

# RURAL RECONSTRUCTION SCHEME.

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No. 31 of 1977.

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AN ACT to amend the Rural Reconstruction Scheme Act, 1971-1973.

[Assented to 3rd November, 1977.]

BE it enacted by the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Council and the Legislative Assembly of Western Australia, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:—

1. (1) This Act may be cited as the *Rural Reconstruction Scheme Act Amendment Act, 1977*.

Short title  
and citation.

(2) In this Act the Rural Reconstruction Scheme Act, 1971-1973, is referred to as the principal Act.

Act No. 17  
of 1971 as  
amended by  
Act No. 88  
of 1973.

(3) The principal Act as amended by this Act may be cited as the Rural Reconstruction and Rural Adjustment Schemes Act, 1971-1977.

Section 3  
amended.

2. Section 3 of the principal Act is amended—
- (a) by inserting before the definition “Agreement” a new definition as follows—

“a scheme” means a scheme established pursuant to section 6 of this Act; ;
  - (b) by deleting the definition “Agreement” and substituting a new definition as follows—

“agreements” means the respective agreements between the Commonwealth and the State of which copies are set forth in the Schedules to this Act; ;
  - (c) by substituting for the word “Reconstruction” in the first line of the definition “Authority” the word “Adjustment”;
  - (d) as to the definition “farmer”, by deleting the passage “of a kind last referred to in paragraph (d) of Part 1 of The Schedule to the first agreement”, in lines twelve to fourteen of that definition, and substituting the words “of which the Authority is satisfied that the shareholders are *bona fide* primary producers relying primarily on the income of the company for their livelihood”;
  - (e) by deleting the definition “Fund”;
  - (f) by deleting the definition “Scheme”;
  - (g) by adding after the definition “the second agreement” the following definitions—

“the third agreement” means the agreement between the Commonwealth and the State a copy of which is set forth in the Third Schedule to this Act;

“the Rural Reconstruction Scheme” means the Scheme mentioned in paragraph (a) of section 6 of this Act;

“the Rural Adjustment Scheme” means the Scheme mentioned in paragraph (b) of section 6 of this Act. .

3. Section 5 of the principal Act is amended— Section 5 amended.
- (a) by deleting the word “Agreement”, in line one, line seven, and line twelve, and substituting in each case the words “first agreement”; and
  - (b) by deleting subsection (3).
4. The principal Act is amended by adding a section, to stand as section 5B, as follows— Section 5B added.
- 5B. (1) The third agreement is approved and the doing or performance of all such acts, matters or things as are necessary to give effect thereto is hereby authorized. Third agreement approved.
- (2) Without affecting the operation of subsection (1) of this section, all acts, matters and things that by the third agreement are agreed, directed, authorized or permitted to be made, done or executed by or on behalf of the State, its authorities and instrumentalities or by the Minister, or by any other person specified therein, whether named as a party to the third agreement or not, are hereby sanctioned, authorized and confirmed. .
5. Section 6 of the principal Act is repealed and re-enacted with amendments as follows— Section 6 repealed and re-enacted.
6. For the purpose of rendering financial assistance to persons engaged in rural industry in the State, there shall be— The Schemes.
- (a) a Rural Reconstruction Scheme as provided for in the first agreement and the second agreement; and
  - (b) a Rural Adjustment Scheme as provided for in the third agreement. .
6. Section 7 of the principal Act is repealed and re-enacted with amendments as follows— Section 7 repealed and re-enacted.

Administra-  
tion.

7. The corporation established pursuant to section 8 of this Act is charged with the duty of administering on behalf of the State—

- (a) the Rural Reconstruction Scheme; and
  - (b) the Rural Adjustment Scheme,
- as the authority under the agreements. .

Section 8  
amended.

7. Section 8 of the principal Act is amended—

- (a) by deleting subsection (1), and substituting a new subsection as follows—

8. (1) The corporation hitherto established by this Act under the name of “The Rural Reconstruction Authority” shall on and after the coming into operation of the Rural Reconstruction Scheme Act Amendment Act, 1977, be preserved and continue in existence as a body corporate under and subject to the provisions of this Act by the name “The Rural Adjustment Authority”, but so that the corporate identity of the body corporate and its rights, powers, functions, duties and liabilities are not affected otherwise than by virtue of the agreements. ; and

- (b) by adding the following subsections—

(4) A reference to The Rural Reconstruction Authority, whether by use of that name or a similar or abbreviated form of that name—

- (a) in a law of the State passed or made;
- (b) in any document or other instrument made, executed, entered into or done; or
- (c) made in any other manner,

before the coming into operation of the Rural Reconstruction Scheme Act Amendment Act, 1977, shall, unless the

context is such that it would be incorrect or inappropriate so to do, be read and construed as a reference to The Rural Adjustment Authority.

