

**Compiled Accounting Standard**

**AASB 119**

# **Employee Benefits**

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This compilation was prepared on 1 July 2005 taking into account amendments made up to and including 9 June 2005.

Prepared by the staff of the Australian Accounting Standards Board.



**Australian Government**

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Australian Accounting Standard AASB 119 *Employee Benefits* (as amended at 9 June 2005) is set out in paragraphs Aus1.1 – 143. All the paragraphs have equal authority. Terms defined in this Standard are in *italics* the first time they appear in the Standard. AASB 119 is to be read in the context of other Australian Accounting Standards, including AASB 1048 *Interpretation and Application of Standards*, which identifies the UIG Interpretations. In the absence of explicit guidance, AASB 108 *Accounting Policies, Changes in Accounting Estimates and Errors* provides a basis for selecting and applying accounting policies.

## COMPILATION DETAILS

### Accounting Standard AASB 119 *Employee Benefits* as amended

This compilation takes into account amendments up to and including 9 June 2005 and was prepared on 1 July 2005 by the staff of the Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB).

This compilation is not a separate Accounting Standard made by the AASB. Instead, it is a representation of AASB 119 (July 2004) as amended by other Accounting Standards, which are listed in the Tables below.

#### Table of Standards

Standard	Date made	Date of notification in <i>Gazette</i> or FRLI registration	Application date ( <i>annual reporting periods</i> )	Application, saving or transitional provisions
AASB 119	15 Jul 2004	22 Jul 2004	( <i>beginning</i> ) 1 Jan 2005	
AASB 2005-3	9 Jun 2005	27 Jun 2005	( <i>ending</i> ) 31 Dec 2005	see (a) below

(a) The amendments in this Standard apply to annual reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2005 to those entities that choose to early-adopt AASB 2005-3 prior to annual reporting periods ending on or after 31 December 2005.

#### Table of Amendments to Standard

Paragraph affected	How affected	By ... [paragraph]
Aus55.1	deleted	AASB 2005-3 [2]
Aus55.2	deleted	AASB 2005-3 [2]

#### Table of Amendments to Australian Guidance

Paragraph affected	How affected	By ... [paragraph]
Australian Guidance, G20	added	AASB 2005-3 [3]

## **COMPARISON WITH INTERNATIONAL PRONOUNCEMENTS**

### **AASB 119 and IAS 19**

AASB 119 as amended is equivalent to IAS 19 *Employee Benefits* as issued and amended by the IASB. Paragraphs that have been added to this Standard (and do not appear in the text of the equivalent IASB standard) are identified with the prefix “Aus”, followed by the number of the relevant IASB paragraph and decimal numbering.

### **Compliance with IAS 19**

Entities that comply with AASB 119 as amended will simultaneously be in compliance with IAS 19 as amended.

### **AASB 119 and IPSASs**

International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSASs) are issued by the International Public Sector Accounting Standards Board of the International Federation of Accountants.

There is no specific IPSAS dealing with accounting for employee benefits at present.



## **ACCOUNTING STANDARD AASB 119**

The Australian Accounting Standards Board made Accounting Standard AASB 119 *Employee Benefits* under section 334 of the *Corporations Act 2001* on 15 July 2004.

The compiled version of AASB 119 incorporates subsequent amendments contained in other AASB Standards made by the AASB up to and including 9 June 2005 (see Compilation Details).

## **ACCOUNTING STANDARD AASB 119**

### ***EMPLOYEE BENEFITS***

#### **Objective**

The objective of this Standard is to prescribe the accounting and disclosure for employee benefits. The Standard requires an entity to recognise:

- (a) a liability when an employee has provided service in exchange for employee benefits to be paid in the future; and
- (b) an expense when the entity consumes the economic benefit arising from service provided by an employee in exchange for employee benefits.

#### **Application**

**Aus1.1 This Standard applies to:**

- (a) **each entity that is required to prepare financial reports in accordance with Part 2M.3 of the Corporations Act and that is a reporting entity;**
- (b) **general purpose financial reports of each other reporting entity; and**
- (c) **financial reports that are, or are held out to be, general purpose financial reports.**

- Aus1.2**      **This Standard applies to annual reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2005.**  
[Note: For application dates of paragraphs changed or added by an amending Standard, see Compilation Details.]
- Aus1.3**      **This Standard shall not be applied to annual reporting periods beginning before 1 January 2005.**
- Aus1.4**      **The requirements specified in this Standard apply to the financial report where information resulting from their application is material in accordance with AASB 1031 *Materiality*.**
- Aus1.5**      **When applicable, this Standard supersedes AASB 1028 *Employee Benefits* as notified in the *Commonwealth of Australia Gazette* No S 237, 29 June 2001.**
- Aus1.6      AASB 1028 remains applicable until superseded by this Standard.
- Aus1.7      Notice of this Standard was published in the *Commonwealth of Australia Gazette* No S 294, 22 July 2004.

## **Scope**

- 1. This Standard shall be applied by an employer in accounting for *employee benefits*, except those to which AASB 2 *Share-based Payment* applies.**
2. This Standard does not deal with reporting by employee benefit plans (see AAS 25 *Financial Reporting by Superannuation Plans*).
3. The employee benefits to which this Standard applies include those provided:
  - (a) under formal plans or other formal agreements between an entity and individual employees, groups of employees or their representatives;
  - (b) under legislative requirements, or through industry arrangements, whereby entities are required to contribute to national, state, industry or other *multi-employer plans*; or
  - (c) by those informal practices that give rise to a constructive obligation. Informal practices give rise to a constructive obligation where the entity has no realistic alternative but to pay

employee benefits. An example of a constructive obligation is where a change in the entity's informal practices would cause unacceptable damage to its relationship with employees.

4. Employee benefits include:
- (a) *short-term employee benefits*, such as wages, salaries and social security contributions, paid annual leave and paid sick leave, profit-sharing and bonuses (if payable within twelve months of the end of the period) and non-monetary benefits (such as medical care, housing, cars and free or subsidised goods or services) for current employees;
  - (b) *post-employment benefits* such as pensions, other retirement benefits, post-employment life insurance and post-employment medical care;
  - (c) *other long-term employee benefits*, including long-service leave or sabbatical leave, jubilee or other long-service benefits, long-term disability benefits and, if they are not payable wholly within twelve months after the end of the period, profit-sharing, bonuses and deferred compensation; and
  - (d) *termination benefits*.

Because each category identified in (a) – (d) above has different characteristics, this Standard establishes separate requirements for each category.

5. Employee benefits include benefits provided to either employees or their dependants and may be settled by payments (or the provision of goods or services) made either directly to the employees, to their spouses, children or other dependants or to others, such as insurance companies.
6. An employee may provide services to an entity on a full-time, part-time, permanent, casual or temporary basis. For the purpose of this Standard, employees include directors and other management personnel.

## Definitions

7. **The following terms are used in this Standard with the meanings specified.**

*Actuarial gains and losses* comprise:

- (a) experience adjustments (the effects of differences between the previous actuarial assumptions and what has actually occurred); and
- (b) the effects of changes in actuarial assumptions.

*Assets held by a long-term employee benefit fund* are assets (other than non-transferable financial instruments issued by the entity) that:

- (a) are held by an entity (a fund) that is legally separate from the entity and exists solely to pay or fund employee benefits; and
- (b) are available to be used only to pay or fund employee benefits, are not available to the entity's own creditors (even in bankruptcy), and cannot be returned to the entity, unless either:
  - (i) the remaining assets of the fund are sufficient to meet all the related employee benefit obligations of the plan or the entity; or
  - (ii) the assets are returned to the entity to reimburse it for employee benefits already paid.

*Current service cost* is the increase in the present value of the defined benefit obligation resulting from employee service in the current period.

*Defined benefit plans* are post-employment benefit plans other than defined contribution plans.

*Defined contribution plans* are post-employment benefit plans under which an entity pays fixed contributions into a separate entity (a fund) and will have no legal or constructive obligation to pay further contributions if the fund does not hold sufficient assets to pay all employee benefits relating to employee service in the current and prior periods.

*Employee benefits* are all forms of consideration given by an entity in exchange for service rendered by employees.

*Fair value* is the amount for which an asset could be exchanged or a liability settled between knowledgeable, willing parties in an arm's length transaction.

***Interest cost*** is the increase during a period in the present value of a defined benefit obligation which arises because the benefits are one period closer to settlement.

***Multi-employer plans*** are defined contribution plans (other than state plans) or defined benefit plans (other than state plans) that:

- (a) pool the assets contributed by various entities that are not under common control; and
- (b) use those assets to provide benefits to employees of more than one entity, on the basis that contribution and benefit levels are determined without regard to the identity of the entity that employs the employees concerned.

***Other long-term employee benefits*** are employee benefits (other than post-employment benefits and termination benefits) which do not fall due wholly within twelve months after the end of the period in which the employees render the related service.

***Past service cost*** is the increase in the present value of the defined benefit obligation for employee service in prior periods, resulting in the current period from the introduction of, or changes to, post-employment benefits or other long-term employee benefits. Past service cost may be either positive (where benefits are introduced or improved) or negative (where existing benefits are reduced).

***Plan assets*** comprise:

- (a) assets held by a long-term employee benefit fund; and
- (b) qualifying insurance policies.

***Post-employment benefit plans*** are formal or informal arrangements under which an entity provides post-employment benefits for one or more employees.

***Post-employment benefits*** are employee benefits (other than termination benefits) which are payable after the completion of employment.

The ***present value of a defined benefit obligation*** is the present value, without deducting any plan assets, of expected future

payments required to settle the obligation resulting from employee service in the current and prior periods.

A *qualifying insurance policy*<sup>1</sup> is an insurance policy issued by an insurer that is not a related party (as defined in AASB 124 *Related Party Disclosures*) of the entity, if the proceeds of the policy:

- (a) can be used only to pay or fund employee benefits under a defined benefit plan; and
- (b) are not available to the entity's own creditors (even in bankruptcy) and cannot be paid to the entity, unless either:
  - (i) the proceeds represent surplus assets that are not needed for the policy to meet all the related employee benefit obligations; or
  - (ii) the proceeds are returned to the entity to reimburse it for employee benefits already paid.

The *return on plan assets* is interest, dividends and other revenue derived from the plan assets, together with realised and unrealised gains or losses on the plan assets, less any costs of administering the plan and less any tax payable by the plan itself.

*Short-term employee benefits* are employee benefits (other than termination benefits) which fall due wholly within twelve months after the end of the period in which the employees render the related service.

*Termination benefits* are employee benefits payable as a result of either:

- (a) an entity's decision to terminate an employee's employment before the normal retirement date; or
- (b) an employee's decision to accept voluntary redundancy in exchange for those benefits.

*Vested employee benefits* are employee benefits that are not conditional on future employment.

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<sup>1</sup> A qualifying insurance policy is not necessarily an insurance contract, as defined in AASB 4 *Insurance Contracts*.

## Short-term Employee Benefits

8. Short-term employee benefits include items such as:
  - (a) wages, salaries and social security contributions;
  - (b) short-term compensated absences (such as paid annual leave and paid sick leave) where the absences are expected to occur within twelve months after the end of the period in which the employees render the related employee service;
  - (c) profit-sharing and bonuses payable within twelve months after the end of the period in which the employees render the related service; and
  - (d) non-monetary benefits (such as medical care, housing, cars and free or subsidised goods or services) for current employees.
9. Accounting for short-term employee benefits is generally straightforward because no actuarial assumptions are required to measure the obligation or the cost and there is no possibility of any actuarial gain or loss. Moreover, short-term employee benefit obligations are measured on an undiscounted basis.

