STEVEDORING INDUSTRY LEVY AMENDMENT BILL 1985

Date Introduced: 24 April 1985
House: House of Representatives
Presented by: Hon. Ralph Willis, M.P., Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations

Short Digest of Bill

Purpose

To enable the ratio of levy between local and international cargo to be set by regulation at less than 75 per cent.

Background

The Government has been involved in the regulation of the stevedoring industry since 1942, providing a statutory basis for agreements reached between employers and employees. Because of the high labour turnover and mobility within the industry, funding for employer obligations is organised on an industry basis rather than by individual employers.

The Stevedoring Industry Levy Act 1977 (the Principal Act) resulted from the National Stevedoring Industry Conference which was established in 1975. Under the Principal Act, payments are made to the Stevedoring Industry Finance Committee (SIFC) from a levy imposed on stevedoring employers, thus superseding previous methods for the collection of statutory levies. The nature and rate of statutory levies is recommended by the SIFC, a body comprising representatives of employers, employees and the Government.

Funds raised by the statutory levy are used by the SIFC to finance the industry deficit on long service leave liabilities, taken over when the Australian Stevedoring Industry Authority was wound up in 1977, and for payment of certain employer obligations, such as retirement fund contributions and long service leave. As well as statutory levies, the Association of Employers of Waterside Labour imposes various voluntary levies to finance other employer obligations not covered by the statutory levy.
Between 1977 and 1984 redundancy payments were financed through a voluntary levy, the levy on local cargo being 20 per cent of the rate for international cargo. In 1984 the Stevedoring Industry Finance Committee Act 1977 was amended to allow redundancy payments to be financed through the statutory levy. As the Principal Act presently stands, the statutory levy on local cargo is 75 per cent of that on international cargo (section 7 of the Principal Act).

Main Provisions

The fixed ratio between the levy on local and international cargo is removed by clause 2 of the Bill, which allows the rate of levy on local cargo to be fixed by regulation at a lower rate than 75%.

There is no mention in the Bill of its operative date. Under the Acts Interpretation Act 1901 it will come into operation 28 days after the Bill receives the Royal Assent.

For further information, if required, contact:

Economics and Commerce Group
LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH SERVICE

2 May 1985