(5) For the purposes of subsection (4) of this section the term "law of the State" means—

- (a) an Act;
- (b) regulations, rules or by-laws having effect by virtue of an Act; and
- (c) an instrument having effect by virtue of an Act or of any regulations, rules or by-laws having effect by virtue of an Act. .

8. Section 15 of the principal Act is amended— Section 15 amended.

- (a) by deleting the words "the Scheme", in line two of subsection (1) and again in line two of subsection (3) and substituting in each case the words "the Rural Reconstruction Scheme and the Rural Adjustment Scheme"; and
- (b) by deleting the word "Agreement", in line two of subsection (2), and substituting the word "agreements".

9. Section 16 of the principal Act is amended— Section 16 amended.

- (a) by deleting the passage "in a special account in the Treasury a fund to be known as "The Rural Reconstruction Fund" and that fund", in lines two to four of subsection (1), and substituting the passage "in the Treasury in separate special accounts two funds to be known respectively as "The Rural Reconstruction Fund" and "The Rural Adjustment Fund" and those funds";

- (b) by inserting immediately before the word "Fund", in line one of subsection (2) and again in line fourteen of that subsection, the word "Rural Reconstruction";
- (c) by deleting the words "the Agreement", in line three of subsection (2) and substituting the words "the first agreement and in the second agreement";
- (d) by inserting immediately before the word "Scheme", in line six and again in line twelve of subsection (2) the words "Rural Reconstruction";
- (e) by adding a new subsection, to stand as subsection (2a), as follow—
  - (2a) There shall be paid into the Rural Adjustment Fund—
    - (a) the payments made by the Commonwealth to the State provided for in the third agreement;
    - (b) all moneys received from time to time for the repayment of advances made under the Rural Adjustment Scheme and interest from time to time paid on such advances; and
    - (c) all other payments that may be lawfully paid into the Rural Adjustment Fund. ;
- (f) by inserting immediately before the word "Fund", in line one of subsection (3), the word "relevant";
- (g) by deleting the word "Scheme", in line two of subsection (3), and substituting the passage "Rural Reconstruction Scheme or the Rural Adjustment Scheme, as the case may be,";

- (h) by deleting the word "Agreement", in line six of subsection (3) and substituting the passage "first agreement or the second agreement, or under the third agreement, as the case may be,";
- (j) by deleting the words "The Fund" in line one of subsection (4) and substituting the words "A Fund established pursuant to this section"; and
- (k) by deleting the words "the Fund", in line one of subsection (5) and line three of subsection (6), and substituting in each case the words "a Fund established pursuant to this section".

10. Section 18 of the principal Act is amended— Section 18 amended.

- (a) by deleting subsection (1) and substituting a new subsection as follows—

18. (1) A person or company who or which may be eligible as a farmer for assistance under a scheme may apply to the Authority for such assistance. ; Applications for assistance.

- (b) by deleting the words "the Scheme", in line two of subsection (2), and substituting the words "a scheme"; and
- (c) by deleting the word "Agreement", in line one of subsection (5), and substituting the word "agreements".

11. Section 19 of the principal Act is amended— Section 19 amended.

- (a) by deleting the words "the Scheme", in lines one and two of subsection (1), and substituting the words "a scheme";
- (b) by deleting the word "Fund", in line eight of subsection (2), and substituting the passage "Rural Reconstruction Fund or the Rural Adjustment Fund, as the case may require,"; and

- (c) by deleting the words "the Scheme", in the last line of subsection (2), and substituting the words "a scheme".

Section 20  
amended.

12. Section 20 of the principal Act is amended by deleting the words "the Scheme", in line five of subsection (4) and again in line five of subsection (8), and substituting in each case the words "a scheme".

Section 22  
amended.

13. Section 22 of the principal Act is amended by deleting the words "the Scheme", in line six, and substituting the words "a scheme".

Section 27  
amended.

14. Section 27 of the principal Act is amended by deleting subsection (1) and substituting a new subsection as follows—

False  
statements.

27. (1) A person who wilfully makes any false statement or wilfully furnishes any false information for any purpose under or in relation to this Act—

(a) in connection with any application under this Act or a scheme; or

(b) as to the amount or nature of any assets belonging to such an applicant or in regard to any debt due by the applicant or any claim against the applicant or the estate of the applicant,

commits an offence.

Penalty: Two hundred dollars or three months' imprisonment. .

Section 28  
amended.

