



NZ ACCOUNTING  
STANDARDS  
BOARD

## **New Zealand Equivalent to SIC Interpretation 27**

### **Evaluating the Substance of Transactions Involving the Legal Form of a Lease (NZ SIC-27)**

**Issued November 2004 and incorporates amendments to 31 December 2016**

This Interpretation was issued by the New Zealand Accounting Standards Board of the External Reporting Board pursuant to section 24(1)(a) of the Financial Reporting Act 1993.

This Interpretation is a Regulation for the purposes of the Regulations (Disallowance) Act 1989.

This Interpretation is superseded by NZ IFRS 16 *Leases*. NZ IFRS 16 shall be applied for annual reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2019. Earlier application is permitted as long as an entity also applies NZ IFRS 15 *Revenue from Contracts with Customers* at the same time, in which case this Standard is superseded from the earlier date of application.

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New Zealand Equivalent to SIC Interpretation 27 *Evaluating the Substance of Transactions Involving the Legal Form of a Lease* (NZ SIC-27) is set out in paragraphs 3–11.

NZ SIC-27 should be read in the context of the Basis for Conclusions on SIC-27 and the IASB’s appendices illustrating the application of SIC-27.

Any New Zealand additional material is shown with either “NZ” or “RDR” preceding the paragraph number.

**Reduced Disclosure Regime**

NZ SIC-27 includes RDR disclosure concessions and associated RDR paragraphs for entities that qualify for and elect to apply Tier 2 for-profit accounting requirements in accordance with XRB A1 *Application of the Accounting Standards Framework*. Entities that elect to report in accordance with Tier 2 accounting requirements are not required to comply with paragraphs in this Interpretation denoted with an asterisk (\*). However, an entity is required to comply with any RDR paragraph associated with that disclosure concession.

**The following is available within New Zealand on the XRB website as additional material**

**BASIS FOR CONCLUSIONS ON SIC-27**

**IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE**

**A Linked transactions**

**B The substance of an agreement**

# New Zealand Equivalent to SIC Interpretation 27

## ***Evaluating the Substance of Transactions Involving the Legal Form of a Lease (NZ SIC-27)***

### References

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- NZ IFRS 4 *Insurance Contracts*
- NZ IFRS 9 *Financial Instruments*
- NZ IFRS 15 *Revenue from Contracts with Customers*
- NZ IAS 8 *Accounting Policies, Changes in Accounting Estimates and Errors*
- NZ IAS 17 *Leases*
- NZ IAS 37 *Provisions, Contingent Liabilities and Contingent Assets*

### Issue

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- 1 An entity may enter into a transaction or a series of structured transactions (an arrangement) with an unrelated party or parties (an Investor) that involves the legal form of a lease. For example, an entity may lease assets to an Investor and lease the same assets back, or alternatively, legally sell assets and lease the same assets back. The form of each arrangement and its terms and conditions can vary significantly. In the lease and leaseback example, it may be that the arrangement is designed to achieve a tax advantage for the Investor that is shared with the entity in the form of a fee, and not to convey the right to use an asset.
- 2 When an arrangement with an Investor involves the legal form of a lease, the issues are:
  - (a) how to determine whether a series of transactions is linked and should be accounted for as one transaction;
  - (b) whether the arrangement meets the definition of a lease under NZ IAS 17; and, if not,
    - (i) whether a separate investment account and lease payment obligations that might exist represent assets and liabilities of the entity (eg consider the example described in paragraph 2(a) of Appendix A);
    - (ii) how the entity should account for other obligations resulting from the arrangement; and
    - (iii) how the entity should account for a fee it might receive from an Investor.

### Consensus

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- 3 A series of transactions that involve the legal form of a lease is linked and shall be accounted for as one transaction when the overall economic effect cannot be understood without reference to the series of transactions as a whole. This is the case, for example, when the series of transactions are closely interrelated, negotiated as a single transaction, and takes place concurrently or in a continuous sequence. (Appendix A provides illustrations of application of this Interpretation.)
- 4 The accounting shall reflect the substance of the arrangement. All aspects and implications of an arrangement shall be evaluated to determine its substance, with weight given to those aspects and implications that have an economic effect.
- 5 NZ IAS 17 applies when the substance of an arrangement includes the conveyance of the right to use an asset for an agreed period of time. Indicators that individually demonstrate that an arrangement may not, in substance, involve a lease under NZ IAS 17 include (Appendix B provides illustrations of application of this Interpretation):
  - (a) an entity retains all the risks and rewards incident to ownership of an underlying asset and enjoys substantially the same rights to its use as before the arrangement;
  - (b) the primary reason for the arrangement is to achieve a particular tax result, and not to convey the right to use an asset; and

