

CONSULTATION ON ADMINISTRATIVE AMENDMENTS

To the Water Services (Wholesale
Charges at Vacant Premises Reform)
Directions 2018 and the
Disconnections Document

6 August 2026

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Consultation on administrative amendments to the Water Services (Wholesale Charges at Vacant Premises Reform) Directions 2018 and the Disconnections Document

As part of its regular monitoring of published documents and other material, the Commission has identified two minor amendments to the Water Services (Wholesale Charges at Vacant Premises Reform) Directions 2018 and the Disconnections Document. While both amendments are administrative in nature and will not change the functioning of the market, the Commission considers that addressing them transparently will demonstrate that we are holding ourselves to the highest standard in how we manage, document and communicate regulatory arrangements.

This document consults on the following:

- A new Direction issued under Section 11 of the 2005 Act, amending the Water Services (Wholesale Charges at Vacant Premises Reform) Directions 2018;
- A revised Disconnections Document.

This consultation has the following Annexes:

- Annex 1: Draft Directions under Section 11 of the 2005 Act to amend the Water Services (Wholesale Charges at Vacant Premises Reform) Directions 2018;
- Annex 2: A Consolidated Water Services (Codes and Services) Directions 2007, updated to reflect the changes proposed in the above Draft Direction;
- Annex 3: Draft Disconnections Document.

The Commission welcomes views from stakeholders. Any responses should be provided by 3 September 2026 to CompetitionTeam@watercommission.co.uk

This document has been sent to:

- All licensed providers;
- Scottish Water;
- Scottish Government;
- The Drinking Water Quality Regulator;
- Consumer Scotland;
- The Central Market Agency Limited; and
- Scottish Public Services Ombudsman.

This consultation document is also available on the WICS website: <https://wics.scot/consultations/retail-market-consultations/decisions>

1. Amendment to the Water Services (Wholesale Charges at Vacant Premises Reform) Directions 2018

1.1. Background

In September 2007, the Commission issued the Water Services (Codes and Services) Directions 2007 to Scottish Water. These Directions were issued in line with WICS's duty under Section 11 the Water Services etc. (Scotland) Act 2005 (**the 2005 Act**) to secure the participation of licensed providers in the provision of water and sewerage services in an orderly manner and in a manner that is not detrimental to the exercise of Scottish Water's core functions (**the Participation Duty**).

The Water Services (Codes and Services) Directions 2007 (**the 2007 Directions**) were subsequently amended in 2007 and 2009. A consolidated version of the 2007 Directions, including these amendments is available on our website: [Codes and directions | WICS](#)

1.2. Context

In March 2018, the Commission introduced the Water Services (Wholesale Charges at Vacant Premises Reform) 2018 Directions (**the 2018 Directions**). These Directions, among other things, made amendments to the 2007 Directions for the purposes of introducing the Temporary Transfer Document¹.

The 2018 Directions inserted a paragraph entitled 13A into the 2007 Directions, which already included a paragraph with the same name. The 2018 Directions were however not intended to replace the already existing paragraph 13A – in other words, the paragraph 13A that was inserted by the 2018 Directions should have been numbered paragraph 13B. On this basis, the consolidated version of the 2007 Directions published on our website cannot be updated to reflect the changes made by the 2018 Directions.

1.3. Proposed changes

The Commission is therefore proposing to issue new Directions that will amend the 2018 Directions in order to correct the numbering of paragraph 13A to paragraph 13B. The Commission considers that this is the simplest way to address this matter. This amendment does not impact the implementation or operation of the Temporary Transfer Document, nor does this amendment affect sections of the 2018 Directions other than the introduction of paragraph 13A.

These new Directions will be known as The Water Services (Wholesale Charges at Vacant Premises Reform) (Amendment) Directions 2026 and a draft of the Directions is included in Annex 1.

A consolidated version of the 2007 Directions accounting for the amendments proposed in the draft directions is included in Annex 2.

¹ The Temporary Transfer Document allows licenced providers to apply to Scottish Water for a temporary transfer of a supply point for cases of persistent non-payment of charges for vacant properties, where the water supply or supplies cannot be physically disconnected by Scottish Water.

2. Amendment to the Disconnections Document

2.1. Background

Section 19 of the 2005 Act requires the Commission to create a disconnections code which deals with certain aspects of the discontinuation of water supplies to non-household premises.

The Commission first published this disconnections code (**the Disconnections Document**) in 2006. The Disconnections Document describes the context in which the disconnection of a water supply or trade effluent services may occur and sets out the conditions which must be adhered to and actions which must be followed in the situation where a licensed provider is seeking to disconnect the water supply or supplies to a customer's premises or the discontinuation of the trade effluent service applying at a customer's premises.

The Disconnections Document was most recently modified in 2018 and is available on our website: [Disconnections document | WICS](#)

2.2. Context

As part of the 2020-21 Wholesale Charges Scheme, Scottish Water removed the ability of customers to request a temporary disconnection. Consistent with the Commission's role in approving changes made to the Wholesale Charges Scheme, these changes were approved by the Commission on 17th December 2019.

