specific review would be conducted. IPART's proposed changes to the 2018 Guidelines include clarifying that:

- The parties should seek to agree prices before asking IPART to start a review;
- The review process may be paused at various points, for example to allow more time to gather information;
- IPART may exercise its powers to compel the parties to provide information;
- IPART may defer or adjourn a review, such as allowing time to seek expert advice or to enable a period of further negotiation between the parties. Each adjournment could be for up to four weeks, with no cap on the number of adjournments.

We support the changes, which clarify parts of the process, provide practical options to manage issues that may arise, and should allow decisions to be informed by the best available information. As a minor enhancement, section 3.3 could clarify that IPART will seek input from the parties before deciding whether to defer or adjourn the review. Additionally, it may be helpful to place constraints on the backdating of charges once an efficient scheme specific price has been set, such as a guiding principle that material changes in price can be backdated to the date an application was made for a scheme specific review.

Yours sincerely,



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