Liquid Fuel Emergency Amendment Act 1987

Date Introduced: 18 February 1987  
House: Senate  
Presented by: Senator the Hon. Gareth Evans, Minister for Resources and Energy.

Digest of Bill

Purpose
To extend the operation of the Liquid Fuel Emergency Act 1984 (the Principal Act).

Background
The Principal Act replaced the Liquid Fuel (Defence Stocks) Act 1949 and provides for the control of fuel stocks to ensure the availability of fuel essential to the reasonable requirements of the community. Although the Principal Act refers specifically to defence needs, its operation is not restricted to defence needs and, to gain Constitutional authority, reference is made to an international agreement, the Agreement on an International Energy Program, trade and commerce and corporations.

The Principal Act provides for the Minister to declare a national liquid fuel emergency where there is or is likely to be a shortage of liquid fuel. After such an emergency is declared the Minister will be able to direct corporations in the fuel industry to maintain reserves and develop bulk allocation procedures. In addition, the Minister will be able to direct the release or sale of fuel, give directions as to refinery output and to make regulations concerning supply. The Minister will not have power to regulate price. Section 54 of the principal Act is a sunset clause and provides that the Act will cease to be in force three years after commencement (i.e. 27 March 1987).

Main Provisions
Clause 3 will repeal section 54 of the Principal Act.

For further information, if required, contact the Law and Government Group.

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