Date Introduced: 29 February 1984
House: House of Representatives

Short Digest of Bill

Purpose

To provide for the collection and enforcement of export inspection charges for export of fresh vegetables, imposed by the Fresh Vegetables (Export Inspection Charge) Bill 1984 and intended to operate from 1 April 1984.

Background

Fresh vegetables, defined in the Bill to include fruit, are inspected prior to export by State Government authorities. Refunds by the Commonwealth of the cost of inspection services are estimated to total $2.4 million in 1983-84. Pursuant to a policy of recovery of 50 per cent of the cost of providing export inspection services, it is intended to impose export inspection charges on fresh vegetables from 1 April 1984 at a rate which, had it applied throughout 1983/84, would have yielded $1.2 million. The charge is authorized by the Fresh Vegetables (Export Inspection Charge) Bill 1984 which sets a maximum rate for Regulations prescribing the charge of $20 plus $0.18 per "package", as defined.

Main Provisions

Clause 2 defines "exporter", who is primarily liable for the export inspection charge, as the person to whom the export permit in respect of the vegetables or fruit is granted. The term "vegetables" is defined to include fruit and may also include vegetables which have been chilled. Canned and frozen vegetables are covered by the Canned and Frozen Vegetables (Export Inspection Charge) Bill 1984 and associated collection legislation. The provisions of the present Bill are substantially the same as those of Bills providing for the collection of export inspection charges imposed on exports of honey and canned and frozen...
vegetables [e.g. Honey (Export Inspection Charge) Collection Bill, 1984].

Export inspection charges are due to be paid within 28 days of the end of the month in which the export permit was issued (clause 4). Clause 6 provides for a late payment charge of 20 per cent of the amount outstanding per annum. Late payment charge may be remitted by the Minister or, for remission of $100 or less, by an authorized person. Decisions as to remission are reviewable by the Administrative Appeals Tribunal (clause 9).

Clause 8 provides for access to premises to search, inspect and take extracts from documentation relating to fresh vegetables liable to export inspection charge. Should the occupier of the premises not consent to entry, a warrant is obtainable from a Justice of the Peace on the basis of reasonable grounds for belief that such documentation exists on the premises. In this case, obstruction or hindrance carries a penalty of a $1000 fine and/or 6 months' imprisonment. The same penalty applies under clause 7 for failure to supply information where required, or for supply of false or misleading information.

For further information, if required, contact:

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