
Part B The National Competition Policy reforms

Part A of this draft report sought to outline and explain the longer-term influences shaping the economic and social circumstances of country Australia. Part B considers the National Competition Policy (NCP) reforms. Chapter 4 outlines the commitments which the governments of Australia entered into under the NCP. It describes the various elements of NCP.

The remaining chapters seek to assess the current and future impacts of respective NCP reforms. Chapter 5 deals with the infrastructure reforms covered by separate intergovernmental agreements established within the framework of the Council of Australian Governments (CoAG). These agreements, which relate to electricity, gas, water and road transport, were brought within the NCP umbrella in 1995.

Chapter 6 examines structural reforms of government monopolies which are not covered specifically by the CoAG agreements. It includes, for example, reforms to rail authorities and to telecommunications. Chapter 7 focuses primarily on the legislation review processes of NCP as they affect statutory marketing arrangements for rural products. The impact of competitive neutrality and contracting on local government is the subject of chapter 8.

Chapter 9 addresses other reform initiatives raised by participants — these include legislation reviews governing shopping hours, reviews of the potentially anti-competitive practices of certain professions, and issues associated with the national access regime.

Finally, chapter 10 seeks to assess the net impact of NCP on country Australia and the nation as a whole. It draws on the Commission's economic modelling of the impact of NCP reforms and of some important long-term sources of change.