- (c) an option is included on terms that make its exercise almost certain (eg a put option that is exercisable at a price sufficiently higher than the expected fair value when it becomes exercisable).
- 6 The definitions and guidance in paragraphs 49–64 of the NZ *Framework* shall be applied in determining whether, in substance, a separate investment account and lease payment obligations represent assets and liabilities of the entity. Indicators that collectively demonstrate that, in substance, a separate investment account and lease payment obligations do not meet the definitions of an asset and a liability and shall not be recognised by the entity include:
- (a) the entity is not able to control the investment account in pursuit of its own objectives and is not obligated to pay the lease payments. This occurs when, for example, a prepaid amount is placed in a separate investment account to protect the Investor and may only be used to pay the Investor, the Investor agrees that the lease payment obligations are to be paid from funds in the investment account, and the entity has no ability to withhold payments to the Investor from the investment account;
- (b) the entity has only a remote risk of reimbursing the entire amount of any fee received from an Investor and possibly paying some additional amount, or, when a fee has not been received, only a remote risk of paying an amount under other obligations (eg a guarantee). Only a remote risk of payment exists when, for example, the terms of the arrangement require that a prepaid amount is invested in risk-free assets that are expected to generate sufficient cash flows to satisfy the lease payment obligations; and
- (c) other than the initial cash flows at inception of the arrangement, the only cash flows expected under the arrangement are the lease payments that are satisfied solely from funds withdrawn from the separate investment account established with the initial cash flows.
- 7 Other obligations of an arrangement, including any guarantees provided and obligations incurred upon early termination, shall be accounted for under NZ IAS 37, NZ IFRS 4 or NZ IFRS 9, depending on the terms.
- 8 The requirements in NZ IFRS 15 shall be applied to the facts and circumstances of each arrangement in determining when to recognise a fee as income that an entity might receive. Factors such as whether there is continuing involvement in the form of significant future performance obligations necessary to earn the fee, whether there are retained risks, the terms of any guarantee arrangements, and the risk of repayment of the fee, shall be considered. Indicators that individually demonstrate that recognition of the entire fee as income when received, if received at the beginning of the arrangement, is inappropriate include:
- (a) obligations either to perform or to refrain from certain significant activities are conditions of earning the fee received, and therefore execution of a legally binding arrangement is not the most significant act required by the arrangement;
- (b) limitations are put on the use of the underlying asset that have the practical effect of restricting and significantly changing the entity's ability to use (eg deplete, sell or pledge as collateral) the asset;
- (c) the possibility of reimbursing any amount of the fee and possibly paying some additional amount is not remote. This occurs when, for example,
- (i) the underlying asset is not a specialised asset that is required by the entity to conduct its business, and therefore there is a possibility that the entity may pay an amount to terminate the arrangement early; or
- (ii) the entity is required by the terms of the arrangement, or has some or total discretion, to invest a prepaid amount in assets carrying more than an insignificant amount of risk (eg currency, interest rate or credit risk). In this circumstance, the risk of the investment's value being insufficient to satisfy the lease payment obligations is not remote, and therefore there is a possibility that the entity may be required to pay some amount.
- 9 The fee shall be presented in the statement of comprehensive income based on its economic substance and nature.

## Disclosure

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- \*10 All aspects of an arrangement that does not, in substance, involve a lease under NZ IAS 17 shall be considered in determining the appropriate disclosures that are necessary to understand the arrangement and the accounting treatment adopted. An entity shall disclose the following in each period that an arrangement exists:
- (a) a description of the arrangement including:
- (i) the underlying asset and any restrictions on its use;
- (ii) the life and other significant terms of the arrangement;

- (iii) the transactions that are linked together, including any options; and
  - (b) the accounting treatment applied to any fee received, the amount recognised as income in the period, and the line item of the statement of comprehensive income in which it is included.
- \*11 The disclosures required in accordance with paragraph 10 of this Interpretation shall be provided individually for each arrangement or in aggregate for each class of arrangement. A class is a grouping of arrangements with underlying assets of a similar nature (eg power plants).

## **Basis for Conclusions on SIC-27**

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12–16 [Paragraphs 12–16 do not form part of NZ SIC-27.]

## **Effective Date**

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This Interpretation becomes operative for an entity's financial statements that cover annual accounting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2007. Early adoption of this Interpretation is permitted only when an entity complies with NZ IFRS 1 *First-time Adoption of New Zealand Equivalents to International Financial Reporting Standards* for an annual accounting period beginning on or after 1 January 2005.