## Recognition and Measurement

### All Short-term Employee Benefits

10. **When an employee has rendered service to an entity during a reporting period, the entity shall recognise the undiscounted amount of short-term employee benefits expected to be paid in exchange for that service:**
  - (a) **as a liability (accrued expense), after deducting any amount already paid. If the amount already paid exceeds the undiscounted amount of the benefits, an entity shall recognise that excess as an asset (prepaid expense) to the extent that the prepayment will lead to, for example, a reduction in future payments or a cash refund; and**
  - (b) **as an expense, unless another Australian Accounting Standard requires or permits the inclusion of the benefits in the cost of an asset (see, for example, AASB 102 *Inventories*, and AASB 116 *Property, Plant and Equipment*).**

**Paragraphs 11, 14 and 17 explain how an entity shall apply this requirement to short-term employee benefits in the form of compensated absences and profit-sharing and bonus plans.**

#### **Short-term Compensated Absences**

- 11. An entity shall recognise the expected cost of short-term employee benefits in the form of compensated absences under paragraph 10 as follows:**
  - (a) in the case of accumulating compensated absences, when the employees render service that increases their entitlement to future compensated absences; and**
  - (b) in the case of non-accumulating compensated absences, when the absences occur.**
12. An entity may compensate employees for absence for various reasons including vacation, sickness and short-term disability, maternity or paternity, jury service and military service. Entitlement to compensated absences falls into two categories:
  - (a) accumulating; and
  - (b) non-accumulating.
13. Accumulating compensated absences are those that are carried forward and can be used in future periods if the current period's entitlement is not used in full. Accumulating compensated absences may be either vesting (in other words, employees are entitled to a cash payment for unused entitlement on leaving the entity) or non-vesting (when employees are not entitled to a cash payment for unused entitlement on leaving). An obligation arises as employees render service that increases their entitlement to future compensated absences. The obligation exists, and is recognised, even if the compensated absences are non-vesting, although the possibility that employees may leave before they use an accumulated non-vesting entitlement affects the measurement of that obligation.
- 14. An entity shall measure the expected cost of accumulating compensated absences as the additional amount that the entity expects to pay as a result of the unused entitlement that has accumulated at the reporting date.**
15. The method specified in the previous paragraph measures the obligation at the amount of the additional payments that are expected to arise solely from the fact that the benefit accumulates. In many

cases, an entity may not need to make detailed computations to estimate that there is no material obligation for unused compensated absences. For example, a sick leave obligation is likely to be material only if there is a formal or informal understanding that unused paid sick leave may be taken as paid vacation.

**Example Illustrating Paragraphs 14 and 15**

An entity has 100 employees, who are each entitled to five working days of paid sick leave for each year. Unused sick leave may be carried forward for one calendar year. Sick leave is taken first out of the current year's entitlement and then out of any balance brought forward from the previous year (a LIFO basis). At 31 December 20X1, the average unused entitlement is two days per employee. The entity expects, based on past experience which is expected to continue, that 92 employees will take no more than five days of paid sick leave in 20X2 and that the remaining eight employees will take an average of six and a half days each.

*The entity expects that it will pay an additional 12 days of sick pay as a result of the unused entitlement that has accumulated at 31 December 20X1 (one and a half days each, for eight employees). Therefore, the entity recognises a liability equal to 12 days of sick pay.*

16. Non-accumulating compensated absences do not carry forward: they lapse if the current period's entitlement is not used in full and do not entitle employees to a cash payment for unused entitlement on leaving the entity. This is commonly the case for sick pay (to the extent that unused past entitlement does not increase future entitlement), maternity or paternity leave and compensated absences for jury service or military service. An entity recognises no liability or expense until the time of the absence, because employee service does not increase the amount of the benefit.

**Profit-sharing and Bonus Plans**

17. **An entity shall recognise the expected cost of profit-sharing and bonus payments under paragraph 10 when, and only when:**

- (a) **the entity has a present legal or constructive obligation to make such payments as a result of past events; and**
- (b) **a reliable estimate of the obligation can be made.**

**A present obligation exists when, and only when, the entity has no realistic alternative but to make the payments.**

18. Under some profit-sharing plans, employees receive a share of the profit only if they remain with the entity for a specified period. Such plans create a constructive obligation as employees render service that increases the amount to be paid if they remain in service until the end of the specified period. The measurement of such constructive obligations reflects the possibility that some employees may leave without receiving profit-sharing payments.

**Example Illustrating Paragraph 18**

A profit-sharing plan requires an entity to pay a specified proportion of its profit for the year to employees who serve throughout the year. If no employees leave during the year, the total profit-sharing payments for the year will be 3% of net profit. The entity estimates that staff turnover will reduce the payments to 2.5% of net profit.

*The entity recognises a liability and an expense of 2.5% of net profit.*

19. An entity may have no legal obligation to pay a bonus. Nevertheless, in some cases, an entity has a practice of paying bonuses. In such cases, the entity has a constructive obligation because the entity has no realistic alternative but to pay the bonus. The measurement of the constructive obligation reflects the possibility that some employees may leave without receiving a bonus.
20. An entity can make a reliable estimate of its legal or constructive obligation under a profit-sharing or bonus plan when, and only when:
- (a) the formal terms of the plan contain a formula for determining the amount of the benefit;
  - (b) the entity determines the amounts to be paid before the financial report is authorised for issue; or
  - (c) past practice gives clear evidence of the amount of the entity's constructive obligation.
21. An obligation under profit-sharing and bonus plans results from employee service and not from a transaction with the entity's owners. Therefore, an entity recognises the cost of profit-sharing and bonus plans not as a distribution of net profit but as an expense.
22. If profit-sharing and bonus payments are not due wholly within twelve months after the end of the period in which the employees render the related service, those payments are other long-term employee benefits (see paragraphs 126-131).

## Disclosure

23. Although this Standard does not require specific disclosures about short-term employee benefits, other Australian Accounting Standards may require disclosures. For example, AASB 124 requires disclosure about employee benefits for key management personnel. AASB 101 *Presentation of Financial Statements* requires disclosure of employee benefits expense.

## Post-employment Benefits: Distinction between Defined Contribution Plans and Defined Benefit Plans

24. Post-employment benefits include, for example:
- (a) retirement benefits, such as pensions; and
  - (b) other post-employment benefits, such as post-employment life insurance and post-employment medical care.

Arrangements whereby an entity provides post-employment benefits are *post-employment benefit plans*. An entity applies this Standard to all such arrangements whether or not they involve the establishment of a separate entity to receive contributions and to pay benefits.

25. Post-employment benefit plans are classified as either *defined contribution plans* or *defined benefit plans*, depending on the economic substance of the plan as derived from its principal terms and conditions. Under defined contribution plans:
- (a) the entity's legal or constructive obligation is limited to the amount that it agrees to contribute to the fund. Thus, the amount of the post-employment benefits received by the employee is determined by the amount of contributions paid by an entity (and perhaps also the employee) to a post-employment benefit plan or to an insurance company, together with investment returns arising from the contributions; and
  - (b) in consequence, actuarial risk (that benefits will be less than expected) and investment risk (that assets invested will be insufficient to meet expected benefits) fall on the employee.
26. Examples of cases where an entity's obligation is not limited to the amount that it agrees to contribute to the fund are when the entity has a legal or constructive obligation through:

- (a) a plan benefit formula that is not linked solely to the amount of contributions;
  - (b) a guarantee, either indirectly through a plan or directly, of a specified return on contributions; or
  - (c) those informal practices that give rise to a constructive obligation. For example, a constructive obligation may arise where an entity has a history of increasing benefits for former employees to keep pace with inflation even where there is no legal obligation to do so.
27. Under defined benefit plans:
- (a) the entity's obligation is to provide the agreed benefits to current and former employees; and
  - (b) actuarial risk (that benefits will cost more than expected) and investment risk fall, in substance, on the entity. If actuarial or investment experience are worse than expected, the entity's obligation may be increased.
28. Paragraphs 29-42 below explain the distinction between defined contribution plans and defined benefit plans in the context of multi-employer plans, state plans and insured benefits.

### **Multi-employer Plans**

- 29. An entity shall classify a multi-employer plan as a defined contribution plan or a defined benefit plan under the terms of the plan (including any constructive obligation that goes beyond the formal terms). Where a multi-employer plan is a defined benefit plan, an entity shall:**
- (a) account for its proportionate share of the defined benefit obligation, *plan assets* and cost associated with the plan in the same way as for any other defined benefit plan; and**
  - (b) disclose the information required by paragraph 120.**
- 30. When sufficient information is not available to use defined benefit accounting for a multi-employer plan that is a defined benefit plan, an entity shall:**
- (a) account for the plan under paragraphs 44-46 as if it were a defined contribution plan;**

- (b) **disclose:**
  - (i) **the fact that the plan is a defined benefit plan; and**
  - (ii) **the reason why sufficient information is not available to enable the entity to account for the plan as a defined benefit plan; and**
- (c) **to the extent that a surplus or deficit in the plan may affect the amount of future contributions, disclose in addition:**
  - (i) **any available information about that surplus or deficit;**
  - (ii) **the basis used to determine that surplus or deficit; and**
  - (iii) **the implications, if any, for the entity.**

31. One example of a defined benefit multi-employer plan is one where:
- (a) the plan is financed on a pay-as-you-go basis such that: contributions are set at a level that is expected to be sufficient to pay the benefits falling due in the same period; and future benefits earned during the current period will be paid out of future contributions; and
  - (b) employees' benefits are determined by the length of their service and the participating entities have no realistic means of withdrawing from the plan without paying a contribution for the benefits earned by employees up to the date of withdrawal. Such a plan creates actuarial risk for the entity: if the ultimate cost of benefits already earned at the reporting date is more than expected, the entity will have to either increase its contributions or persuade employees to accept a reduction in benefits. Therefore, such a plan is a defined benefit plan.
32. Where sufficient information is available about a multi-employer plan which is a defined benefit plan, an entity accounts for its proportionate share of the defined benefit obligation, plan assets and post-employment benefit cost associated with the plan in the same way as for any other defined benefit plan. However, in some cases, an entity may not be able to identify its share of the underlying financial position and performance of the plan with sufficient reliability for accounting purposes. This may occur if:
- (a) the entity does not have access to information about the plan that satisfies the requirements of this Standard; or

- (b) the plan exposes the participating entities to actuarial risks associated with the current and former employees of other entities, with the result that there is no consistent and reliable basis for allocating the obligation, plan assets and cost to individual entities participating in the plan.

In those cases, an entity accounts for the plan as if it were a defined contribution plan and discloses the additional information required by paragraph 30.

- 33. Multi-employer plans are distinct from group administration plans. A group administration plan is merely an aggregation of single employer plans combined to allow participating employers to pool their assets for investment purposes and reduce investment management and administration costs, but the claims of different employers are segregated for the sole benefit of their own employees. Group administration plans pose no particular accounting problems because information is readily available to treat them in the same way as any other single employer plan and because such plans do not expose the participating entities to actuarial risks associated with the current and former employees of other entities. The definitions in this Standard require an entity to classify a group administration plan as a defined contribution plan or a defined benefit plan in accordance with the terms of the plan (including any constructive obligation that goes beyond the formal terms).
- 34. Defined benefit plans that pool the assets contributed by various entities under common control, for example, a parent and its subsidiaries, are not multi-employer plans. Therefore, an entity treats all such plans as defined benefit plans.
- 35. AASB 137 *Provisions, Contingent Liabilities and Contingent Assets* requires an entity to recognise, or disclose information about, certain contingent liabilities. In the context of a multi-employer plan, a contingent liability may arise from, for example:
  - (a) actuarial losses relating to other participating entities because each entity that participates in a multi-employer plan shares in the actuarial risks of every other participating entity; or
  - (b) any responsibility under the terms of a plan to finance any shortfall in the plan if other entities cease to participate.

### **State Plans**

- 36. **An entity shall account for a state plan in the same way as for a multi-employer plan (see paragraphs 29 and 30).**

37. State plans are established by legislation to cover all entities (or all entities in a particular category, for example, a specific industry) and are operated by national or local government or by another body (for example, an autonomous agency created specifically for this purpose) which is not subject to control or influence by the entity. Some plans established by an entity provide both compulsory benefits which substitute for benefits that would otherwise be covered under a state plan and additional voluntary benefits. Such plans are not state plans.
38. State plans are characterised as defined benefit or defined contribution in nature based on the entity's obligation under the plan. Many state plans are funded on a pay-as-you-go basis: contributions are set at a level that is expected to be sufficient to pay the required benefits falling due in the same period; future benefits earned during the current period will be paid out of future contributions. Nevertheless, in most state plans, the entity has no legal or constructive obligation to pay those future benefits: its only obligation is to pay the contributions as they fall due and if the entity ceases to employ members of the state plan, it will have no obligation to pay the benefits earned by its own employees in previous years. For this reason, state plans are normally defined contribution plans. However, in the rare cases when a state plan is a defined benefit plan, an entity applies the treatment prescribed in paragraphs 29 and 30.

