Slaughter-Houses Act (Northern Ireland) 1953 [F1]

1953 CHAPTER 21

An Act to amend the law with respect to slaughter-houses, and for purposes connected with that matter. [7th July 1953]

F1 SI 1965/1536

1 Licensing of slaughter-houses.

(1) The Ministry of Agriculture (in this Act referred to as "the Ministry") may issue licences in respect of slaughter-houses, subject to such conditions as may be prescribed including (but without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing words) conditions as to the kind or kinds of animal which may be slaughtered in any slaughter-house.

(2) An application for a licence under this section (in this Act referred to as a "licence") shall be in such form as may be prescribed.

(3) The Ministry, on receiving an application for a licence—

[F2](a) shall, before issuing the licence, consult the district council for the district in which are situated the premises in respect of which the application is made];

(b) may before issuing the licence cause an inspection to be made by an authorised officer of the premises, plant and equipment proposed to be used for the purposes of the slaughter-house in respect of which the application is made.

(4) An application duly made for the issue of a licence may be refused on the ground that—

(a) the applicant was at any time a licence-holder whose licence has been revoked either by the Ministry under this Act or by a court of summary jurisdiction under any other enactment;

(b) the slaughter-house of the applicant is one in respect of which a licence previously subsisted and has been revoked either by the Ministry or by a court as aforesaid;

Changes to legislation: *There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Slaughter-Houses Act (Northern Ireland) 1953. (See end of Document for details)*

(c) the premises used, or proposed to be used, for the purposes of the slaughter-house of the applicant are wholly or partly the same as those used for the purposes of a slaughter-house in respect of which a licence previously subsisted and has been revoked either by the Ministry or by a court as aforesaid;

(d) the applicant is a person who has been convicted of an offence against this Act or any other enactment relating to the regulation of slaughter-houses;

(e) the Ministry is not satisfied that the premises, plant and equipment used for the purposes of the slaughter-house of the applicant comply or, regard being had to any alterations or additions which it is proposed to make respecting the premises or the buildings or plant thereon or the equipment thereof, will be made to comply, with such requirements as shall be prescribed; or

Para. (f) rep. by 1984 NI 2

and, subject to the last preceding sub-section, shall not be refused on any other ground.

(5) A licence shall be in such form as may be prescribed, and shall contain a statement specifying the name and address of the licence-holder and particulars of the premises used for the purposes of the slaughter-house in respect of which it is issued.

(6) A licence shall continue in force until it is revoked or suspended either under section three of this Act or by a court of summary jurisdiction under any other enactment, or is surrendered by the licence-holder.

(7) Subject to the succeeding sub-section, it shall not be lawful for any person to slaughter or cause or permit to be slaughtered for human consumption an animal of any kind except in a slaughter-house duly licensed under this section for the slaughter of animals of that kind, or operated by the Ministry under section eight of this Act.

(8) The Ministry may by order exempt from the provisions of the last preceding sub-section—

(a) the slaughter in any part of Northern Ireland designated in the order of pigs for sale to a person who is a licensed bacon-curer within the meaning of the Agricultural Produce (Meat Regulation) Act (Northern Ireland), 1930 [F3];

(b) the slaughter on farms in any part of Northern Ireland designated in the order of animals, the property of the owner or occupier of the farm on which they are slaughtered, for the purpose of their being consumed in the household of such owner or occupier;

(c) the slaughter of any animal under or by virtue of the**[**[F4] Diseases of Animals (Northern Ireland) Order 1981**]**[F4]; or

(d) the slaughter of animals whose immediate slaughter becomes necessary or expedient by reason of injury or by reason of infirmity other than disease within the meaning of the**[**[F4] Diseases of Animals (Northern Ireland) Order 1981**]**[F4];

and any exemption under this sub-section shall be subject to such conditions as may be specified in the order; and any such order may be varied or revoked by a subsequent order. Every order made under this sub-section shall be published forthwith in the Belfast Gazette.

F2 1977 NI 12
F3 1962 c. 13 (NI)
F4 1981 NI 22

2 Register of licensed slaughter-houses.

(1) The Ministry shall for the purposes of this Act cause to be kept a register and in respect of every licence issued shall cause to be entered in that register—

(a) the full name, address and description of the licence-holder;

(b) particulars of the premises used for the purposes of the slaughter-house in respect of which the licence is issued;

(c) such other particulars as may from time to time be determined by the Ministry.

Subs. (2) rep. by 1962 c. 13 (NI)

3 Revocation and suspension of licences.

The Ministry may revoke or suspend a licence by reason—

(a) of the non-compliance of the licence-holder with any condition attached thereto; or

(b) that the licence-holder has been convicted of an offence against this Act, or under any other enactment relating to the regulation of slaughter-houses.

4 Appeals.

The Ministry where it revokes or suspends a licence shall by means of a registered letter[F5] notify its decision to the licence-holder concerned, who may within twenty-eight days of the posting of such letter serve on the Ministry in accordance with county court rules a notice of appeal to quarter sessions[F6] against such decision; and such appeal shall be heard and determined by the court of quarter sessions[F6] for the district in which the premises are situate in respect of which the licence was issued… .[F7]

F5 Recorded delivery service may be used an an alternative, 1963 c. 5 (NI)
F6 To be construed as county ct., 1980 NI 3
F7 1959 c. 25 (NI)

5 Records and returns.

(1) Licence-holders shall keep such records and shall furnish to the Ministry in the prescribed manner and at the prescribed times such returns as may be prescribed. Any such records shall be open to inspection at all reasonable times by an authorised officer.

