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CENSUS AND STATISTICS AMENDMENT BILL 1977

Date introduced: 23 February 1977

House : House of Representatives

Presented by : Hon. A.A. Street, Minister representing
the Minister for Administrative Services

Short Digest of Bill

Purpose

The purpose of the Bill is to provide for a census every five years and for the compilation of quarterly population figures.

Background

The Representation Act 1905 as amended by the Representation Amendment Bill 1977 requires the number of seats in the House of Representatives for each State to be determined in the twelfth month of a Parliament using "the latest statistics of the Commonwealth" about the numbers of people in the States.

The amendments made by this Bill ensure that with a full census every five years, and State population figures every quarter, there will always be up-to-date figures available for this purpose.

Summary

The Bill amends the Census and Statistics Act 1905.

Clause 3 updates the references to the Statistician who is now appointed under the Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975.

Clause 4 repeals section 4 which used to provide for the appointment of the Statistician but which has not operated since the passage of the Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975.

Clause 5 amends section 8 to provide for a census every five years; a census may also be held at other times, if prescribed. The next census is to be held in 1981. The existing section 8 provides for a census every 10 years and at such other times as are prescribed.

Clause 7 amends section 20 which presently requires the compilation and tabulation of the statistics collected pursuant to the Act (these are listed in section 16), and, if the Minister directs, their publication in full, or as abstracts, with comments thereon. The Statistician will now also be obliged to compile and tabulate quarterly population figures for the States and to publish them if directed.

Clause 6 amends section 16 so that any statistics (such as births, deaths, inter-State migrations and so on) necessary for the compilation of quarterly population figures must be collected.

Clause 9 does not amend the Act but limits the requirement to compile the quarterly population figures to quarter days after the new requirements come into operation.

Clause 8 amends the Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975 to make it clear that an acting Statistician is required to carry out the duties of the Statistician (such as compiling quarterly population figures) as well as exercising his powers and functions.