

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

WATER RATES ORDINANCE 1959

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

No. 19 of 1959

At present, charges for water are as follows :-

- (a) Sewerage and water charges are, in general levied at the rate of 6d. in the £ on the assessed value of a parcel of land;
- (b) In some cases, water is supplied through a meter and charged for at 1/- per thousand gallons where the amount so calculated exceeds the charge calculated in accordance with paragraph (a); and
- (c) Rural lessees are charged at the rate of 1/- per thousand gallons up to a consumption of 91,000 gallons in each of the six months commencing on the 1st January and the 1st July and at the rate of 1/6 per thousand gallons for consumption in excess of this figure.

Under the proposed Ordinance no charges will be based on the assessed value of the land. Meters will be at the rate of 1/- per thousand gallons of water consumed, with a minimum charge of £5 per annum. In the case of flats, it is impracticable to instal a meter for each flat, and there will be an annual charge of £5 per flat, irrespective of consumption. In a limited number of other cases, it will be impracticable or uneconomic to instal a meter, and there will be an annual charge of £5.

In the case of rural leases, the charge will be at the rate of 1/- per thousand gallons up to a consumption of 182,000 gallons in a year and where consumption exceeds that figure the charge will be 1/6 per thousand gallons for the excess. This preserves the present position, with a variation to bring the charge on to an annual basis.

Rates are payable from the time when the mains for the supply of water to the land are installed. Until the land is actually connected to the mains, there will be a charge of £1 per annum.

If no meter is installed, the charges are for the calendar year, but if there is a meter, the whole of the charges are based on a meter reading year, which is a period of twelve months between annual readings. The date of the annual reading may be varied by fourteen days either way as it is not possible to ensure that a meter will be read on the same date each year.

Charges will be payable by persons owning the freehold, lessees from the Commonwealth, and tenants of Government owned houses and flats. They will be payable by the person who occupies the land at the commencement of the calendar year or meter reading year, as the case requires. In every case, £5 is payable at the beginning of the year, and any balance due at the end. Provision is made for payment in respect of portion only of a year in appropriate cases.

The Minister may, in special circumstances, fix special rates.

Accounts will normally be rendered annually, but may be rendered for shorter periods in special circumstances.

The Minister is given power to grant exemptions from water rates.