15. Section 28 of the principal Act is amended—

- (a) by deleting the words "farmer who has applied", in line one and substituting the words "person that applies";



- (b) by deleting the words “the “Scheme”, in line two, and substituting the words “a scheme”;
- (c) by deleting the word “farmer”, in line two, and substituting the word “person”; and
- (d) by deleting the words “Any farmer or creditor to whom such a request is made who” in lines one and two of subsection (2), and substituting the passage “Where a request is made pursuant to subsection (1) of this section, any person that”.

16. Section 29 of the principal Act is amended— Section 29 amended.

- (a) by deleting the words “and the Scheme”, in line five, and substituting the words “or a scheme”; and
- (b) by deleting the words “the Scheme”, in lines ten and eleven, and substituting the words “a scheme”.

17. The principal Act is amended by adding, at the end thereof, the following Schedule— Third Schedule added.

Section 3.

THIRD SCHEDULE.

AN AGREEMENT made the first day of January One thousand and nine hundred and seventy-seven between—

The Commonwealth of Australia (in this agreement called “the Commonwealth”) of the first part,  
The State of New South Wales of the second part,  
The State of Victoria of the third part,  
The State of Queensland of the fourth part,  
The State of South Australia of the fifth part,  
The State of Western Australia of the sixth part, and  
The State of Tasmania of the seventh part.

WHEREAS—

- A. the Commonwealth and the States recognize that there is need to provide assistance to persons engaged in rural industries throughout Australia in the interest of those industries and of Australia generally;

- B. Ministers of the Commonwealth and of the States have agreed upon the Outline of Scheme for Rural Adjustment set out in the Schedule to this agreement as constituting a Scheme under which assistance of various kinds could be provided;
- C. the carrying out of the said Scheme is dependent upon financial assistance being granted by the Parliament of the Commonwealth to the States for that purpose;
- D. the Parliament of the Commonwealth has authorized the execution of this agreement by and on behalf of the Commonwealth and the provision of financial assistance to the States as provided in this agreement;

NOW IT IS HEREBY AGREED as follows:

#### I.—INTRODUCTION.

##### Operation of Agreement

1. (1) This agreement shall, as between the Commonwealth and a State, come into force when it has been entered into by the Commonwealth and that State.

(2) Notwithstanding that all the States of New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, South Australia, Western Australia and Tasmania are named as parties to this agreement, this agreement shall operate as an agreement between the Commonwealth and each State in respect of which it has come into force as fully and effectually as if the State or States in respect of which it has come into force were the only State or States named as a party or as parties to the agreement.

(3) In this agreement, each State in respect of which the agreement has come into force is referred to as a "State", and the expression "the States" means, except where the context otherwise requires, all of the States in respect of which for the time being the agreement is in force.

##### Performance of Agreement

2. The Commonwealth will provide for or secure the performance by it and its authorities of the obligations of the Commonwealth under this agreement and each of the States will provide for or secure the performance by the State and its authorities and instrumentalities of the obligations of the State under this agreement.

Interpretation

3. (1) In this agreement, unless the contrary intention appears—"financial year" means a period of twelve months ending on the thirtieth day of June:

"the Authority" means the authority or authorities of a State that has or have the administration of the Scheme on behalf of the State and, in a case where there is more than one authority, refers, where the context requires reference to one authority, to the relevant authority of the State;

"the Scheme" means the scheme to be established and operated by a State in accordance with clause 4;

"the Treasurer" means the Treasurer of the Commonwealth.

(2) Reference in this agreement to a Minister of the Commonwealth or of a State shall include a reference to a Minister for the time being acting for or on behalf of the Minister referred to.

(3) In this agreement, except where the context otherwise requires—

- (a) a reference to a clause refers to the relevant clause of this agreement;
- (b) a reference to a sub-clause refers to the relevant sub-clause of the clause in which the reference appears; and
- (c) the Schedule to this agreement shall be deemed to be an integral part of this agreement.

II—ADMINISTRATION OF SCHEME

State to operate Scheme

4. (1) Each State will, by using the financial assistance provided by the Commonwealth in accordance with this agreement, establish and operate a scheme of financial assistance to persons engaged in rural industries in that State.

(2) The Scheme shall consist of the forms of assistance described in, and shall be operated in conformity and in accordance with the general principles and the provisions set out in, the Outline of Scheme for Rural Adjustment contained in the Schedule to this agreement, as amended at any time in pursuance of sub-clause 9 (1).

(3) The Scheme shall commence operation on the first day of January 1977.

Forms of Assistance

5. For the purposes of this agreement the various forms of assistance under the Scheme are referred to as follows:

PART A

- (a) the assistance provided for in Part 2 of the Schedule—as debt reconstruction
- (b) the assistance provided for in Part 3 of the Schedule as farm build-up.
- (c) the assistance provided for in Part 4 of the Schedule—as farm improvement
- (d) the assistance provided for in Part 5 of the Schedule—as rehabilitation

PART B

- (e) the assistance provided for in Part 6 of the Schedule—as carry-on finance.

