

# *In brief*

## A look at current financial reporting issues

February 2018

### *IASB issues amendments to IAS 19 – plan amendment, curtailment or settlement*

#### *Issue*

On 7 February 2018, the IASB issued amendments to the guidance in IAS 19, 'Employee Benefits', in connection with accounting for plan amendments, curtailments and settlements.

The amendments require an entity:

- to use updated assumptions to determine current service cost and net interest for the remainder of the period after a plan amendment, curtailment or settlement; and
- to recognise in profit or loss as part of past service cost, or a gain or loss on settlement, any reduction in a surplus, even if that surplus was not previously recognised because of the impact of the asset ceiling.

#### *Impact*

Changes in the terms or membership of a defined benefit plan might result in a plan amendment or a curtailment or settlement. IAS 19 requires an entity to determine the amount of any past service cost, or gain or loss on settlement, by remeasuring the net defined benefit liability before and after the amendment, using current assumptions and the fair value of plan assets at the time of the amendment.

Current service cost and net interest are usually calculated using assumptions determined at the beginning of the period. However, if the net defined benefit liability is remeasured to determine past service cost or the gain or loss on settlement, current service cost and net interest for the remainder of the period are remeasured using the same assumptions and the same fair value of plan assets. This will change the amounts that would otherwise have been charged to profit or loss in the period after the plan amendment, curtailment or settlement, and it might mean that the net defined benefit liability is remeasured more often.

A plan amendment, curtailment or settlement might reduce or eliminate a surplus, which could change the effect of the asset ceiling. Past service cost, or a gain or loss on settlement, is calculated in accordance with IAS 19, and it is recognised in profit or loss. This reflects the substance of the transaction, because a surplus that has been used to settle an obligation or provide additional benefits is recovered. The impact on the asset ceiling is recognised in other comprehensive income, and it is not reclassified to profit or loss. The impact of the amendments is to confirm that these effects are not offset.

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### *Who is affected*

The amendments will affect any entity that changes the terms or the membership of a defined benefit plan such that there is past service cost or a gain or loss on settlement.

The amendments are applied prospectively to plan amendments, settlements or curtailments that occur after the beginning of the first annual reporting period beginning on or after 1 January 2019.



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