*Framework: Tier 1 and Tier 2 For-profit Entities*, issued in November 2012, amended extant NZ IFRSs by deleting any public benefit entity paragraphs, deleting any differential reporting concessions, adding scope paragraphs for Tier 1 and Tier 2 for-profit entities and adding disclosure concessions for Tier 2 entities. It made no changes to the requirements for Tier 1 entities. A Tier 2 entity may elect to apply the disclosure concessions for annual periods beginning on or after 1 December 2012. Early application is permitted.

NZ IFRS 9 amended paragraph 7. An entity shall apply that amendment when it applies NZ IFRS 9.

NZ IFRS 15 *Revenue from Contracts with Customers*, issued in July 2014, amended the 'References' section and paragraph 8. An entity shall apply those amendments when it applies NZ IFRS 15.

## **Appendices to SIC-27**

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*[These appendices do not form part of NZ SIC-27.]*

**Appendix A: Linked transactions**

**Appendix B: The substance of an agreement**

## HISTORY OF AMENDMENTS

### Table of Pronouncements – NZ SIC-27 *Evaluating the Substance of Transactions Involving the Legal Form of a Lease*

This table lists the pronouncements establishing and substantially amending NZ SIC-27. The table is based on amendments approved as at 31 December 2016.

Pronouncements	Date approved	Early operative date	Effective date (annual reporting periods... on or after ...)
NZ SIC-27 <i>Evaluating the Substance of Transactions Involving the Legal Form of a Lease</i>	Nov 2004	1 Jan 2005	1 Jan 2007
NZ IAS 1 <i>Presentation of Financial Statements</i> (revised 2007)	Nov 2007	Early application permitted	1 Jan 2009
NZ IFRS 9 <i>Financial Instruments</i> (2010)	Nov 2010	Early application permitted	1 Jan 2013 <sup>1</sup>
<i>Framework: Tier 1 and Tier 2 For-profit Entities</i> <sup>2</sup>	Nov 2012	Early application permitted	1 Dec 2012
NZ IFRS 9 <i>Financial Instruments (Hedge Accounting and Amendments to NZ IFRS 9, NZ IFRS 7 and NZ IAS 39)</i>	Dec 2013	Early application permitted	1 Jan 2017 <sup>3</sup>
NZ IFRS 15 <i>Revenue from Contracts with Customers</i>	July 2014	Early application permitted	1 Jan 2018 <sup>4</sup>
NZ IFRS 9 <i>Financial Instruments</i> (2014)	Sept 2014	Early application permitted	1 Jan 2018

Table of Amended Paragraphs in NZ SIC-27		
Paragraph affected	How affected	By ... [date]
Various	Terminology changed	NZ IAS 1 [Nov 2007]
References	Amended	NZ IFRS 9 (2010) [Nov 2010], NZ IFRS 9 (2013) [Dec 2013] and NZ IFRS 9 (2014) [Sept 2014]
References	Amended	NZ IFRS 15 [July 2014]
Paragraph 7	Amended	NZ IFRS 9 (2010) [Nov 2010], NZ IFRS 9 (2013) [Dec 2013] and NZ IFRS 9 (2014) [Sept 2014]
Paragraph 8	Amended	NZ IFRS 15 [July 2014]
Effective date	Amended	<i>Framework: Tier 1 and Tier 2 For-profit Entities</i> [Nov 2012]
Effective date	Amended	NZ IFRS 9 (2010) [Nov 2010], NZ IFRS 9 (2013) [Dec 2013] and NZ IFRS 9 (2014) [Sept 2014]
Effective date	Amended	NZ IFRS 15 [July 2014]

<sup>1</sup> Superseded by NZ IFRS 9 *Financial Instruments* (2014). NZ IFRS 9 (2014) restricted early application of earlier versions of NZ IFRS 9.

<sup>2</sup> This pronouncement amended extant NZ IFRSs by (i) deleting any public benefit entity paragraphs, (ii) deleting any differential reporting paragraphs, (iii) adding scope paragraphs for Tier 1 and Tier 2 for-profit entities, and (iv) adding RDR disclosure concessions.

<sup>3</sup> Superseded by NZ IFRS 9 *Financial Instruments* (2014). NZ IFRS 9 (2014) restricted early application of earlier versions of NZ IFRS 9.

<sup>4</sup> *Effective date of NZ IFRS 15*, issued in November 2015, deferred the mandatory effective date of NZ IFRS 15 from annual reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2017 to annual reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2018.