PART C

- (f) the assistance provided for in Part 7 of the Schedule—as household support.

Allocation of Financial Assistance

6. (1) Subject to the provisions expressly made by this agreement, the financial assistance that is to be made available by the Commonwealth to a State under this agreement for the forms of assistance referred to in paragraphs (a), (b) and (c) of Part A of Clause 5 shall be allocated between those forms of assistance in such proportions as the Commonwealth determines after consultation with the State.

(2) A determination by the Commonwealth for the purposes of sub-clause (1) shall specify a target percentage for commitments on farm build-up and on farm improvement which the State shall endeavour to achieve and a maximum percentage for commitments on debt reconstruction which the State may not exceed without the prior approval of the Commonwealth.

(3) The consultations referred to in sub-clause (1) shall extend to establishing by agreement between the Commonwealth and the State a firm program of commitments of financial assistance for each four-monthly period during the year.

(4) If during a financial year either the Commonwealth or a State informs the other that it considers the allocation of the financial assistance by the State or the program of commitments in respect of the year should be varied, further consultations will be held between the Commonwealth and the State with a view to varying the determination by the Commonwealth for the purposes of this clause should the Commonwealth see fit to do so or varying the program of commitments for the purposes of this clause as the case may be.

#### Interest rates for Parts A and C Assistance

7. (1) The rates of interest at which money is lent by the Authority under the Scheme in providing the forms of assistance referred to in Part A and Part C of clause 5 shall be as determined by the Authority in the circumstances of the particular case.

(2) The Authority shall have the right to review the terms of repayment, including interest rates, of individual accounts at any time and shall exercise this right at regular intervals with the objective of the borrower being encouraged to transfer to commercial credit as soon as circumstances permit.

#### Administration Expenses

8. (1) The Commonwealth and each State shall bear the administration expenses of the provisions by the State, of assistance referred to in Parts A and C of clause 5 as follows—

- (a) up to the amount in each year which is equivalent to 2 per centum in value of the approvals for those forms of assistance in that year—by the Commonwealth and the State equally; and
- (b) in excess of the amount in each year which is equivalent to 2 per centum in value of the approvals for those forms of assistance in that year—by the State.

(2) The Commonwealth and each State shall bear the administration expenses of the provision by the State of assistance referred to in Part B of clause 5 in the respective proportions that assistance is for the time being provided by the Commonwealth and the State in respect of the relevant industry in accordance with the agreement which establishes the relevant proportion of the assistance in respect of that industry referred to in sub-clause 14(2).

#### Amendment of Schedule

9. (1) The provisions of the Schedule to this agreement may be amended from time to time by agreement between the Ministers of the Commonwealth and of the States for the time being responsible for the administration of the Scheme.

(2) Where so agreed between the Commonwealth Minister and the Minister or Ministers of the relevant State or States, any amendments to the provisions of the Schedule to this agreement may be made and take effect as between the Commonwealth and one or more of the States without affecting the operation of this agreement as between the Commonwealth and a State the Minister of which has not so agreed.

### III—FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

#### Provision of Financial Assistance

10. Subject to, and to the performance by a State of, the provisions of the Agreement, the Commonwealth will make financial assistance available to the States for the purposes of the Scheme.

#### Amount of Financial Assistance

11. (1) The amount of financial assistance to be made available by the Commonwealth to each State for the forms of assistance referred to in Parts A and C of clause 5 during a financial year shall be determined by the Commonwealth before the commencement of the financial year following a meeting of Commonwealth and State Ministers which will review the circumstances relating to the financial year and which will give due consideration to submissions made by the States not later than the end of February last preceding the financial year and will have regard to such other criteria as the Commonwealth considers appropriate.

(2) The amount of financial assistance to be made available by the Commonwealth to a State for the form of assistance referred to in Part B of clause 5 shall be determined at the time the Commonwealth and the State agree that the provision of such assistance is warranted.

#### Advances

12. (1) The Treasurer may, at such time and in such amounts as he thinks fit, make advances on account of the payment that may be made by the Commonwealth under clause 14.

(2) An amount or part of an amount advanced by the Treasurer under this clause may be deducted by the Commonwealth from an amount that subsequently becomes payable under clause 14 or, if no further amounts will become payable under that clause, shall be refunded by the State to the Commonwealth at the request of the Treasurer.

#### Use of Advances

13. A State shall ensure that an amount or any part of an amount advanced to the State and not refunded under the last preceding clause is not used or applied except for the operation of the Scheme.

