



Meat Industry Association of New Zealand (Inc)

Submission to the Justice and Electoral
Select Committee on the

Electoral Finance Bill

6 September 2007

Meat Industry Association Submission on the Electoral Finance Bill

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I: About the Meat Industry Association

1. The Meat Industry Association of New Zealand Incorporated ('MIA') is a voluntary trade association representing New Zealand meat processors, marketers and exporters. It is an Incorporated Society (owned by members) that represents companies supplying virtually all of New Zealand sheepmeat exports and all beef exports, producing 15 per cent of our nation's exports by value (29 percent of New Zealand's primary sector export revenue). The New Zealand meat industry earned \$5.4 billion in export revenue in the year ended May 2007 and \$1.1 billion from domestic meat sales in the year ended September 2006.
2. MIA member companies operate approximately 80 processing plants dispersed throughout the country. The plants slaughter and process approximately 24 million lambs, 4.4 million sheep and 4.2 million cattle and calves each year. Ninety percent of this production is processed into value-added products. Approximately 840,000 tonnes or 85% of the production is exported to overseas destinations. Our affiliate members add to the depth of expertise available from the membership, with representation throughout the meat supply chain, including road and rail transport, shipping lines, ports, packaging firms, specialist product exporters, research and technology.
3. The Association advocates on behalf of its members and provides advice on economic, trade policy, market access, employment relations, business compliance costs and technical and regulatory issues facing the industry, with a particular focus on:
 - Food safety trends and developments in importing countries
 - Economic and trade aspects of market access to key overseas markets
 - Major public policy proposals that could impact on industry operations
4. The MIA is also the interface between the meat industry and government (i.e., it is the consultative body referred to in various New Zealand statutes, such as the Meat Board Act 2004, Meat Act 1981 and the Animal Products Act 1999).
5. The Association's mission is to:
 - Provide a forum for consideration of industry-wide commercial, human resource, marketing, and sanitary and zoosanitary issues; and
 - Provide the means of formulating a collective view on issues of industry wide interest, and of conveying that position to government, departments of state, trade bodies, and other appropriate external agencies and organisations.
6. A list of Association members is attached as Appendix 1.

II: Consultation

7. In preparing this submission all members and affiliate members were consulted and asked for input. MIA members may also make individual submissions reflecting concerns relating to their specific operations.

III: Submission

8. Our key concern is that the Bill's broad definitions would unnecessarily restrict the activities of legitimate and apolitical lobbying organisations such as the MIA.

Intent of the Bill

9. The MIA understands that the intent of the Bill is to control the conduct of those groups or individuals who would seek to influence the outcome of a general election.
10. The MIA is an apolitical organisation and has no interest in influencing the outcome of any general election. As such, the MIA has no comment on the intent of the Bill or on the likely efficacy of the Bill in achieving its stated intent.

Consequences beyond stated intent

11. The MIA contends that the wording of the Bill will mean that, if enacted, it would have consequences far beyond its stated intent.
12. The Bill's definition of 'Election Advertising' (Clause 5) is so broad that most citizens and organisations in the country could be said to be commissioning such advertising on a regular basis. Most New Zealanders will at some point use "...any form of words or graphics..." to take "...a position on a proposition with which 1 or more parties or 1 or more candidates are associated..." While several specific activities are subsequently excluded from this definition, there is a huge amount of activity undertaken by apolitical organisations that is not excluded.
13. The Bill goes on to severely restrict such activities.
14. The Bill's definition is clearly much broader than what most New Zealanders would consider to be election advertising.

Severe restriction on activities

15. One of the MIA's primary roles is to represent the position of our members and affiliate members on a range of issues that have political relevance, including, for instance; trade policy, industrial relations, climate change and food safety. The MIA regularly communicates on such issues with a range of audiences in a range of fora. Under the Bill, such communications activities would be severely restricted within election years (even if the MIA were registered as a 'Third Party').
16. The MIA submits that the restriction of its normal, apolitical communications activities would not contribute to the stated intent of the Bill. Further, such restriction would do damage to the interests of the MIA and its members, and to New Zealand's consultative law-making process.

IV: Recommendations

17. The MIA recommends that, should the Bill proceed, Clause 5 of the Bill be amended such that the normal communications activities of organisations such as the MIA are not defined as Election Advertising.

18. The MIA further recommends that any definition of Election Advertising be inclusive, that is, the drafting should describe what is Election Advertising rather than starting with the base assumption that all communications are Election Advertising then trying to describe what is not.
19. The MIA does not wish to present oral submissions.
20. For any queries relating to this submission, please contact Dan Coup (DDI: 04 495 8374 or email: dan.coup@mia.co.nz) in the first instance.

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Appendix 1: Association Members and Affiliate Members as at 1 July 2007

Members
Advance Marketing Ltd
AFFCO New Zealand Ltd
Alliance Group Ltd
ANZCO Foods Ltd
ANZCO Green Island Ltd (ANZCO group)
ANZPAC Foods Ltd
APJ Meats Ltd
Auckland Meat Processors Ltd
Ballande New Zealand Ltd
Bernard Matthews New Zealand Ltd
Blue Sky Meats (NZ) Ltd
<i>Brookland (NZ) Ltd (in receivership)</i>
Canterbury Meat Packers Ltd (ANZCO group)
Columbia Exports Ltd
Crown Marketing Ltd (ANZCO group)
Crusader Meats New Zealand Ltd
Davmet New Zealand Ltd
Fern Ridge Ltd
Frasertown Meat Company Ltd
Garra International Ltd
Greenlea Premier Meats Ltd
Harrier Exports Ltd
Horizon Meats New Zealand Ltd (wholly owned subsidiary of Blue Sky Meats (NZ) Ltd)
Lamb Packers Feilding Ltd (wholly owned subsidiary of Bernard Matthews NZ Ltd)
Land Meat (NZ) Ltd (AFFCO group)
Lanexco Ltd
Lowe Corporation Ltd
Mathias International (Mathias Meats NZ Ltd)
New Zealand By-Products
Pilot (NZ) Ltd
PPCS Ltd
Progressive Gisborne Ltd (wholly owned subsidiary of Bernard Matthews NZ Ltd)
Progressive Meats Ltd
Riverlands Ltd (ANZCO group)
South Pacific Meats Ltd
South Pacific Meats - Malvern (AFFCO Group)
Tara Exports Ltd
Taylor Preston Ltd
Te Kuiti Meat Processors Ltd
Towers Thompson (New Zealand) Ltd
Universal Beef Packers Ltd (UBP)
Wallace Corporation Ltd

Affiliate Members
AgResearch-MIRINZ Centre
Aon New Zealand Limited
Axis Intermodal (Ports of Auckland Ltd) CentrePort Wellington
Energy for Industry (ex Meridian Solutions)
Hamburg-Sud New Zealand Ltd
Hapag Lloyd (New Zealand) Ltd
Maersk New Zealand Ltd
Millers Mechanical NZ Ltd
Oceanic Navigation Ltd
Port of Napier
Port Otago Ltd
Port Taranaki Ltd (previously Westgate Transport Ltd)
ProAnd Ltd (Meatek Ltd)
Sealed Air (New Zealand), Cryovac Division
Thompson Clarke Shipping Pty Ltd (ANZ Marketing Representative for the Port of Los Angeles)
Vero Marine Insurance