Egg Industry Research (Hen Quota) Levy Amendment Bill 1987

Date Introduced: 18 September 1987
House: House of Representatives
Presented by: The Hon. Barry Jones, M.P., Minister representing the Minister for Primary Industries and Energy.

Digest of Bill

Purpose
To amend the Egg Industry Research (Hen Quota) Levy Act 1987 (the Principal Act) in order to clarify the application of the hen quota levy.

Background
Under the Poultry Industry Levy Act 1965, a levy was imposed in order to equalise the impact on individual producers of losses incurred in disposing of egg surpluses. A small component of the amount collected from egg producers was directed towards research. In recent years, the egg surplus decreased significantly, so that the legislation was amended to end the levy on 30 June 1987.

The Principal Act and Egg Industry Research (Hen Quota) Levy Collection Act 1987 established a new system for the imposition and collection of levy, enabling the scheme for sponsorship of egg research to continue after the previous levy system ended. The Principal Act provides for the imposition of levy on the quota of hens which a producer holds under a licence issued by State or Territory Authorities. However, there is considerable variation in licence specifications between the States and Territories which makes it impracticable to tie hen quotas to licence requirements. Administrative arrangements for levy collection which take these varying State practices into account are already operating between the Commonwealth and State Egg Boards. The amendments to the Principal Act proposed by this Bill will provide legislative confirmation of these administrative arrangements.

Main Provisions
Section 4 of the Principal Act contains the interpretation provisions. Clause 3 will omit the current definition of 'hen quota licence' and substitute definitions of 'hen quota' and 'hen quota licence'. The proposed definitions will make it clear that the levy is to apply to the maximum number of laying hens that a licence holder is entitled to keep, regardless of the means by which this is specified by a State or Territory.