#### Payments of Financial Assistance

14. (1) The Commonwealth shall, from time to time, at the request of a State and subject to the provisions of this agreement make payments to the State of the financial assistance to be provided to the State under this agreement:

- (a) in respect of the forms of assistance referred to in Parts A and C of clause 5 in amounts equal to the expenditure by the State (other than administration expenses) in the provision of those forms of assistance; and
- (b) in respect of the forms of assistance referred to in Part B of clause 5 in amounts equal to the relevant proportion of the expenditure by the State (other than administration expenses) in the provision of that form of assistance.

(2) For the purposes of paragraph (b) of sub-clause (1) "the relevant proportion" means the proportion of the total cost of operation of the form of assistance referred to in Part B of clause 5 as is from time to time agreed between the Commonwealth and the State as being the proportion to be provided by the Commonwealth.

#### Supporting Financial Evidence

15. (1) A State shall furnish to the Treasurer such documents and other evidence to justify the making of an advance under clause 12 or in support of a request by the

State for a payment to it by the Commonwealth under the last preceding clause as the Treasurer may from time to time reasonably request, whether the request by the Treasurer is made before or after the Commonwealth has made the advance or a payment pursuant to the request by the State.

(2) Any statement of expenditure by a State furnished to the Treasurer in connection with a request by the State for a payment under clause 14 shall be certified by the Auditor-General of the State or an officer authorised by the Treasurer of the State as to its correctness in accordance with the books and documents of the Authority.

#### Interest on Part A Assistance

16. (1) Interest at the rate for the time being applicable under this clause shall accrue in respect of so much of each amount that has been advanced or paid to the State in respect of the forms of assistance referred to in Part A, of clause 5 as is repayable by the State under clause 17 and has not for the time being been refunded or repaid to the Commonwealth, calculated from the date upon which the advance or payment was made by the Commonwealth.

(2) The rate of interest referred to in sub-clause (1) shall be 7 per centum per annum but shall be subject to renegotiation and redetermination at an annual review of the scheme to the intent that, in the event that as at the 1st day of January preceding the review there has been a variation of the long term bond rate of 20 per centum or more of the long term bond rate as at the 1st day of January 1977 or the 1st day of January when the rate of interest was last redetermined, as the case may be, the rate applicable under this clause (1) shall be redetermined having regard to the extent of that variation.

(3) A redetermination of the rate of interest under sub-clause (2) shall take effect on a date to be specified by the determination.

(4) A reference in sub-clause (2) to the long term bond rate is a reference to the rate that is equivalent to the rate of yield to maturity of the long term loan of the loan raising by the Commonwealth in Australia for public subscription last preceding the date to which the reference relates.

(5) Interest that accrues under this clause prior to the date upon which interest becomes included in payments provided for in clause 17 shall be payable on the 15th day of January and the 15th day of July each year.



Repayments with Interest of Part A Assistance

17. (1) Subject to the provisions of clause 20, each State shall repay to the Commonwealth 85 per centum of each of the advances made to the State in respect of the forms of assistance referred to in Part A of clause 5 and not refunded or repaid under clause 12 and each of the payments made to the State under clause 14 and not for the time being repaid, together with interest referred to in sub-clause (3) of this clause by 34 half-yearly payments, that, subject to any variation resulting from a redetermination of the rate of interest under clause 16, are equal in amount.

(2) The first payment under sub-clause (1) shall be made on the 15th day of July of the fourth financial year that wholly occurs after the advance or payment was made by the Commonwealth to the State and subsequent payments shall be made on each 15th day of January and 15th day of July thereafter until the full amount of the repayment, including interest, has been paid.

(3) The interest to be included in payments referred to in sub-clause (1) shall be the interest that, in accordance with sub-clauses (1) and (2) of clause 16, accrues in respect of the relevant advance or payment on and from the 15th day of January preceding the commencement of the fourth financial year that wholly occurs after the advance or payment was made by the Commonwealth.

Repayments of Part B Assistance

18. (1) Each State shall, by way of repayment of the form of assistance referred to in Part B of clause 5 pay to the Commonwealth by payments in accordance with sub-clause (3) the amount that is calculated by subtracting (b) from (a) where—

- (a) is the amount which is the relevant proportion of the principal and interest repaid to the Authority by the recipients of that assistance; and
- (b) is the amount which is the relevant proportion of the administration expenses of the Authority in providing that assistance.

(2) For the purposes of sub-clause (1) “the relevant proportion” means the proportion of the total cost of the provision of the form of assistance referred to in Part B of clause 5 as is from time to time agreed between the Commonwealth and the State as being the proportion to be provided by the Commonwealth.

