



T: 0300 244 4000  
E: scottish.ministers@gov.scot

By email

To Licensed Providers in the business retail  
market in Scotland.

19 March 2020

The Scottish Government recognise that there will be significant impacts on the water retail market as a result of the response to the COVID19. Operations will be affected through social distancing measures and many of your customers face very challenging and uncertain times ahead. You have written to the Water Industry Commission for Scotland raising your concerns and we share your wish to minimise disruption in the market.

The Scottish Government and the UK Government have already put in place a range of measures to support businesses. I now wish to advise you of additional measures specifically designed to minimise disruption in the retail water market and offer relief to businesses in that market. These measures have been developed in close discussion with WICS, Scottish Water and the CMA and you will shortly receive an industry letter setting out the detail of the measures. I am very grateful for the urgent and collaborative manner in which they have worked with my officials to address these concerns

Most significantly the measures include relaxation by Scottish Water of the requirement for the pre-payment of wholesale charges. Licensed providers will therefore have the flexibility you need to engage with customers in Scotland and to respond positively to their challenging circumstances. I know you will share our concern that the interests of customers in Scotland are of paramount importance. In responding to these measures, the Scottish Government therefore look to all licensed providers to give these interests the absolute priority.

WICS, Scottish Water and the CMA will continue to work together to minimise the burden on your ability to serve customers. I have asked them to report regularly to the Scottish Government on the circumstances in the market and to advise me of any further measures which might be considered in the light of further developments.

Scottish Ministers, special advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See [www.lobbying.scot](http://www.lobbying.scot)



I am copying this to WICS, Scottish Water and the CMA.



**ROSEANNA CUNNINGHAM**

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St Andrew's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh EH1 3DG  
[www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot)



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Until 2020



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