### **Insured Benefits**

39. **An entity may pay insurance premiums to fund a post-employment benefit plan. The entity shall treat such a plan as a defined contribution plan unless the entity will have (either directly, or indirectly through the plan) a legal or constructive obligation to either:**
- (a) **pay the employee benefits directly when they fall due; or**
  - (b) **pay further amounts if the insurer does not pay all future employee benefits relating to employee service in the current and prior periods.**

**If the entity retains such a legal or constructive obligation, the entity shall treat the plan as a defined benefit plan.**

40. The benefits insured by an insurance contract need not have a direct or automatic relationship with the entity's obligation for employee benefits. Post-employment benefit plans involving insurance contracts are subject to the same distinction between accounting and funding as other funded plans.

41. Where an entity funds a post-employment benefit obligation by contributing to an insurance policy under which the entity (either directly, indirectly through the plan, through the mechanism for setting future premiums or through a related party relationship with the insurer) retains a legal or constructive obligation, the payment of the premiums does not amount to a defined contribution arrangement. It follows that the entity:
- (a) accounts for a *qualifying insurance policy* as a plan asset (see paragraph 7); and
  - (b) recognises other insurance policies as reimbursement rights (if the policies satisfy the criteria in paragraph 104A).
42. Where an insurance policy is in the name of a specified plan participant or a group of plan participants and the entity does not have any legal or constructive obligation to cover any loss on the policy, the entity has no obligation to pay benefits to the employees and the insurer has sole responsibility for paying the benefits. The payment of fixed premiums under such contracts is, in substance, the settlement of the employee benefit obligation, rather than an investment to meet the obligation. Consequently, the entity no longer has an asset or a liability. Therefore, an entity treats such payments as contributions to a defined contribution plan.

## **Post-employment Benefits: Defined Contribution Plans**

43. Accounting for defined contribution plans is straightforward because the entity's obligation for each period is determined by the amounts to be contributed for that period. Consequently, no actuarial assumptions are required to measure the obligation or the expense and there is no possibility of any actuarial gain or loss. Moreover, the obligations are measured on an undiscounted basis, except where they do not fall due wholly within twelve months after the end of the period in which the employees render the related service.

## **Recognition and Measurement**

- 44. When an employee has rendered service to an entity during a period, the entity shall recognise the contribution payable to a defined contribution plan in exchange for that service:**
- (a) **as a liability (accrued expense), after deducting any contribution already paid. If the contribution already paid exceeds the contribution due for service before the reporting**

date, an entity shall recognise that excess as an asset (prepaid expense) to the extent that the prepayment will lead to, for example, a reduction in future payments or a cash refund; and

- (b) as an expense, unless another Australian Accounting Standard requires or permits the inclusion of the contribution in the cost of an asset (see, for example, AASB 102 and AASB 116).

- 45. Where contributions to a defined contribution plan do not fall due wholly within twelve months after the end of the period in which the employees render the related service, they shall be discounted using the discount rate specified in paragraph 78.

### **Disclosure**

- 46. An entity shall disclose the amount recognised as an expense for defined contribution plans.
- 47. Where required by AASB 124 an entity discloses information about contributions to defined contribution plans for key management personnel.

### **Post-employment Benefits: Defined Benefit Plans**

- 48. Accounting for defined benefit plans is complex because actuarial assumptions are required to measure the obligation and the expense and there is a possibility of *actuarial gains and losses*. Moreover, the obligations are measured on a discounted basis because they may be settled many years after the employees render the related service.

### **Recognition and Measurement**

- 49. Defined benefit plans may be unfunded, or they may be wholly or partly funded by contributions by an entity, and sometimes its employees, into an entity, or fund, that is legally separate from the entity and from which the employee benefits are paid. The payment of funded benefits when they fall due depends not only on the financial position and the investment performance of the fund but also on an entity's ability (and willingness) to make good any shortfall in the fund's assets. Therefore, the entity is, in substance, underwriting the actuarial and investment risks associated with the plan. Consequently, the expense recognised for a defined benefit plan is not necessarily the amount of the contribution due for the period.

50. Accounting by an entity for defined benefit plans involves the following steps:
- (a) using actuarial techniques to make a reliable estimate of the amount of benefit that employees have earned in return for their service in the current and prior periods. This requires an entity to determine how much benefit is attributable to the current and prior periods (see paragraphs 67-71) and to make estimates (actuarial assumptions) about demographic variables (such as employee turnover and mortality) and financial variables (such as future increases in salaries and medical costs) that will influence the cost of the benefit (see paragraphs 72-91);
  - (b) discounting that benefit using the Projected Unit Credit Method in order to determine the present value of the defined benefit obligation and the *current service cost* (see paragraphs 64-66);
  - (c) determining the *fair value* of any plan assets (see paragraphs 102-104);
  - (d) determining the total amount of actuarial gains and losses (see paragraphs Aus92.1-94);
  - (e) where a plan has been introduced or changed, determining the resulting *past service cost* (see paragraphs 96-101); and
  - (f) where a plan has been curtailed or settled, determining the resulting gain or loss (see paragraphs 109-115).

Where an entity has more than one defined benefit plan, the entity applies these procedures for each material plan separately.

51. In some cases, estimates, averages and computational shortcuts may provide a reliable approximation of the detailed computations illustrated in this Standard.

#### **Accounting for the Constructive Obligation**

52. **An entity shall account not only for its legal obligation under the formal terms of a defined benefit plan, but also for any constructive obligation that arises from the entity's informal practices. Informal practices give rise to a constructive obligation where the entity has no realistic alternative but to pay employee benefits. An example of a constructive obligation is where a change in the entity's informal practices would cause unacceptable damage to its relationship with employees.**

53. The formal terms of a defined benefit plan may permit an entity to terminate its obligation under the plan. Nevertheless, it is usually difficult for an entity to cancel a plan if employees are to be retained. Therefore, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, accounting for post-employment benefits assumes that an entity which is currently promising such benefits will continue to do so over the remaining working lives of employees.

#### **Balance Sheet**

54. **The amount recognised as a defined benefit liability shall be the net total of the following amounts:**
- (a) **the present value of the defined benefit obligation at the reporting date (see paragraph 64);**
  - (b) [Deleted by the AASB]
  - (c) **minus any past service cost not yet recognised (see paragraph 96); and**
  - (d) **minus the fair value at the reporting date of plan assets (if any) out of which the obligations are to be settled directly (see paragraphs 102-104).**
55. The present value of the defined benefit obligation is the gross obligation, before deducting the fair value of any plan assets.
56. **An entity shall determine the present value of defined benefit obligations and the fair value of any plan assets with sufficient regularity that the amounts recognised in the financial statements do not differ materially from the amounts that would be determined at the reporting date.**
57. This Standard encourages, but does not require, an entity to involve a qualified actuary in the measurement of all material post-employment benefit obligations. For practical reasons, an entity may request a qualified actuary to carry out a detailed valuation of the obligation before the reporting date. Nevertheless, the results of that valuation are updated for any material transactions and other material changes in circumstances (including changes in market prices and interest rates) up to the reporting date.
58. **The amount determined under paragraph 54 may be negative (an asset). An entity shall measure the resulting asset at the lower of:**
- (a) **the amount determined under paragraph 54; and**

- (b) **the total of:**
  - (i) **any unrecognised past service cost (see paragraph 96); and**
  - (ii) **the present value of any economic benefits available in the form of refunds from the plan or reductions in future contributions to the plan. The present value of these economic benefits shall be determined using the discount rate specified in paragraph 78.**

**58A. The application of paragraph 58 shall not result in a gain being recognised solely as a result of a past service cost in the current period. The entity shall therefore recognise immediately under paragraph 54 the following, to the extent that they arise while the defined benefit asset is determined in accordance with paragraph 58(b):**

- (a) **past service cost of the current period to the extent that it exceeds any reduction in the present value of the economic benefits specified in paragraph 58(b)(ii). If there is no change or an increase in the present value of the economic benefits, the entire past service cost of the current period shall be recognised immediately under paragraph 54.**

- (b) [Deleted by the AASB]

58B. Paragraph 58A applies to an entity only if it has, at the beginning or end of the reporting period, a surplus<sup>2</sup> in a defined benefit plan and cannot, based on the current terms of the plan, recover that surplus fully through refunds or reductions in future contributions. In such cases, past service cost that arises in the period, the recognition of which is deferred under paragraph 54, will increase the amount specified in paragraph 58(b)(i). If that increase is not offset by an equal decrease in the present value of economic benefits that qualify for recognition under paragraph 58(b)(ii), there will be an increase in the net total specified by paragraph 58(b) and, hence, a recognised gain. Paragraph 58A prohibits the recognition of a gain in these circumstances. For examples of the application of this paragraph, see Appendix C.

59. An asset may arise where a defined benefit plan has been overfunded or in certain cases where actuarial gains are recognised. An entity recognises an asset in such cases because:

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<sup>2</sup> A surplus is an excess of the fair value of the plan assets over the present value of the defined benefit obligation.

- (a) the entity controls a resource, which is the ability to use the surplus to generate future benefits;
  - (b) that control is a result of past events (contributions paid by the entity and service rendered by the employee); and
  - (c) future economic benefits are available to the entity in the form of a reduction in future contributions or a cash refund, either directly to the entity or indirectly to another plan in deficit.
60. The limit in paragraph 58(b) does not over-ride the delayed recognition of certain past service cost (see paragraph 96), other than as specified in paragraph 58A. Paragraph 120(c)(vi) requires an entity to disclose any amount not recognised as an asset because of the limit in paragraph 58(b).

**Example Illustrating Paragraph 60**

A defined benefit plan has the following characteristics:

Present value of the obligation	1,100
Fair value of plan assets	<u>(1,190)</u>
	(90)
Unrecognised past service cost	<u>(70)</u>
Negative amount determined under paragraph 54	<u>(160)</u>
Present value of available future refunds and reductions in future contributions	90

*The limit under paragraph 58(b) is computed as follows:*

<i>Unrecognised past service cost</i>	<i>70</i>
<i>Present value of available future refunds and reductions in future contributions</i>	<u><i>90</i></u>
<i>Limit</i>	<u><i>160</i></u>

*The limit does not exceed the negative amount determined under paragraph 54. Therefore the entity recognises an asset of 160.*

## Income Statement

- 61. An entity shall recognise the net total of the following amounts as expense or (subject to the limit in paragraph 58(b)) income, except to the extent that another Australian Accounting Standard requires or permits their inclusion in the cost of an asset:**
- (a) **current service cost (see paragraph 63-91);**
  - (b) ***interest cost* (see paragraph 82);**
  - (c) **the expected return on any plan assets (see paragraphs 105-107) and on any reimbursement rights (paragraph 104A);**
  - (d) **actuarial gains and losses (see paragraph Aus92.1);**
  - (e) **past service cost, to the extent that paragraph 96 requires an entity to recognise it; and**
  - (f) **the effect of any curtailments or settlements (see paragraphs 109 and 110).**
62. Other Australian Accounting Standards require the inclusion of certain employee benefit costs within the cost of assets such as inventories or property, plant and equipment (see AASB 102 and AASB 116). Any post-employment benefit costs included in the cost of such assets include the appropriate proportion of the components listed in paragraph 61.

## **Recognition and Measurement: Present Value of Defined Benefit Obligations and Current Service Cost**

63. The ultimate cost of a defined benefit plan may be influenced by many variables, such as final salaries, employee turnover and mortality, medical cost trends and, for a funded plan, the investment earnings on the plan assets. The ultimate cost of the plan is uncertain and this uncertainty is likely to persist over a long period of time. In order to measure the present value of the post-employment benefit obligations and the related current service cost, it is necessary to:
- (a) apply an actuarial valuation method (see paragraphs 64-66);
  - (b) attribute benefit to periods of service (see paragraphs 67-71);  
and

- (c) make actuarial assumptions (see paragraphs 72-91).

**Actuarial Valuation Method**

- 64. An entity shall use the Projected Unit Credit Method to determine the present value of its defined benefit obligations and the related current service cost and, where applicable, past service cost.**
65. The Projected Unit Credit Method (sometimes known as the accrued benefit method pro-rated on service or as the benefit/years of service method) sees each period of service as giving rise to an additional unit of benefit entitlement (see paragraphs 67-71) and measures each unit separately to build up the final obligation (see paragraphs 72-91).