(3) The State shall pay to the Commonwealth so much as is from half-year to half-year calculated to be payable of the amount first referred to in sub-clause (1) by consecutive half-yearly payment, the first payment to be made on the 15th day of July or January that occurs after the first repayment of principal and interest made by a recipient of the assistance to the Authority and subsequent payments to be made on each succeeding 15th day of January and July thereafter until no further amount is payable by the State in pursuance of its obligation under sub-clause (1).

#### Repayments of Part C Assistance

19. Each State shall, by way of repayment of the form of assistance referred to in Part C of clause 5, pay to the Commonwealth so much of that assistance and interest thereon as is recouped by the State in any year from the recipients of that assistance, such payments to be made on each 15th day of January and 15th day of July next succeeding the receipt of those moneys by the State.

#### Prepayments by State

20. (1) In addition to making payments in accordance with clause 17, a State may on the 15th day of January or on the 15th day of July in any year, after having given to the Treasurer notice in writing of at least one month of its intention to do so, pay to the Commonwealth an amount that has been specified in the notice of the repayments that remain to be made by the State under that clause.

(2) Interest shall accrue on amounts paid by a State in accordance with sub-clause (1) at the rate that is for the time being the rate of interest applicable under clause 16 calculated from the date of payment and compounded with half yearly rests on each 15th day of January and 15th day of July.

(3) When on any 15th day of January or 15th day of July the payment by the State under clause 17, exceeds the amount by which the unrepaid balance of the total amount repayable under that clause together with interest accrued on that total amount up to and including that date exceeds the total of the amounts paid by the State to the Commonwealth in accordance with sub-clause (1) together with interest accrued on those amounts up to and including that date under sub-clause (2), the State shall pay to the Commonwealth the amount of the second-mentioned excess in lieu of the amount due under clause 17 and no further payments shall be required to be made by the State to the Commonwealth under that clause.

#### Financial Administration and Adjustments

21. (1) Each State agrees that in respect of the forms of assistance referred to in Part A of clause 5 the Scheme shall be operated by the State in such a way that the amounts received by the Authority in the course of the operation of the Scheme could be reasonably expected to equal the payments of principal and interest which the State is required to make to the Commonwealth under this agreement.

(2) Should a State certify that, without taking into account its administration expenses, it has incurred losses under the Scheme in respect of the form of assistance specified in Part A of clause 5 from circumstances beyond its control arising after the date of this agreement, the Commonwealth agrees to review the position with the State with a view to adjusting amounts payable to the Commonwealth by the State under this agreement to the extent of such losses.

(3) The provisions of this agreement in relation to the times at which payments are to be made by the State to the Commonwealth and the amounts of the payments that are to be made may be varied in such manner as is agreed between the Commonwealth and the State upon a review carried out in accordance with sub-clause (2).

#### Audit

22. (1) The accounts, books, vouchers, documents and other records of a State relating to the operation of the Scheme shall be subject to audit by the Auditor-General of the State.

(2) A report on the audits in respect of each financial year shall be furnished by the Auditor-General of the State to the Treasurer as soon as possible after the completion of the financial year.

#### Other Financial Arrangements

23. Financial arrangements in connection with the Scheme other than those provided for in this agreement shall be carried out as agreed from time to time between the Treasurer and Treasurer of each State.

### IV—GENERAL

#### Review

24. The operation of the Scheme in relation to all of the States will be reviewed from time to time as appropriate by the Commonwealth and the States in the light of experience in its administration.

Exchange of Information

25. The Authorities of the States and appropriate Commonwealth officers associated with the Schemes for Rural Adjustment will meet together as appropriate and at least once in each year and exchange information on any matters pertinent to the Schemes.

Provision of Information and Review

26. The Authority will supply to the Commonwealth from time to time such information regarding the operation of the Scheme by the State as may be requested by the Commonwealth and which is reasonably able to be supplied by the Authority and will participate in periodic reviews of the effectiveness of the Scheme.

THE SCHEDULE

Rural Adjustment—Outline of Scheme

Part 1—General Principles

- (a) All agricultural, horticultural and pastoral industries are included in the Scheme. It is recognised that in particular circumstances some industries may need additional special consideration.
- (b) The general principle to be applied is to distribute the available resources as widely as practicable, but the over-riding objective is to help restore to economic viability those farms and farmers with the capacity to maintain viability once achieved.
- (c) It is expected that each administering authority will avail itself of the best available advice on agricultural technology and market prospects.
- (d) Companies will not be eligible for assistance unless the Authority, having considered the shareholdings and being satisfied that the shareholders are bona fide primary producers relying primarily on the income of the company for their livelihood, considers it appropriate to provide assistance.
- (e) In cases of assistance under the heading of debt reconstruction or by way of advances for carry-on expenses, plant, livestock and property development, it is an essential part of the scheme that adequate supervision of property management and the financial affairs of the assisted farmer is maintained. If the Authority deems it necessary, it may require that moneys receivable on account of the property will be received by the Authority or its agent or a body nominated by the Authority, payments within the approved budgets being made through normal channels.