(2) No individual return or part of a return furnished under this section shall be published or disclosed except [[F8] to a Department of the Government of Northern Ireland or of the United Kingdom or] for the purposes of a prosecution under this Act.

F8 1977 NI 12

[F9 5A Duty to slaughter animals in slaughter-houses at request of retailers of meat.

(1) A district council which manages or has under its control a slaughter-house and any other person operating a commercial slaughter-house shall, at the request of any person carrying on the business of selling meat by retail for human consumption in Northern Ireland, slaughter any animal presented to it or him for slaughter for the purposes of

that business, being an animal of a kind which may be slaughtered in that slaughter-house.

(2) An animal so slaughtered in a commercial slaughter-house shall be slaughtered upon such terms and conditions as shall be determined by the Department and an animal so slaughtered in a slaughter-house managed or under the control of a district council shall be slaughtered in accordance with the bye-laws applying to that slaughter-house.

(3) In this section "commercial slaughter-house" means a slaughter-house which is not managed by or under the control of a district council.

(4) A district council or other person who fails to comply with the provisions of subsection (1) shall be guilty of an offence under this Act.]

F9 1977 NI 12

6 Enforcement.

(1) An authorised officer shall, without prejudice to any other provision of this Act, have power—

(a) to enter at all reasonable times any premises owned or occupied for the purpose of his slaughter-house by or on behalf of a licence-holder, and to inspect any process, plant, equipment or appliance used in or in connection with that slaughter-house, or any animal, meat, offals or any other substance or thing being in his possession for the purpose of that slaughter-house;

(b) to take for the purpose of expert examination samples of meat or offals found in his possession for the purpose of his slaughter-house.

(2) If the Ministry has reason to believe that, in contravention of sub-section (7) of section one of this Act, any animal has been or is about to be slaughtered in or at any premises or place, the Ministry may specially authorise any of its officers to enter such premises or place, and an officer so authorised shall have the like powers of entry, inspection and taking samples as are conferred on an authorised officer by the preceding sub-section.

(3) An authorised officer exercising any power conferred on him by or under this Act shall produce his authority if so requested by or on behalf of the owner or occupier of the premises wherein, or in relation to which, he is exercising or is about to exercise such power.

(4) Any person who—

(a) obstructs or impedes an authorised officer in the exercise of any power conferred on him by this Act;

(b) fraudulently alters or uses, or causes or permits to be fraudulently altered or used, any licence or other document issued or granted under or by virtue of this Act;

(c) being a licence-holder, makes any false or fraudulent statement in any record kept by him under or by virtue of this Act;

(d) acts in contravention of or neglects or fails to comply with any provision of this Act or of any regulation made thereunder;

shall be guilty of an offence against this Act.

(5) A person guilty of an offence against this Act shall on summary conviction thereof be liable[F10]... to a fine not exceeding[F10] level 4 on the standard scale][F10]; and where any

such offence is continued after conviction, to a further fine of [F11 £25] for each day during which the offence is continued.

(6) Subject to the provisions of section two hundred and sixty-four[F12] of the Public Health (Ireland) Act, 1878 , where an offence against this Act was committed by a body corporate and is proved to have been so committed with the consent or approval, or to have been facilitated by any neglect or default on the part, of any director, manager, secretary or other officer thereof, such director, manager, secretary or other officer shall be deemed to be guilty of such offence and shall be liable to be proceeded against and punished accordingly.

(7) All offences against this Act shall be prosecuted, and all fines in respect thereof shall be recovered, in manner provided by the Summary Jurisdiction Acts (Northern Ireland).

(8) A prosecution for an offence against this Act shall not be instituted otherwise than by or with the consent of the Attorney-General or the Ministry, except—

(a) a prosecution for an offence committed by an officer of the Ministry;

(b) a prosecution by a local authority for an offence against this Act which is also an offence against any enactment relating to the sale of food or the public health and enforceable by such authority:

Provided that this sub-section shall not be construed as rendering any person liable to be punished more than once for any offence.

F10 1984 NI 3
F11 1977 NI 12
F12 1972 c. 9 (NI)

7 Abolition of certain functions of local authorities.

(1) Local authorities shall cease to have any functions in relation to the licensing of premises for use as slaughter-houses or to the registering of slaughter-houses.

Subs. (2), with Pt.I of Second Schedule, effects amendments

(3) Any provision of any local or private Act inconsistent with the foregoing provisions of this section shall cease to have effect.

(4) Any regulation, bye-law, order or other instrument which immediately before the commencement of this Act has effect by virtue of any enactment amended by this section shall thereafter have effect as if it had been made after such commencement.

8 Power of Ministry to provide slaughter-house facilities.

(1) Subject to the next succeeding sub-section, where it appears to the Ministry that it would be in the interests of efficiency or economy or of the development of the livestock industry that a slaughter-house should be provided by the Ministry, the Ministry, notwithstanding anything in any enactment, may, with the approval of the Ministry of Finance, acquire, provide, maintain or operate a slaughter-house in any place or places, and may, in respect of the use of any such slaughter-house by any person, charge such fees as the Ministry of Finance may approve; and any fee so charged shall be recoverable by the Ministry as a civil debt due to it.