**Example Illustrating Paragraph 65**

A lump sum benefit is payable on termination of service and equal to 1% of final salary for each year of service. The salary in year 1 is 10,000 and is assumed to increase at 7% (compound) each year. The discount rate used is 10% per annum. The following table shows how the obligation builds up for an employee who is expected to leave at the end of year 5, assuming that there are no changes in actuarial assumptions. For simplicity, this example ignores the additional adjustment needed to reflect the probability that the employee may leave the entity at an earlier or later date.

<i>Year</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Benefit attributed to:</i>					
<i>- prior years</i>	<i>–</i>	<i>131</i>	<i>262</i>	<i>393</i>	<i>524</i>
<i>- current year (1% of final salary)</i>	<u><i>131</i></u>	<u><i>131</i></u>	<u><i>131</i></u>	<u><i>131</i></u>	<u><i>131</i></u>
<i>- current and prior years</i>	<u><i>131</i></u>	<u><i>262</i></u>	<u><i>393</i></u>	<u><i>524</i></u>	<u><i>655</i></u>
<i>Opening Obligation</i>	<i>–</i>	<i>89</i>	<i>196</i>	<i>324</i>	<i>476</i>
<i>Interest at 10%</i>	<i>–</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>33</i>	<i>48</i>
<i>Current Service Cost</i>	<u><i>89</i></u>	<u><i>98</i></u>	<u><i>108</i></u>	<u><i>119</i></u>	<u><i>131</i></u>
<i>Closing Obligation</i>	<u><i>89</i></u>	<u><i>196</i></u>	<u><i>324</i></u>	<u><i>476</i></u>	<u><i>655</i></u>

Note:

1. *The Opening Obligation is the present value of benefit attributed to prior years.*
2. *The Current Service Cost is the present value of benefit attributed to the current year.*
3. *The Closing Obligation is the present value of benefit attributed to current and prior years.*

66. An entity discounts the whole of a post-employment benefit obligation, even if part of the obligation falls due within twelve months of the reporting date.

#### **Attributing Benefit to Periods of Service**

67. **In determining the present value of its defined benefit obligations and the related current service cost and, where applicable, past service cost, an entity shall attribute benefit to periods of service under the plan's benefit formula. However, if an employee's service in later years will lead to a materially higher level of benefit than in earlier years, an entity shall attribute benefit on a straight-line basis from:**
- (a) **the date when service by the employee first leads to benefits under the plan (whether or not the benefits are conditional on further service); until**
  - (b) **the date when further service by the employee will lead to no material amount of further benefits under the plan, other than from further salary increases.**
68. The Projected Unit Credit Method requires an entity to attribute benefit to the current period (in order to determine current service cost) and the current and prior periods (in order to determine the present value of defined benefit obligations). An entity attributes benefit to periods in which the obligation to provide post-employment benefits arises. That obligation arises as employees render services in return for post-employment benefits which an entity expects to pay in future reporting periods. Actuarial techniques allow an entity to measure that obligation with sufficient reliability to justify recognition of a liability.

**Examples Illustrating Paragraph 68**

1. A defined benefit plan provides a lump-sum benefit of 100 payable on retirement for each year of service.  
*A benefit of 100 is attributed to each year. The current service cost is the present value of 100. The present value of the defined benefit obligation is the present value of 100, multiplied by the number of years of service up to the reporting date.*  
*If the benefit is payable immediately when the employee leaves the entity, the current service cost and the present value of the defined benefit obligation reflect the date at which the employee is expected to leave. Thus, because of the effect of discounting, they are less than the amounts that would be determined if the employee left at the reporting date.*
2. A plan provides a monthly pension of 0.2% of final salary for each year of service. The pension is payable from the age of 65.  
*Benefit equal to the present value, at the expected retirement date, of a monthly pension of 0.2% of the estimated final salary payable from the expected retirement date until the expected date of death is attributed to each year of service. The current service cost is the present value of that benefit. The present value of the defined benefit obligation is the present value of monthly pension payments of 0.2% of final salary, multiplied by the number of years of service up to the reporting date. The current service cost and the present value of the defined benefit obligation are discounted because pension payments begin at the age of 65.*

69. Employee service gives rise to an obligation under a defined benefit plan even if the benefits are conditional on future employment (in other words they are not *vested*). Employee service before the vesting date gives rise to a constructive obligation because, at each successive reporting date, the amount of future service that an employee will have to render before becoming entitled to the benefit is reduced. In measuring its defined benefit obligation, an entity considers the probability that some employees may not satisfy any vesting requirements. Similarly, although certain post-employment benefits, for example, post-employment medical benefits, become payable only if a specified event occurs when an employee is no longer employed, an obligation is created when the employee renders service that will provide entitlement to the benefit if the specified event occurs. The probability that the specified event will occur affects the measurement of the obligation, but does not determine whether the obligation exists.

**Examples Illustrating Paragraph 69**

1. A plan pays a benefit of 100 for each year of service. The benefits vest after ten years of service.  
*A benefit of 100 is attributed to each year. In each of the first ten years, the current service cost and the present value of the obligation reflect the probability that the employee may not complete ten years of service.*
2. A plan pays a benefit of 100 for each year of service, excluding service before the age of 25. The benefits vest immediately.  
*No benefit is attributed to service before the age of 25 because service before that date does not lead to benefits (conditional or unconditional). A benefit of 100 is attributed to each subsequent year.*

70. The obligation increases until the date when further service by the employee will lead to no material amount of further benefits. Therefore, all benefit is attributed to periods ending on or before that date. Benefit is attributed to individual reporting periods under the plan's benefit formula. However, if an employee's service in later years will lead to a materially higher level of benefit than in earlier years, an entity attributes benefit on a straight-line basis until the date when further service by the employee will lead to no material amount of further benefits. That is because the employee's service throughout the entire period will ultimately lead to benefit at that higher level.

**Examples Illustrating Paragraph 70**

1. A plan pays a lump-sum benefit of 1,000 that vests after ten years of service. The plan provides no further benefit for subsequent service.  
*A benefit of 100 (1,000 divided by ten) is attributed to each of the first ten years. The current service cost in each of the first ten years reflects the probability that the employee may not complete ten years of service. No benefit is attributed to subsequent years.*
2. A plan pays a lump-sum retirement benefit of 2,000 to all employees who are still employed at the age of 55 after twenty years of service, or who are still employed at the age of 65, regardless of their length of service.  
*For employees who join before the age of 35, service first leads to benefits under the plan at the age of 35 (an employee could*

leave at the age of 30 and return at the age of 33, with no effect on the amount or timing of benefits). Those benefits are conditional on further service. Also, service beyond the age of 55 will lead to no material amount of further benefits. For these employees, the entity attributes benefit of 100 (2,000 divided by 20) to each year from the age of 35 to the age of 55.

For employees who join between the ages of 35 and 45, service beyond twenty years will lead to no material amount of further benefits. For these employees, the entity attributes benefit of 100 (2,000 divided by 20) to each of the first twenty years.

For an employee who joins at the age of 55, service beyond ten years will lead to no material amount of further benefits. For this employee, the entity attributes benefit of 200 (2,000 divided by 10) to each of the first ten years.

For all employees, the current service cost and the present value of the obligation reflect the probability that the employee may not complete the necessary period of service.

3. A post-employment medical plan reimburses 40% of an employee's post-employment medical costs if the employee leaves after more than ten and less than twenty years of service and 50% of those costs if the employee leaves after twenty or more years of service.  
*Under the plan's benefit formula, the entity attributes 4% of the present value of the expected medical costs (40% divided by ten) to each of the first ten years and 1% (10% divided by ten) to each of the second ten years. The current service cost in each year reflects the probability that the employee may not complete the necessary period of service to earn part or all of the benefits. For employees expected to leave within ten years, no benefit is attributed.*
4. A post-employment medical plan reimburses 10% of an employee's post-employment medical costs if the employee leaves after more than ten and less than twenty years of service and 50% of those costs if the employee leaves after twenty or more years of service.  
*Service in later years will lead to a materially higher level of benefit than in earlier years. Therefore, for employees expected to leave after twenty or more years, the entity attributes benefit on a straight-line basis under paragraph 68. Service beyond twenty years will lead to no material amount of further benefits. Therefore, the benefit attributed to each of the first twenty years is 2.5% of the present value of the expected medical costs (50% divided by twenty).*

*For employees expected to leave between ten and twenty years, the benefit attributed to each of the first ten years is 1% of the present value of the expected medical costs. For these employees, no benefit is attributed to service between the end of the tenth year and the estimated date of leaving.*

*For employees expected to leave within ten years, no benefit is attributed.*

71. Where the amount of a benefit is a constant proportion of final salary for each year of service, future salary increases will affect the amount required to settle the obligation that exists for service before the reporting date, but do not create an additional obligation. Therefore:
- (a) for the purpose of paragraph 67(b), salary increases do not lead to further benefits, even though the amount of the benefits is dependent on final salary; and
  - (b) the amount of benefit attributed to each period is a constant proportion of the salary to which the benefit is linked.

**Example Illustrating Paragraph 71**

Employees are entitled to a benefit of 3% of final salary for each year of service before the age of 55.

*Benefit of 3% of estimated final salary is attributed to each year up to the age of 55. This is the date when further service by the employee will lead to no material amount of further benefits under the plan. No benefit is attributed to service after that age.*

**Actuarial Assumptions**

72. **Actuarial assumptions shall be unbiased and mutually compatible.**
73. Actuarial assumptions are an entity's best estimates of the variables that will determine the ultimate cost of providing post-employment benefits. Actuarial assumptions comprise:
- (a) demographic assumptions about the future characteristics of current and former employees (and their dependants) who are eligible for benefits. Demographic assumptions deal with matters such as:
    - (i) mortality, both during and after employment;
    - (ii) rates of employee turnover, disability and early retirement;

- (iii) the proportion of plan members with dependants who will be eligible for benefits; and
    - (iv) claim rates under medical plans; and
  - (b) financial assumptions, dealing with items such as:
    - (i) the discount rate (see paragraphs 78-82);
    - (ii) future salary and benefit levels (see paragraphs 83-87);
    - (iii) in the case of medical benefits, future medical costs, including, where material, the cost of administering claims and benefit payments (see paragraphs 88-91); and
    - (iv) the expected rate of *return on plan assets* (see paragraphs 105-107).
74. Actuarial assumptions are unbiased if they are neither imprudent nor excessively conservative.
75. Actuarial assumptions are mutually compatible if they reflect the economic relationships between factors such as inflation, rates of salary increase, the return on plan assets and discount rates. For example, all assumptions which depend on a particular inflation level (such as assumptions about interest rates and salary and benefit increases) in any given future period assume the same inflation level in that period.
76. An entity determines the discount rate and other financial assumptions in nominal (stated) terms, unless estimates in real (inflation-adjusted) terms are more reliable, for example, in a hyper-inflationary economy (see AASB 129 *Financial Reporting in Hyperinflationary Economies*), or where the benefit is index-linked and there is a deep market in index-linked bonds of the same currency and term.
- 77. Financial assumptions shall be based on market expectations, at the reporting date, for the period over which the obligations are to be settled.**

**Actuarial Assumptions: Discount Rate**

- 78. The rate used to discount post-employment benefit obligations (both funded and unfunded) shall be determined by reference to market yields at the reporting date on high quality corporate bonds. In countries where there is no deep market in such bonds, the market yields (at the reporting date) on government bonds**

**shall be used. The currency and term of the corporate bonds or government bonds shall be consistent with the currency and estimated term of the post-employment benefit obligations.**

**Aus78.1 In applying the requirement in paragraph 78, Australia does not have a sufficiently active and liquid market for high quality corporate bonds. Accordingly, market yields on government bonds shall be used to discount post-employment benefit obligations denominated in Australian currency.**

79. One actuarial assumption which has a material effect is the discount rate. The discount rate reflects the time value of money but not the actuarial or investment risk. Furthermore, the discount rate does not reflect the entity-specific credit risk borne by the entity's creditors, nor does it reflect the risk that future experience may differ from actuarial assumptions.
80. The discount rate reflects the estimated timing of benefit payments. In practice, an entity often achieves this by applying a single weighted average discount rate that reflects the estimated timing and amount of benefit payments and the currency in which the benefits are to be paid.
81. In some cases, there may be no deep market in bonds with a sufficiently long maturity to match the estimated maturity of all the benefit payments. In such cases, an entity uses current market rates of the appropriate term to discount shorter term payments, and estimates the discount rate for longer maturities by extrapolating current market rates along the yield curve. The total *present value of a defined benefit obligation* is unlikely to be particularly sensitive to the discount rate applied to the portion of benefits that is payable beyond the final maturity of the available corporate or government bonds.
82. Interest cost is computed by multiplying the discount rate as determined at the start of the period by the present value of the defined benefit obligation throughout that period, taking account of any material changes in the obligation. The present value of the obligation will differ from the liability recognised in the balance sheet because the liability is recognised after deducting the fair value of any plan assets and because some past service costs are not recognised immediately. (Appendix A illustrates the computation of interest cost, among other things.)