- (f) Repayment of advances made by the Authority and interest due thereon will be secured by the best and most appropriate security available, recognising that this may involve ranking after existing securities.
- (g) A transfer of the property or any interest therein before advances made by the Authority are repaid will be permitted only with the consent of the Authority, which will upon transfer, or upon succession on the death of the borrower, have the right to review its arrangements in respect of the property.
- (h) The arrangements with the assisted farmer will be subject to regular review by the Authority from time to time. They may be terminated if the farmer ceases to work the property personally, fails to observe his obligations and undertakings under the arrangements or if the Authority decides that for any reason he lacks reasonable prospects of successful economic operation. Otherwise the arrangements shall be terminable when the Authority decides that his prospects of successful economic operation are no longer dependent on the extension of concessional finance. Upon termination of the arrangements, all debts will then become due and payable.
- (i) The eligibility of a farmer for one form of assistance under this Scheme will not necessarily be affected by his having applied for or received another form of assistance under the Scheme.
- (j) The rate of interest payable will be decided by the Authority in the circumstances of the particular case. The Authority will have the right to review the interest rates on individual accounts at any time and shall review the terms of repayment, including interest rates, at regular intervals with the objective of the borrower being encouraged to transfer to commercial credit as soon as circumstances permit.

#### Part 2—Debt Reconstruction

##### (1) Purpose

To assist a farmer who, although having sound prospects of long term commercial viability, has used all his cash and credit resources and cannot meet his financial commitments.

(2) Tests of Eligibility

- (a) The applicant is unable to obtain finance on reasonable terms to carry on, from any other normal source and is thus in danger of losing property or other assets if not assisted under the Scheme.
- (b) There is a reasonable prospect of successful operation with the assistance possible under the Scheme, the prime requirements being ability to service commitments and to reach the stage of commercial viability within a reasonable time.
- (c) Assistance is merited and the applicant's difficulties are not substantially due to circumstances within his control.

(3) Nature of Assistance

The assistance to be provided may include where necessary:

- (a) A re-arrangement and/or a composition of debts to allow more time for payment.
- (b) The negotiation of a concessional rate of interest for existing rates.
- (c) Advances of additional funds for carry-on expenses, livestock and further property development.
- (d) Where the State legislation so provides, a protection order against any creditor who has threatened action for debt, to apply while the application is under consideration and subject to such extensions as the administering Authority may from time to time determine.

(4) Method of Operation

- (a) A re-arrangement and/or composition may take the form of the Authority advancing money to pay off in whole or in part the creditors, (whether or not the debts have been written down by the creditors under (b) below), excluding the Crown. There may be an arrangement by the secured or unsecured creditors to postpone repayments of principal and to refrain from taking action against the debtor for a specified time. Composition arrangements require the agreement in writing of creditors.

- (b) The possibility of creditors, including the Crown, local authorities and public utilities being asked to defer or write off part of their debts should be considered. Creditors should not be pressed to the extent that the availability of credit to rural industries is damaged.
- (c) Additional funds advanced for carry-on expenses, livestock and further property development will be strictly limited to the minimum which the Authority considers is required to enable the farmer to carry on and free himself from dependence on the Authority's assistance within the term of the advances made to him by the Authority.
- (d) In exceptional cases, advances for carry-on expenses and livestock may be made to a farmer who is not yet in immediate danger of losing property or other assets but who, in the opinion of the Authority, is likely to reach that position without such assistance, such cases being tested strictly against the remaining eligibility criteria.
- (e) Where protection orders apply it is desirable to establish a relationship with creditors such that the Authority is acting in combined interests of applicant and creditors, secured and unsecured.

(5) Limits

The Authority shall have discretion to determine:

- (a) The terms and conditions of any loan it may make up to a maximum repayment term of 30 years. An initial period of freedom from repayments of principal may be allowed depending on the circumstances of the case and the interest rate to be charged.
- (b) The proportion of debts paid off by advances in any one case.
- (c) The total of advances which may be made by the Authority in any one case.

Part 3—Farm Build-up

(1) Purpose

To supplement, without discouraging, the normal processes under which properties which do not have reasonable prospects of long term viability under existing and prospective circumstances are amalgamated with an adjoining holding or are subdivided and the subdivided portions are added to adjoining holdings, or to assist a farmer with a property too small to be economic to purchase additional land to build up his property to at least economic size.

