

1994

THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PRAWN EXPORT CHARGE BILL 1994

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

(Circulated by the authority of the Minister for Resources, the Hon David Beddall, MP)

PRAWN EXPORT CHARGE BILL 1994

GENERAL OUTLINE

1. The prawn sector is an important component of the Australian fishing industry, providing a significant input to a number of regional economies. However, over some years, market share and earnings have been eroded through direct competition in overseas markets from aquacultured prawns.
2. Faced with these pressures, the prawn industry has sought Commonwealth Government assistance in working to increase the export value of Australian sea-caught prawns, especially those sold on the Japanese market.
3. The industry has developed a promotional strategy involving innovative marketing to differentiate Australian sea-caught prawns from the overseas farmed product.
4. The Government has agreed to collect funds for the scheme by means of a levy and charge similar to those imposed in respect of various other primary industry products. As one of these measures, the Prawn Export Charge Bill imposes a charge on exports of sea-caught Australian prawns to finance the promotion of the product in overseas markets.

FINANCIAL IMPACT STATEMENT

5. The promotion will be funded only by this charge and the related prawn boat levy. As all expenditure, including administration, will be funded from these collections, the proposal will have no impact on the Commonwealth Budget.

NOTES ON INDIVIDUAL CLAUSES

Clause 1: Short title

6. This clause provides for the Act to be called the Prawn Export Charge Act 1994.

Clause 2: Commencement

7. This clause enables the Act to come into effect on the same day as the Prawn Boat Levy Act 1994. This is because the two Acts will be complementary.

Clause 3: Interpretation

8. Sub-clause 3(1) makes it clear that words used but not defined in this Bill but defined in the Prawn Export Promotion Bill will have the same meaning as in the latter Bill.

9. Sub-clause 3(2) provides that, for the purposes of this Bill, the prescribed industry organisation is the same as that defined in the Prawn Export Promotion Bill.

Clause 4: Imposition of charge

10. This clause imposes the prawn export charge on sea-caught prawns, parts of sea-caught prawn (eg tails) and sea-caught prawn products (eg canned food containing sea-caught prawns) exported from Australia.

Clause 5: Rate of charge

11. This clause provides for the amount of charge payable to be prescribed by regulation, to a maximum of 10 cents per kilogram. There is no differentiation in the amount of charge payable per unit weight in respect of whole prawns and parts of prawns.

Clause 6: Person liable to pay charge

12. This clause specifies that the person liable to pay the charge is the exporter of the prawns, parts of prawns or prawn products. The prawn boat operator or processor cannot become liable to pay the charge unless that person is also the exporter.

Clause 7: Regulations

13. Sub-clause 7(1) enables the Governor-General to make regulations prescribing the amount of charge.

14. Sub-clause 7(2) provides that, if regulations prescribing a new charge amount are proposed, any recommendation about the proposed regulations made to the Minister by the prescribed industry organisation must be considered by the Governor-General.

15. Sub-clause 7(3) requires the prescribed industry organisation to obtain approval from its immediately preceding annual general meeting about any recommendation it makes to the Minister about the rate of charge.



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