Export Inspection (Service Charge) Bill 1985

Date introduced: 22 August 1985
House: House of Representatives
Presented by: Hon. John Kerin, M.P., Minister for Primary Industry

Digest of Bill

Purpose

To impose a service charge based on time incurred on inspections of rural products for export.

Background

Inspection is required for a range of rural goods before they may be exported. The aim of the inspection is to ensure the quality of Australian primary products destined for consumption overseas. The maintenance of a high level of quality is important for the continuation of current export markets and for the establishment of new ones. The 'meat substitution' episode showed how vulnerable Australian primary exports are to a drop in quality.

At present, the Government's policy is to recoup 50 per cent of the cost of export inspection through charges based on quantity. Under these arrangements producers are charged a flat rate regardless of the actual cost of inspection. As a result, producers who have instituted efficient methods of inspection pay the same amount as other producers even though their actual cost of inspection may be much lower.

A wide range of options for the calculation and collection of export inspection charges will be made available by this and associated Bills (the Export Inspection (Establishment Registration Charge) Bill 1985 and the Export Inspection Charges (Miscellaneous Amendments) Bill 1985). The alternative methods of calculating charges will be:

- the current flat-rate quantity charge;
an hourly-based service charge;

- a registration charge;

- a combination of quantity and registration charges; or

- a combination of service and registration charges.

Quantity and service charges cannot be imposed together. The wide range of options will enable the method of charge to be adapted to the peculiarities of various rural industries and establishments.

Main Provisions

A charge for export inspection is imposed by clause 6.

By clause 7, the rate of charge is to be calculated by reference to the time taken for inspection.

The charge is payable by the registered occupier of the establishment (clause 8).

For further information, if required, contact the Economics and Commerce Group.