**Actuarial Assumptions: Salaries, Benefits and Medical Costs**

83. **Post-employment benefit obligations shall be measured on a basis that reflects:**

- (a) **estimated future salary increases;**
  - (b) **the benefits set out in the terms of the plan (or resulting from any constructive obligation that goes beyond those terms) at the reporting date; and**
  - (c) **estimated future changes in the level of any state benefits that affect the benefits payable under a defined benefit plan, if, and only if, either:**
    - (i) **those changes were enacted before the reporting date; or**
    - (ii) **past history, or other reliable evidence, indicates that those state benefits will change in some predictable manner, for example, in line with future changes in general price levels or general salary levels.**
84. Estimates of future salary increases take account of inflation, seniority, promotion and other relevant factors, such as supply and demand in the employment market.
85. If the formal terms of a plan (or a constructive obligation that goes beyond those terms) require an entity to change benefits in future periods, the measurement of the obligation reflects those changes. This is the case when, for example:
- (a) the entity has a past history of increasing benefits, for example, to mitigate the effects of inflation, and there is no indication that this practice will change in the future; or
  - (b) actuarial gains have already been recognised in the financial statements and the entity is obliged, by either the formal terms of a plan (or a constructive obligation that goes beyond those terms) or legislation, to use any surplus in the plan for the benefit of plan participants (see paragraph 98(c)).
86. Actuarial assumptions do not reflect future benefit changes that are not set out in the formal terms of the plan (or a constructive obligation) at the reporting date. Such changes will result in:
- (a) past service cost, to the extent that they change benefits for service before the change; and
  - (b) current service cost for periods after the change, to the extent that they change benefits for service after the change.

87. Some post-employment benefits are linked to variables such as the level of state retirement benefits or state medical care. The measurement of such benefits reflects expected changes in such variables, based on past history and other reliable evidence.
- 88. Assumptions about medical costs shall take account of estimated future changes in the cost of medical services, resulting from both inflation and specific changes in medical costs.**
89. Measurement of post-employment medical benefits requires assumptions about the level and frequency of future claims and the cost of meeting those claims. An entity estimates future medical costs on the basis of historical data about the entity's own experience, supplemented where necessary by historical data from other entities, insurance companies, medical providers or other sources. Estimates of future medical costs consider the effect of technological advances, changes in health care utilisation or delivery patterns and changes in the health status of plan participants.
90. The level and frequency of claims is particularly sensitive to the age, health status and sex of employees (and their dependants) and may be sensitive to other factors such as geographical location. Therefore, historical data is adjusted to the extent that the demographic mix of the population differs from that of the population used as a basis for the historical data. It is also adjusted where there is reliable evidence that historical trends will not continue.
91. Some post-employment health care plans require employees to contribute to the medical costs covered by the plan. Estimates of future medical costs take account of any such contributions, based on the terms of the plan at the reporting date (or based on any constructive obligation that goes beyond those terms). Changes in those employee contributions result in past service cost or, where applicable, curtailments. The cost of meeting claims may be reduced by benefits from state or other medical providers (see paragraphs 83(c) and 87).

#### **Actuarial Gains and Losses**

92. [Deleted by the AASB]

**Aus92.1 In measuring its defined benefit liability under paragraph 54, an entity shall, subject to paragraph 58A, recognise actuarial gains and losses as income or expense immediately.**

93. [Deleted by the AASB]

94. Actuarial gains and losses may result from increases or decreases in either the present value of a defined benefit obligation or the fair value of any related plan assets. Causes of actuarial gains and losses include, for example:
- (a) unexpectedly high or low rates of employee turnover, early retirement or mortality or of increases in salaries, benefits (if the formal or constructive terms of a plan provide for inflationary benefit increases) or medical costs;
  - (b) the effect of changes in estimates of future employee turnover, early retirement or mortality or of increases in salaries, benefits (if the formal or constructive terms of a plan provide for inflationary benefit increases) or medical costs;
  - (c) the effect of changes in the discount rate; and
  - (d) differences between the actual return on plan assets and the expected return on plan assets (see paragraphs 105-107).
95. [Deleted by the AASB]

#### **Past Service Cost**

- 96. In measuring its defined benefit liability under paragraph 54, an entity shall, subject to paragraph 58A, recognise past service cost as an expense on a straight-line basis over the average period until the benefits become vested. To the extent that the benefits are already vested immediately following the introduction of, or changes to, a defined benefit plan, an entity shall recognise past service cost immediately.**
97. Past service cost arises when an entity introduces a defined benefit plan or changes the benefits payable under an existing defined benefit plan. Such changes are in return for employee service over the period until the benefits concerned are vested. Therefore, past service cost is recognised over that period, regardless of the fact that the cost refers to employee service in previous periods. Past service cost is measured as the change in the liability resulting from the amendment (see paragraph 64).

**Example Illustrating Paragraph 97**

An entity operates a pension plan that provides a pension of 2% of final salary for each year of service. The benefits become vested after five years of service. On 1 January 20X5 the entity improves the pension to 2.5% of final salary for each year of service starting from 1 January 20X1. At the date of the improvement, the present value of the additional benefits for service from 1 January 20X1 to 1 January 20X5 is as follows:

Employees with more than five years' service at 1/1/X5	150
Employees with less than five years' service at 1/1/X5 (average period until vesting: three years)	<u>120</u>
	<u>270</u>

*The entity recognises 150 immediately because those benefits are already vested. The entity recognises 120 on a straight-line basis over three years from 1 January 20X5.*

98. Past service cost excludes:
- (a) the effect of differences between actual and previously assumed salary increases on the obligation to pay benefits for service in prior years (there is no past service cost because actuarial assumptions allow for projected salaries);
  - (b) under and over estimates of discretionary pension increases where an entity has a constructive obligation to grant such increases (there is no past service cost because actuarial assumptions allow for such increases);
  - (c) estimates of benefit improvements that result from actuarial gains that have already been recognised in the financial statements if the entity is obliged, by either the formal terms of a plan (or a constructive obligation that goes beyond those terms) or legislation, to use any surplus in the plan for the benefit of plan participants, even if the benefit increase has not yet been formally awarded (the resulting increase in the obligation is an actuarial loss and not past service cost, see paragraph 85(b));
  - (d) the increase in vested benefits when, in the absence of new or improved benefits, employees complete vesting requirements (there is no past service cost because the estimated cost of benefits was recognised as current service cost as the service was rendered); and

- (e) the effect of plan amendments that reduce benefits for future service (a curtailment).
99. An entity establishes the amortisation schedule for past service cost when the benefits are introduced or changed. It would be impracticable to maintain the detailed records needed to identify and implement subsequent changes in that amortisation schedule. Moreover, the effect is likely to be material only where there is a curtailment or settlement. Therefore, an entity amends the amortisation schedule for past service cost only if there is a curtailment or settlement.
100. Where an entity reduces benefits payable under an existing defined benefit plan, the resulting reduction in the defined benefit liability is recognised as (negative) past service cost over the average period until the reduced portion of the benefits becomes vested.
101. Where an entity reduces certain benefits payable under an existing defined benefit plan and, at the same time, increases other benefits payable under the plan for the same employees, the entity treats the change as a single net change.

## **Recognition and Measurement: Plan Assets**

### **Fair Value of Plan Assets**

102. The fair value of any plan assets is deducted in determining the amount recognised in the balance sheet under paragraph 54. When no market price is available, the fair value of plan assets is estimated; for example, by discounting expected future cash flows using a discount rate that reflects both the risk associated with the plan assets and the maturity or expected disposal date of those assets (or, if they have no maturity, the expected period until the settlement of the related obligation).
103. Plan assets exclude unpaid contributions due from the entity to the fund, as well as any non-transferable financial instruments issued by the entity and held by the fund. Plan assets are reduced by any liabilities of the fund that do not relate to employee benefits, for example, trade and other payables and liabilities resulting from derivative financial instruments.
104. Where plan assets include qualifying insurance policies that exactly match the amount and timing of some or all of the benefits payable under the plan, the fair value of those insurance policies is deemed to be the present value of the related obligations, as described in

paragraph 54 (subject to any reduction required if the amounts receivable under the insurance policies are not recoverable in full).

### Reimbursements

**104A. When, and only when, it is virtually certain that another party will reimburse some or all of the expenditure required to settle a defined benefit obligation, an entity shall recognise its right to reimbursement as a separate asset. The entity shall measure the asset at fair value. In all other respects, an entity shall treat that asset in the same way as plan assets. In the income statement, the expense relating to a defined benefit plan may be presented net of the amount recognised for a reimbursement.**

104B. Sometimes, an entity is able to look to another party, such as an insurer, to pay part or all of the expenditure required to settle a defined benefit obligation. Qualifying insurance policies, as defined in paragraph 7, are plan assets. An entity accounts for qualifying insurance policies in the same way as for all other plan assets and paragraph 104A does not apply (see paragraphs 39-42 and 104).

104C. When an insurance policy is not a qualifying insurance policy, that insurance policy is not a plan asset. Paragraph 104A deals with such cases: the entity recognises its right to reimbursement under the insurance policy as a separate asset, rather than as a deduction in determining the defined benefit liability recognised under paragraph 54; in all other respects, the entity treats that asset in the same way as plan assets. Paragraph 120(c)(vii) requires the entity to disclose a brief description of the link between the reimbursement right and the related obligation.

#### Example Illustrating Paragraphs 104A-C

Present value of obligation (liability recognised in balance sheet)	<u>1,241</u>
Rights under insurance policies that exactly match the amount and timing of some of the benefits payable under the plan. Those benefits have a present value of 1,092.	<u>1,092</u>

104D. If the right to reimbursement arises under an insurance policy that exactly matches the amount and timing of some or all of the benefits payable under a defined benefit plan, the fair value of the

reimbursement right is deemed to be the present value of the related obligation, as described in paragraph 54 (subject to any reduction required if the reimbursement is not recoverable in full).

### Return on Plan Assets

105. The expected return on plan assets is one component of the expense recognised in the income statement. The difference between the expected return on plan assets and the actual return on plan assets is an actuarial gain or loss.
106. The expected return on plan assets is based on market expectations, at the beginning of the period, for returns over the entire life of the related obligation. The expected return on plan assets reflects changes in the fair value of plan assets held during the period as a result of actual contributions paid into the fund and actual benefits paid out of the fund.

#### Example Illustrating Paragraph 106

At 1 January 20X1, the fair value of plan assets was 10,000. On 30 June 20X1, the plan paid benefits of 1,900 and received contributions of 4,900. At 31 December 20X1, the fair value of plan assets was 15,000 and the present value of the defined benefit obligation was 14,792. Actuarial losses on the obligation for 20X1 were 60.

At 1 January 20X1, the entity made the following estimates, based on market prices at that date:

	%
Interest and dividend income, after tax payable by the fund	9.25
Realised and unrealised gains on plan assets (after tax)	2.00
Administration costs	(1.00)
Expected rate of return	<u>10.25</u>

*For 20X1, the expected and actual return on plan assets are as follows:*

<i>Return on 10,000 held for 12 months at 10.25%</i>	1,025
<i>Return on 3,000 held for six months at 5% (equivalent to 10.25% annually, compounded every six months)</i>	<u>150</u>
<i>Expected return on plan assets for 20X1</i>	<u>1,175</u>

<i>Fair value of plan assets at 31 December 20X1</i>	15,000
<i>Less fair value of plan assets at 1 January 20X1</i>	(10,000)
<i>Less contributions received</i>	(4,900)
<i>Add benefits paid</i>	<u>1,900</u>
<i>Actual return on plan assets</i>	<u>2,000</u>
<i>The difference between the expected return on plan assets (1,175) and the actual return on plan assets (2,000) is an actuarial gain of 825.</i>	
<i>The entity will recognise a net actuarial gain of 765 (825 less 60) in the income statement for 20X1.</i>	
<i>The expected return on plan assets for 20X2 will be based on market expectations at 1/1/X2 for returns over the entire life of the obligation.</i>	

107. In determining the expected and actual return on plan assets, an entity deducts expected administration costs, other than those included in the actuarial assumptions used to measure the obligation.