Whilst the changes to the Wholesale Charges Scheme came into effect immediately after approval, the corresponding changes to the Operational Code and the Disconnections Document were not progressed due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. Scottish Water introduced the relevant changes to the Operational Code as part of Operational Code Change Proposal 073 (OCCP073) in July 2024. The Disconnections Document was however not updated at that time to align with the Wholesale Charges Scheme and Operational Code.

2.3. Proposed changes

The Commission is proposing to amend Section 4.1 of the Disconnections Document to remove the reference to customer requested temporary disconnections. For additional clarity, this amendment seeks to ensure alignment with the Scheme of Charges and Operational Code and does not therefore implement new changes to the current operations of the market. The Commission is also utilising this opportunity to visually align the Disconnections Document with the Commission's current branding.

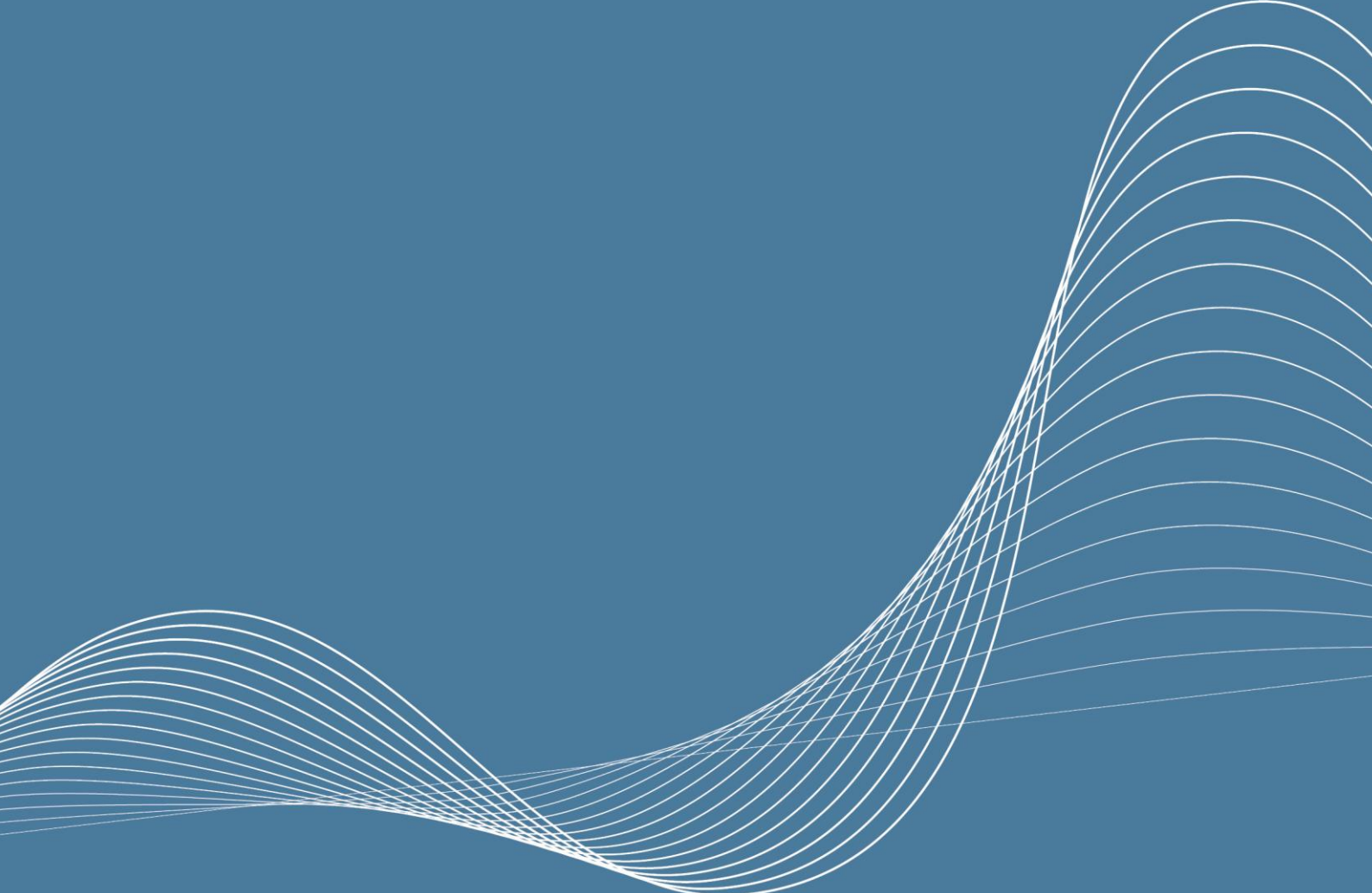
The proposed updated Disconnections Document is included as Annex 3 to this consultation.

3. Next steps

The Commission welcomes comments on the proposed The Water Services (Wholesale Charges at Vacant Premises Reform) (Amendment) Directions 2026 and the proposed revisions to the Disconnections Document.

Further, should any stakeholder be aware of similar administrative amendments required within other documents published by the Commission we would request they use this consultation as an opportunity to raise these to the Commission.

Responses to this consultation should be sent to CompetitionTeam@watercommission.co.uk by 3 September 2026. The Commission plans to review the responses to this and issue a final decision by 1 October 2026.



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