### **Business Combinations**

108. In a business combination, an entity recognises assets and liabilities arising from post-employment benefits at the present value of the obligation less the fair value of any plan assets (see AASB 3 *Business Combinations*). The present value of the obligation includes all of the following, even if the acquiree had not recognised them at the acquisition date:

- (a) actuarial gains and losses that arose before the acquisition date; and
- (b) past service cost that arose from benefit changes, or the introduction of a plan, before the acquisition date.
- (c) [Deleted by the AASB]

### **Curtailments and Settlements**

109. **An entity shall recognise gains or losses on the curtailment or settlement of a defined benefit plan when the curtailment or settlement occurs. The gain or loss on a curtailment or settlement shall comprise:**

- (a) **any resulting change in the present value of the defined benefit obligation;**

- (b) any resulting change in the fair value of the plan assets; and
- (c) any related past service cost that, under paragraph 96, had not previously been recognised.

**110. Before determining the effect of a curtailment or settlement, an entity shall remeasure the obligation (and the related plan assets, if any) using current actuarial assumptions (including current market interest rates and other current market prices).**

111. A curtailment occurs when an entity either:

- (a) is demonstrably committed to make a material reduction in the number of employees covered by a plan; or
- (b) amends the terms of a defined benefit plan such that a material element of future service by current employees will no longer qualify for benefits, or will qualify only for reduced benefits.

A curtailment may arise from an isolated event, such as the closing of a plant, discontinuance of an operation or termination or suspension of a plan. An event is material enough to qualify as a curtailment if the recognition of a curtailment gain or loss would have a material effect on the financial statements. Curtailments are often linked with a restructuring. Therefore, an entity accounts for a curtailment at the same time as for a related restructuring.

112. A settlement occurs when an entity enters into a transaction that eliminates all further legal or constructive obligation for part or all of the benefits provided under a defined benefit plan, for example, when a lump-sum cash payment is made to, or on behalf of, plan participants in exchange for their rights to receive specified post-employment benefits.

113. In some cases, an entity acquires an insurance policy to fund some or all of the employee benefits relating to employee service in the current and prior periods. The acquisition of such a policy is not a settlement if the entity retains a legal or constructive obligation (see paragraph 39) to pay further amounts if the insurer does not pay the employee benefits specified in the insurance policy. Paragraphs 104A-104D deal with the recognition and measurement of reimbursement rights under insurance policies that are not plan assets.

114. A settlement occurs together with a curtailment if a plan is terminated such that the obligation is settled and the plan ceases to exist. However, the termination of a plan is not a curtailment or settlement if

the plan is replaced by a new plan that offers benefits that are, in substance, identical.

115. Where a curtailment relates to only some of the employees covered by a plan, or where only part of an obligation is settled, the gain or loss includes a proportionate share of the previously unrecognised past service cost. The proportionate share is determined on the basis of the present value of the obligations before and after the curtailment or settlement, unless another basis is more rational in the circumstances. For example, it may be appropriate to apply any gain arising on a curtailment or settlement of the same plan to first eliminate any unrecognised past service cost relating to the same plan.

**Example Illustrating Paragraph 115**

An entity discontinues a business segment and employees of the discontinued segment will earn no further benefits. This is a curtailment without a settlement. Using current actuarial assumptions (including current market interest rates and other current market prices) immediately before the curtailment, the entity has a defined benefit obligation with a net present value of 1,000 and plan assets with a fair value of 820. The curtailment reduces the net present value of the obligation by 100 to 900.

	<i>Before curtailment</i>	<i>Curtailment gain</i>	<i>After curtailment</i>
<i>Net present value of obligation</i>	1,000	(100)	900
<i>Fair value of plan assets</i>	<u>(820)</u>	—	<u>(820)</u>
<i>Net liability recognised in balance sheet</i>	<u>180</u>	<u>(100)</u>	<u>80</u>

**Presentation**

**Offset**

116. An entity shall offset an asset relating to one plan against a liability relating to another plan when, and only when, the entity:
- (a) has a legally enforceable right to use a surplus in one plan to settle obligations under the other plan; and

- (b) **intends either to settle the obligations on a net basis, or to realise the surplus in one plan and settle its obligation under the other plan simultaneously.**

117. The offsetting criteria are similar to those established for financial instruments in AASB 132 *Financial Instruments: Disclosure and Presentation*.

#### **Current / Non-current Distinction**

118. Some entities distinguish current assets and liabilities from non-current assets and liabilities. This Standard does not specify whether an entity shall distinguish current and non-current portions of assets and liabilities arising from post-employment benefits.

#### **Financial Components of Post-employment Benefit Costs**

119. This Standard does not specify whether an entity shall present current service cost, interest cost and the expected return on plan assets as components of a single item of income or expense on the face of the income statement.

#### **Disclosure**

**120. An entity shall disclose the following information about defined benefit plans:**

- (a) **the entity's accounting policy for recognising actuarial gains and losses;**
- (b) **a general description of the type of plan;**
- (c) **a reconciliation of the assets and liabilities recognised in the balance sheet, showing at least:**
  - (i) **the present value at the reporting date of defined benefit obligations that are wholly unfunded;**
  - (ii) **the present value (before deducting the fair value of plan assets) at the reporting date of defined benefit obligations that are wholly or partly funded;**
  - (iii) **the fair value of any plan assets at the reporting date;**
  - (iv) [Deleted by the AASB]

- (v) **the past service cost not yet recognised in the balance sheet (see paragraph 96);**
- (vi) **any amount not recognised as an asset, because of the limit in paragraph 58(b);**
- (vii) **the fair value at the reporting date of any reimbursement right recognised as an asset under paragraph 104A (with a brief description of the link between the reimbursement right and the related obligation); and**
- (viii) **the other amounts recognised in the balance sheet;**
- (d) **the amounts included in the fair value of plan assets for:**
  - (i) **each category of the entity's own financial instruments; and**
  - (ii) **any property occupied by, or other assets used by, the entity;**
- (e) **a reconciliation showing the movements during the period in the net liability (or asset) recognised in the balance sheet;**
- (f) **the total expense recognised in the income statement for each of the following, and the line item(s) of the income statement in which they are included:**
  - (i) **current service cost;**
  - (ii) **interest cost;**
  - (iii) **expected return on plan assets;**
  - (iv) **expected return on any reimbursement right recognised as an asset under paragraph 104A;**
  - (v) **actuarial gains and losses;**
  - (vi) **past service cost; and**
  - (vii) **the effect of any curtailment or settlement;**
- (g) **the actual return on plan assets, as well as the actual return on any reimbursement right recognised as an asset under paragraph 104A; and**

- (h) **the principal actuarial assumptions used as at the reporting date, including, where applicable:**
  - (i) **the discount rates;**
  - (ii) **the expected rates of return on any plan assets for the periods presented in the financial report;**
  - (iii) **the expected rates of return for the periods presented in the financial report on any reimbursement right recognised as an asset under paragraph 104A;**
  - (iv) **the expected rates of salary increases (and of changes in an index or other variable specified in the formal or constructive terms of a plan as the basis for future benefit increases);**
  - (v) **medical cost trend rates; and**
  - (vi) **any other material actuarial assumptions used.**

**An entity shall disclose each actuarial assumption in absolute terms (for example, as an absolute percentage) and not just as a margin between different percentages or other variables.**

121. Paragraph 120(b) requires a general description of the type of plan. Such a description distinguishes, for example, flat salary pension plans from final salary pension plans and from post-employment medical plans. Further detail is not required.

**Aus121.1 An entity shall disclose details of arrangements for employer contributions for funding for each defined benefit plan. In complying with this requirement, an entity shall disclose:**

- (a) **the surplus or deficit measured as the difference between accrued benefits and the net market value of plan assets determined in accordance with AAS 25 *Financial Reporting by Superannuation Plans* and which, in the absence of more recent information, has been determined as at the date of the most recent financial report of the superannuation plan;**
- (b) **the current contribution recommendations;**
- (c) **details of the funding method used to make the contribution recommendation; and**

- (d) **the economic assumptions used to make funding recommendations.**

**Aus121.2 An entity shall disclose details of the nature of any asset or liability recognised in the balance sheet, including any legal liability to make up a deficit or the manner in which the employer may benefit from any surplus.**

122. When an entity has more than one defined benefit plan, disclosures may be made in total, separately for each plan, or in such groupings as are considered to be the most useful. It may be useful to distinguish groupings by criteria such as the following:

- (a) the geographical location of the plans, for example, by distinguishing domestic plans from foreign plans; or
- (b) whether plans are subject to materially different risks, for example, by distinguishing flat salary pension plans from final salary pension plans and from post-employment medical plans.

When an entity provides disclosures in total for a grouping of plans, such disclosures are provided in the form of weighted averages or of relatively narrow ranges.

123. Paragraph 30 requires additional disclosures about multi-employer defined benefit plans that are treated as if they were defined contribution plans.

124. Where required by AASB 124 an entity discloses information about:

- (a) related party transactions with post-employment benefit plans; and
- (b) post-employment benefits for key management personnel.

125. Where required by AASB 137 an entity discloses information about contingent liabilities arising from post-employment benefit obligations.

## **Other Long-term Employee Benefits**

126. Other long-term employee benefits include, for example:

- (a) long-term compensated absences such as long-service or sabbatical leave;
- (b) jubilee or other long-service benefits;

- (c) long-term disability benefits;
- (d) profit-sharing and bonuses payable twelve months or more after the end of the period in which the employees render the related service; and
- (e) deferred compensation paid twelve months or more after the end of the period in which it is earned.

127. The measurement of other long-term employee benefits is not usually subject to the same degree of uncertainty as the measurement of post-employment benefits. Furthermore, the introduction of, or changes to, other long-term employee benefits rarely causes a material amount of past service cost. For these reasons, this Standard requires a simplified method of accounting for other long-term employee benefits. This method differs from the accounting required for post-employment benefits as follows:

- (a) [Deleted by the AASB]
- (b) all past service cost is recognised immediately.

## **Recognition and Measurement**

**128. The amount recognised as a liability for other long-term employee benefits shall be the net total of the following amounts:**

- (a) the present value of the defined benefit obligation at the reporting date (see paragraph 64);**
- (b) minus the fair value at the reporting date of plan assets (if any) out of which the obligations are to be settled directly (see paragraphs 102-104).**

**In measuring the liability, an entity shall apply paragraphs 49-91, excluding paragraphs 54 and 61. An entity shall apply paragraph 104A in recognising and measuring any reimbursement right.**

**129. For other long-term employee benefits, an entity shall recognise the net total of the following amounts as expense or (subject to paragraph 58) income, except to the extent that another Australian Accounting Standard requires or permits their inclusion in the cost of an asset:**

- (a) current service cost (see paragraphs 63-91);**

- (b) **interest cost (see paragraph 82);**
- (c) **the expected return on any plan assets (see paragraphs 105-107) and on any reimbursement right recognised as an asset (see paragraph 104A);**
- (d) **actuarial gains and losses, which shall all be recognised immediately;**
- (e) **past service cost, which shall all be recognised immediately; and**
- (f) **the effect of any curtailments or settlements (see paragraphs 109 and 110).**

130. One form of other long-term employee benefit is long-term disability benefit. If the level of benefit depends on the length of service, an obligation arises when the service is rendered. Measurement of that obligation reflects the probability that payment will be required and the length of time for which payment is expected to be made. If the level of benefit is the same for any disabled employee regardless of years of service, the expected cost of those benefits is recognised when an event occurs that causes a long-term disability.

### **Disclosure**

131. Although this Standard does not require specific disclosures about other long-term employee benefits, other Australian Accounting Standards may require disclosures, for example, where the expense resulting from such benefits is material and so would require disclosure in accordance with AASB 101. When required by AASB 124 an entity discloses information about other long-term employee benefits for key management personnel.

### **Termination Benefits**

132. This Standard deals with termination benefits separately from other employee benefits because the event which gives rise to an obligation is the termination rather than employee service.

### **Recognition**

**133. An entity shall recognise termination benefits as a liability and an expense when, and only when, the entity is demonstrably committed to either:**

- (a) **terminate the employment of an employee or group of employees before the normal retirement date; or**
  - (b) **provide termination benefits as a result of an offer made in order to encourage voluntary redundancy.**
134. **An entity is demonstrably committed to a termination when, and only when, the entity has a detailed formal plan for the termination and is without realistic possibility of withdrawal. The detailed plan shall include, as a minimum:**
- (a) **the location, function, and approximate number of employees whose services are to be terminated;**
  - (b) **the termination benefits for each job classification or function; and**
  - (c) **the time at which the plan will be implemented. Implementation shall begin as soon as possible and the period of time to complete implementation shall be such that material changes to the plan are not likely.**
135. An entity may be committed, by legislation, by contractual or other agreements with employees or their representatives or by a constructive obligation based on business practice, custom or a desire to act equitably, to make payments (or provide other benefits) to employees when it terminates their employment. Such payments are termination benefits. Termination benefits are typically lump-sum payments, but sometimes also include:
- (a) enhancement of retirement benefits or of other post-employment benefits, either indirectly through an employee benefit plan or directly; and
  - (b) salary until the end of a specified notice period if the employee renders no further service that provides economic benefits to the entity.
136. Some employee benefits are payable regardless of the reason for the employee's departure. The payment of such benefits is certain (subject to any vesting or minimum service requirements) but the timing of their payment is uncertain. Although such benefits are described in some countries as termination indemnities, or termination gratuities, they are post-employment benefits, rather than termination benefits and an entity accounts for them as post-employment benefits. Some entities provide a lower level of benefit for voluntary termination at the request of the employee (in substance, a post-employment benefit) than

for involuntary termination at the request of the entity. The additional benefit payable on involuntary termination is a termination benefit.

137. Termination benefits do not provide an entity with future economic benefits and are recognised as an expense immediately.
138. Where an entity recognises termination benefits, the entity may also have to account for a curtailment of retirement benefits or other employee benefits (see paragraph 109).

### **Measurement**

- 139. Where termination benefits fall due more than 12 months after the reporting date, they shall be discounted using the discount rate specified in paragraph 78.**
- 140. In the case of an offer made to encourage voluntary redundancy, the measurement of termination benefits shall be based on the number of employees expected to accept the offer.**

### **Disclosure**

141. Where there is uncertainty about the number of employees who will accept an offer of termination benefits, a contingent liability exists. As required by AASB 137 an entity discloses information about the contingent liability unless the possibility of an outflow in settlement is remote.
142. As required by AASB 101, an entity discloses the nature and amount of an expense if it is material. Termination benefits may result in an expense needing disclosure in order to comply with this requirement.
143. Where required by AASB 124 an entity discloses information about termination benefits for key management personnel.
144. – 152. [Deleted by the IASB]

### **Transitional Provisions**

153. [Deleted by the AASB]
154. [Deleted by the AASB]
155. [Deleted by the AASB]
156. [Deleted by the AASB]

## **Effective Date of IAS 19**

157. [Deleted by the AASB]

158. [Deleted by the AASB]

159. [Deleted by the AASB]

159A. [Deleted by the AASB]

160. [Deleted by the AASB]

## APPENDIX A

### ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLE

*The appendix accompanies, but is not part of, AASB 119. Extracts from income statements and balance sheets are provided to show the effects of the transactions described below. These extracts do not necessarily conform with all the disclosure and presentation requirements of other Australian Accounting Standards.*

#### Background Information

The following information is given about a funded defined benefit plan. To keep interest computations simple, all transactions are assumed to occur at the year end. The present value of the obligation and the fair value of the plan assets were both 1,000 at 1 January 20X1.

	20X1	20X2	20X3
Discount rate at start of year	10.0%	9.0%	8.0%
Expected rate of return on plan assets at start of year	12.0%	11.1%	10.3%
Current service cost	130	140	150
Benefits paid	150	180	190
Contributions paid	90	100	110
Present value of obligation at 31 December	1,141	1,197	1,295
Fair value of plan assets at 31 December	1,092	1,109	1,093

In 20X2, the plan was amended to provide additional benefits with effect from 1 January 20X2. The present value as at 1 January 20X2 of additional benefits for employee service before 1 January 20X2 was 50 for vested benefits and 30 for non-vested benefits. As at 1 January 20X2, the entity estimated that the average period until the non-vested benefits would become vested was three years; the past service cost arising from additional non-vested benefits is therefore recognised on a straight-line basis over three years. The past service cost arising from additional vested benefits is recognised immediately (paragraph 96 of the Standard). In accordance with paragraph Aus92.1 the entity immediately recognises all actuarial gains and losses.

## Changes in the Present Value of the Obligation and in the Fair Value of the Plan Assets

The first step is to summarise the changes in the present value of the obligation and in the fair value of the plan assets and use this to determine the amount of the actuarial gains or losses for the period. These are as follows:

	20X1	20X2	20X3
Present value of obligation, 1 January	1,000	1,141	1,197
Interest cost	100	103	96
Current service cost	130	140	150
Past service cost – non-vested benefits	–	30	–
Past service cost – vested benefits	–	50	–
Benefits paid	(150)	(180)	(190)
Actuarial (gain) loss on obligation (balancing figure)	<u>61</u>	<u>(87)</u>	<u>42</u>
Present value of obligation, 31 December	<u>1,141</u>	<u>1,197</u>	<u>1,295</u>
Fair value of plan assets, 1 January	1,000	1,092	1,109
Expected return on plan assets	120	121	114
Contributions	90	100	110
Benefits paid	(150)	(180)	(190)
Actuarial gain (loss) on plan assets (balancing figure)	<u>32</u>	<u>(24)</u>	<u>(50)</u>
Fair value of plan assets, 31 December	<u>1,092</u>	<u>1,109</u>	<u>1,093</u>

## Amounts Recognised in the Balance Sheet and Income Statement, and Related Analyses

The final step is to determine the amounts to be recognised in the balance sheet and income statement, and the related analyses to be disclosed under paragraphs 120(c), (e), (f) and (g) of the Standard. These are as follows:

	20X1	20X2	20X3
Present value of the obligation	1,141	1,197	1,295
Fair value of plan assets	<u>(1,092)</u>	<u>(1,109)</u>	<u>(1,093)</u>
	49	88	202
Unrecognised past service cost – non-vested benefits	<u>–</u>	<u>(20)</u>	<u>(10)</u>
<b>Liability recognised in balance sheet</b>	<b><u>49</u></b>	<b><u>68</u></b>	<b><u>192</u></b>
Current service cost	130	140	150
Interest cost	100	103	96
Expected return on plan assets	(120)	(121)	(114)
Net actuarial (gain) loss recognised in year	29	(63)	92
Past service cost – non-vested benefits	–	10	10
Past service cost – vested benefits	<u>–</u>	<u>50</u>	<u>–</u>
<b>Expense recognised in the income statement</b>	<b><u>139</u></b>	<b><u>119</u></b>	<b><u>234</u></b>

Movements in the net liability recognised in the balance sheet, to be disclosed under paragraph 120(e):

Opening net liability	–	49	68
Expense (as above)	139	119	234
Contributions paid	<u>(90)</u>	<u>(100)</u>	<u>(110)</u>
Closing net liability	<u>49</u>	<u>68</u>	<u>192</u>

Actual return on plan assets, to be disclosed under paragraph 120(g):

Expected return on plan assets	120	121	114
Actuarial gain (loss) on plan assets	<u>32</u>	<u>(24)</u>	<u>(50)</u>
Actual return on plan assets	<u>152</u>	<u>97</u>	<u>64</u>

Note: see example illustrating paragraphs 104A-104C for presentation of reimbursements.

## APPENDIX B

### ILLUSTRATIVE DISCLOSURES

*The appendix accompanies, but is not part of, AASB 119. Extracts from notes show how the required disclosures may be aggregated in the case of a large multi-national group that provides a variety of employee benefits. These extracts do not necessarily conform with all the disclosure and presentation requirements of other Australian Accounting Standards. In particular, they do not illustrate the disclosure of:*

- (a) *accounting policies for employee benefits (see AASB 101 Presentation of Financial Statements). Under paragraph 120(a) of the Standard, this disclosure shall include the entity's accounting policy for recognising actuarial gains and losses;*
- (b) *employee benefits granted to directors and key management personnel (see AASB 124 Related Party Disclosures).*

#### **Employee Benefit Obligations**

The amounts recognised in the balance sheet are as follows:

	Defined benefit pension plans		Post-employment medical benefits	
	20X2	20X1	20X2	20X1
Present value of funded obligations	12,310	11,772	2,819	2,721
Fair value of plan assets	<u>(11,982)</u>	<u>(11,188)</u>	<u>(2,480)</u>	<u>(2,415)</u>
	328	584	339	306
Present value of unfunded obligations	6,459	6,123	5,160	5,094
Unrecognised past service cost	<u>(450)</u>	<u>(650)</u>	—	—
Net liability in balance sheet	<u>6,337</u>	<u>6,057</u>	<u>5,499</u>	<u>5,400</u>

	Defined benefit pension plans		Post-employment medical benefits	
	20X2	20X1	20X2	20X1
Amounts in the balance sheet:				
Liabilities	6,548	6,295	5,499	5,400
Assets	<u>(211)</u>	<u>(238)</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>—</u>
Net liability in balance sheet	<u>6,337</u>	<u>6,057</u>	<u>5,499</u>	<u>5,400</u>

The pension plan assets include ordinary shares issued by [name of entity] with a fair value of 317 (20X1: 281). Plan assets also include property occupied by [name of entity] with a fair value of 200 (20X1: 185).

The amounts recognised in the income statement are as follows:

	Defined benefit pension plans		Post-employment medical benefits	
	20X2	20X1	20X2	20X1
Current service cost	1,759	1,554	512	411
Interest on obligation	1,890	1,650	819	705
Expected return on plan assets	(1,392)	(1,188)	(291)	(266)
Net actuarial losses (gains) recognised in year	90	(187)	—	—
Past service cost	200	200	—	—
Losses (gains) on curtailments and settlements	<u>221</u>	<u>(47)</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>—</u>
Total, included in 'employee benefits expense'	<u>2,768</u>	<u>1,982</u>	<u>1,040</u>	<u>850</u>
Actual return on plan assets	<u>1,232</u>	<u>1,205</u>	<u>275</u>	<u>254</u>

Movements in the net liability recognised in the balance sheet are as follows:

	Defined benefit pension plans		Post-employment medical benefits	
	20X2	20X1	20X2	20X1
Net liability at start of year	6,057	5,522	5,400	5,367
Net expense recognised in the income statement	2,768	1,982	1,040	850
Contributions	(2,261)	(1,988)	(941)	(817)
Exchange differences on foreign plan	(227)	221	–	–
Liabilities acquired in business combinations	–	320	–	–
Net liability at end of year	<u>6,337</u>	<u>6,057</u>	<u>5,499</u>	<u>5,400</u>

Principal actuarial assumptions at the reporting date (expressed as weighted averages):

	20X2	20X1
Discount rate at 31 December	10.0%	9.1%
Expected return on plan assets at 31 December	12.0%	10.9%
Future salary increases	5%	4%
Future pension increases	3%	2%
Proportion of employees opting for early retirement	30%	30%
Annual increase in health care costs	8%	8%
Future changes in maximum state health care benefits	3%	2%

The group also participates in an industry-wide defined benefit plan which provides pensions linked to final salaries and is funded on a pay-as-you-go basis. It is not practicable to determine the present value of the group's obligation or the related current service cost as the plan computes its obligations on a basis that differs materially from the basis used in [name of entity]'s financial statements. [describe basis] On that basis, the plan's financial statements to 30 June 20X0 show an unfunded liability of 27,525. The unfunded liability will result in future payments by participating employers. The plan has approximately 75,000 members, of whom approximately 5,000 are current or former employees of [name of entity] or

their dependants. The expense recognised in the income statement, which is equal to contributions due for the year, and is not included in the above amounts, was 230 (20X1: 215). The group's future contributions may be increased substantially if other entities withdraw from the plan.

## APPENDIX C

*This appendix accompanies, but is not part of, AASB 119.*

### Illustration of the Application of Paragraph 58A

#### The issue

Paragraph 58 of the Standard imposes a ceiling on the defined benefit asset that can be recognised.

- 58. The amount determined under paragraph 54 may be negative (an asset). An entity shall measure the resulting asset at the lower of:**
- (a) the amount determined under paragraph 54** [i.e. the surplus/deficit in the plan minus any past service cost not yet recognised]; **and**
  - (b) the total of:**
    - (i) any unrecognised past service cost** (see paragraph 96); **and**
    - (ii) the present value of any economic benefits available in the form of refunds from the plan or reductions in future contributions to the plan. The present value of these economic benefits shall be determined using the discount rate specified in paragraph 78.**

Without paragraph 58A (see below), paragraph 58(b)(i) has the following consequence: sometimes deferring the recognition of a past service cost in determining the amount specified by paragraph 54 leads to a gain being recognised in the income statement.

The following example illustrates the effect of applying paragraph 58 without paragraph 58A. In accordance with paragraph Aus92.1, the entity immediately recognises all actuarial gains and losses.

*Example 1*

	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b> =A+C	<b>E</b> =B+C	<b>F</b> =lower of D and E	<b>G</b>
Year	Surplus in plan	Economic benefits available (paragraph 58(b)(ii))	Past service cost not yet recognised under paragraph 54	Para- graph 54	Para- graph 58(b)	Asset ceiling, i.e. recog- nised asset	Gain recog- nised in year 2
1	100	0	0	100	0	0	—
2	70	0	30	100	30	30	30

At the end of year 1, there is a surplus of 100 in the plan (column A in the table above), but no economic benefits are available to the entity either from refunds or reductions in future contributions<sup>1</sup> (column B). There are no past service costs not yet recognised under paragraph 54 (column C). So, if there were no asset ceiling, an asset of 100 would be recognised, being the amount specified by paragraph 54 (column D). The asset ceiling in paragraph 58 restricts the asset to nil (column F).

In year 2 the entity improves the pension plan for its employees by 0.5% for employees with 10 years of service. This has resulted in the present value of vested benefits arising from past service increasing by 50 (which has been immediately recognised as an expense for the year), and the present value of unvested benefits arising from past service increasing by 30 (which has not been recognised). Consequently, the 30 of unrecognised past service cost (column C) reduces the plan surplus from 100 to 70 (column A).

If there were no asset ceiling, an asset of 100 (column D) would be recognised. The asset ceiling without paragraph 58A would be 30 (column E). An asset of 30 would be recognised (column F), giving rise to a gain in income (column G) even though all that has happened is that a surplus from which the entity cannot benefit has decreased.

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<sup>1</sup> Based on the current terms of the plan.

## AUSTRALIAN GUIDANCE

*Australian Guidance accompanies, but is not part of, AASB 119.*

### **Non-monetary benefits**

- G1. An employer may provide employee benefits in the form of non-monetary benefits. Such benefits may take the form of payment of health insurance premiums, housing, motor vehicles, and free or subsidised goods or services (for example, interest free or subsidised loans). In most circumstances, employees' rights to non-monetary benefits do not accrue in proportion to their periods of service and do not accumulate. Usually, the right to receive those benefits in each period exists irrespective of the duration of service provided by employees. In such circumstances, an employer recognises the cost associated with providing the benefits in the period during which the benefits are taken by employees. The amount of cost is determined on the basis of the net marginal cost (if any) to the employer of the benefits provided. A liability is not recognised for any non-accumulating benefits that the employees do not take during the period.
- G2. In other circumstances, employees' entitlements to non-monetary benefits may accrue in proportion to periods of service and/or accumulate over a number of reporting periods. To the extent that employees' entitlements to non-monetary benefits are accumulating and have not been settled, those benefits satisfy the definition of liabilities. In such cases, the amount recognised as liabilities is determined on the basis of the net marginal cost (if any) to the employer of the benefits expected to be provided. This requires employers to recognise as expenses (unless recognised as part of the carrying amount of an asset in accordance with another Australian Accounting Standard) accumulating non-monetary benefits in the reporting periods during which employees accumulate those benefits and not in the reporting periods during which the benefits are taken.
- G3. Where goods or services have been purchased from other entities, the net marginal cost will be the cost of the acquired goods or services less any amount expected to be paid or payable by employees. For example, if a retailer (employer) has a present obligation to provide discounted merchandise to employees as a result of their service to date, the amount recognised as liabilities is the expected cost of the goods to the employer less any amount expected to be paid by employees for those goods. In respect of benefits such as low-interest or interest-free loans to be provided to employees, the amount recognised as liabilities is based on the expected marginal cost to the

employer of borrowing those funds, less the expected interest charged to employees. Where goods or services that the employer produces or manufactures (for example, motor vehicles) are to be sold to employees at a discount, the amount recognised as liabilities is based on marginal production costs less amounts expected to be paid or payable by employees.

## Long service leave requirements

- G4. Whilst differences exist between the various Acts, Awards and Workplace Agreements specifying long service leave entitlements in Australia, the following entitlement categories are common:
- (a) an unconditional legal entitlement to payment arises after a qualifying period of service (usually ten or fifteen years). Accumulation of long service leave entitlement continues after this point, until the leave is taken. This entitlement is termed the “unconditional” entitlement category;
  - (b) in certain circumstances (for example, death, retrenchment, or early retirement under some Awards), a legal entitlement to pro rata payment in lieu of long service leave arises (sometimes only after a qualifying period of service). This entitlement is termed the “conditional” entitlement category; and
  - (c) no legal entitlement to any payment or leave exists before the accumulation of the period of service necessary to qualify for the entitlement described in (a) or (b) above. This entitlement is termed the “pre-conditional” entitlement category.

At any point in time, an employer could have employees in more than one of the above categories.

- G5. To the extent that it is probable that long service leave entitlements accumulated by employees in the unconditional, conditional and pre-conditional entitlement categories during the reporting period will result in cash outflows by an employer in future reporting periods, they satisfy the criteria for recognition of a liability. The employer has consumed employees’ services during the period and the entitlement accumulates with the provision of employees’ services.
- G6. It will often be possible for employers to estimate the present value of the future cash outflows associated with their long service leave liabilities by using “short-hand” measurement techniques. For example, experience may indicate that accrual of an employer’s long service leave liability based on remuneration rates current as at the

reporting date for all employees with five or more years of service provides an estimate of the long service leave liability not materially different from the estimate determined by using the present value basis of measurement and detailed group-based estimates.

- G7. Whilst most employers provide long service leave benefits to employees directly, some employers participate in industry-based long service leave schemes. Where an employer has an obligation to contribute to any funding shortfalls of such a scheme, that obligation satisfies the definition of liabilities. This is because the employer has a present obligation to make future cash outflows as a result of the long service leave scheme arrangements. Accordingly, an employer's obligations to industry-based long service leave schemes are recognised as a liability of the employer.
- G8. Some industry-based long service leave schemes operate so that employers directly meet their long service leave obligations to employees, and subsequently receive reimbursement from the scheme for all or part of the payments made to employees. In such cases employers recognise separately as liabilities the amount of payments expected to be made to employees and as assets the amount expected to be reimbursed by the scheme.

## **Termination benefits**

- G9. Evidence that the entity has raised a valid expectation in those employees affected that it will carry out terminations would be provided, for example, by starting to implement the termination plan or notifying employees (or their representatives) that their services will be terminated. A public announcement of a detailed plan to terminate the employment of employees by itself constitutes a constructive obligation only if it is made in such a way and in sufficient detail (that is, setting out the main features of the plan) that it gives rise to valid expectations of employees (or their representatives) that the entity will carry out the terminations.
- G10. For a termination plan to give rise to a present obligation when communicated to those employees affected by it, its implementation is scheduled to begin as soon as possible and to be completed in a timeframe that makes significant changes to the plan unlikely. If it is expected that there will be a long delay before the terminations begin or that the termination plan will take an unreasonably long time, it is unlikely that the plan will raise a valid expectation on the part of employees that the entity is at present committed to the terminations, because the timeframe allows opportunities for the entity to alter its decisions.

- G11. A decision of the entity's management or governing body to terminate employees made before a particular date does not give rise to a constructive obligation at that date unless the entity has, before that date:
- (a) started to implement the termination plan; or
  - (b) announced the main features of the termination plan to those employees affected by it in a sufficiently specific manner to raise a valid expectation in them that the entity will carry out the terminations.
- G12. When the entity starts to implement a termination plan, or announces its main features to those employees affected, after the reporting date and before the authorisation of the financial report for issue, disclosure of this event may be required under AASB 110 *Events after the Balance Sheet Date*.
- G13. Although a constructive obligation is not created solely by a management or governing body decision, a present obligation may result from earlier events together with such a decision. For example, negotiations with employee representatives for termination payments may have been concluded subject only to approval by the entity's management or governing body. Once that approval has been obtained and communicated to the other parties, the entity has a constructive obligation with respect to termination benefits, if the conditions in paragraph 134 of this Standard are met.
- G14. For some entities, the ultimate authority is held by a supervisory board the membership of which includes representatives of external parties (for example, employees). Because a decision by such a board involves communication to these representatives, it may result in a constructive obligation to provide termination benefits. However, if further consultations or major modifications to the plan are likely to be subsequently required, it is unlikely that the entity has a present obligation. If significant changes are possible, for example, as a result of the outcome of further negotiations, the entity does not have a constructive obligation in respect of a specific termination plan.

## **Non-salary components**

- G15. Measuring employee benefit liabilities requires all factors that are expected to affect the ultimate amount payable to be taken into account. For example, when employees will receive leave benefits that are determined by reference to the total remuneration package, rather than the salary component of an employee's remuneration package, the

non-salary components (such as employer superannuation contributions) are included in the measurement of the leave liability, to the extent that the non-salary components are not otherwise recognised as a liability. Superannuation contributions are regarded as employee benefits in accordance with AASB 119, and are not on-costs (as discussed in paragraphs G16-17). To the extent that it is expected that settlement of leave will give rise to the payment of superannuation contributions, superannuation contributions should be accrued as part of the provision for leave.

## **On-costs**

- G16. Costs that are a consequence of employing employees, but which are not employee benefits, such as payroll tax and workers' compensation insurance, are recognised as liabilities and expenses when the employment to which they relate has occurred. For example, where the settlement of employee benefit liabilities, such as long service leave, gives rise to the payment of employment on-costs, such as payroll tax and workers' compensation insurance, a liability is recognised for those on-costs as well as for the employee benefits. In determining whether settlement of employee benefit liabilities will result in the payment of on-costs, an entity should consider whether employee benefits are likely to be extinguished through resignation (or termination), or through the employee taking leave.
- G17. On-costs are not employee benefits. Accordingly on-costs should not be included as part of the entity's "employee benefits expense". Although AASB 119 does not specifically address employee on-costs, an entity should consider their separate disclosure to assist users in calculating the total employee expense.

## **Plan assets**

- G18. AASB 119.103 specifically requires unpaid contributions due from the entity to the fund to be excluded from plan assets when calculating the employers' defined benefit obligation. In circumstances when the entity separately recognises the unpaid contributions as a liability in the balance sheet, the amount is deducted from the defined benefit liability recognised by the entity to avoid any double counting.

## ***AAS 25 Financial Reporting by Superannuation Plans***

- G19. AAS 25 *Financial Reporting by Superannuation Plans* contains the recognition and disclosure requirements for superannuation plans

including defined benefit plans. It should be noted that there are inconsistencies between the requirements in AAS 25 and the requirements in AASB 119. These inconsistencies relate to the discount rate to be used in determining the present value of the defined benefit obligation, the calculation of the defined benefit obligation and the definition of defined benefit plans. When a fundamental review of AAS 25 is carried out (not expected before 2005), these inconsistencies will be considered.

### **Actuarial Assumptions – Allowance for Taxes in Defined Benefit Plans**

G20. In accordance with paragraph 73 that states “Actuarial assumptions are an entity’s best estimates of the variables that will determine the ultimate cost of providing post-employment benefits.”, any future taxes, such as contributions tax and investment tax, are taken into account in the actuarial assumptions used to determine the relevant components of the employer’s defined benefit liability (asset).