(2) Tests of Eligibility

- (a) The owner of the property to be purchased wishes to sell or accepts that he is obliged to sell.
- (b) The purchaser is unable to obtain the finance applied for on reasonable terms from any other normal source.
- (c) The Authority is satisfied that the built up property will be of sufficient size to offer sound prospects of long term commercial viability.
- (d) Where an application is made by an adjoining owner for assistance under the scheme to purchase an uneconomic property, but there is a possibility of sale of the property to another adjoining owner who does not require assistance under the Scheme, assistance will be provided only if the applicant's property would be built up from an uneconomic to an economic size.
- (e) The term "adjoining holding" includes a holding which is within a reasonable working distance of the holding under consideration where there is no impediment to the two holdings being worked as a single unit.

(3) Nature of Assistance

- (a) The provision to the purchaser of finance to assist the purchase of an adjoining holding or part of an adjoining holding.
- (b) Grants at the discretion of the Authority to cover, in whole or in part, losses sustained from the reduction in value of assets which are either not useful or less useful for the built up property.
- (c) Advances for carry-on expenses, plant, live-stock and property development in respect of the additional land where not available from other normal sources.

(4) Method of Operation

- (a) Normally a property will be purchased only where arrangements have been made for an adjoining owner to take over the property or for the property to be subdivided and the subdivided parts added to adjoining properties. The Authority may purchase an uneconomic property in advance of arrangements having



been made for the property to be added to an adjoining property or properties where the program of farm adjustment could not otherwise be achieved. The Authority may dispose of such a property on commercial terms where the purchaser does not require or is not eligible for assistance under this Part.

- (b) Where appropriate, the Authority could take the initiative to encourage an adjoining owner to purchase an uneconomic farm where the Authority is aware that the owner of the uneconomic farm wished to leave the industry or accepts that he is obliged to leave the industry; this applies particularly where it is unlikely that the appropriate purchaser or purchasers will be able to purchase the additional land unless the Authority provides assistance for the purchase.
- (c) Since it is required that there must be reasonable prospects of successful operation of the built up property, the Authority in considering the transfer price of land will have regard to its productivity value.
- (d) Grants to cover losses on the write off of redundant assets will be kept to a minimum.
- (e) Where advances are made for carry-on expenses, plant, livestock and property development, the advances will be strictly limited to the minimum which the Authority considers is required to enable the farmer to carry on and free himself from dependence on the Authority's assistance within the term of the advances made to him by the Authority.
- (f) While any advances by the Authority in respect of built up property remain unpaid, the transfer of part of the built up property will not be permitted if this would result in a property of a size too small to be economic.

#### (5) Limits

- (a) The term of a loan by the Authority and conditions of repayment of principal will be at the discretion of the Authority up to a maximum repayment term of 30 years. An initial period of freedom from repayments of principal may be allowed depending on the circumstances of the case and the interest rate to be charged.
- (b) The total of advances which may be made by the Authority in any one case shall also be at its discretion.

**Part 4—Farm Improvement**

(1) Purpose

To assist the restoration of an uneconomic property to economic viability by improving the effective use of an existing farm without adding to its area.

(2) Tests of Eligibility

(a) The existing farm has been, but is not now, viable and is of sufficient area and the proposed improvements are of such a kind as to offer sound prospects of restoration to long term commercial viability if assistance under the Scheme were provided.

(b) The applicant is unable to obtain finance on reasonable terms from any other normal source.

(3) Nature of Assistance

(a) Advances for plant, livestock, carry-on expenses and further property development intended to restore the economic viability of the farm either in the existing form of production or in another form of production which may be undertaken in combination with, or completely replace, the existing form of production.

(b) Grants at the discretion of the Authority to cover, in whole or in part, losses sustained from the reduction in value of assets which are either not useful or are less useful because of the changed pattern of farm operations.

(4) Method of Operation

(a) Advances made for the purposes of this Part will be limited to the minimum which the Authority considers is required to enable the farmer to achieve the objective of the improvement program.

(b) Grants to cover the write off of redundant assets will be kept to a minimum and will be made only where the changed pattern of farm operations is, in the opinion of the Authority, essential to the restoration of long term commercial viability.

- (c) While any advances by the Authority in respect of improvement for which finance is provided under this Part remain unpaid, the transfer of part of the improved property will not be permitted if this would result in a property of a size too small to be economic.

(5) Limits

- (a) The term of a loan by the Authority and the conditions of repayment of principal will be at the discretion of the Authority up to a maximum repayment term of 30 years. An initial period of freedom from repayments of principal may be allowed where circumstances warrant this concession.
- (b) The total of advances which may be made by the Authority in any one case shall be at its discretion.

Part 5—Rehabilitation

(1) Purpose

To provide limited assistance to those obliged to leave the industry where in the opinion of the Authority administering the Scheme this is necessary to alleviate conditions of personal hardship.

(2) Conditions of Eligibility

- (a) The applicant's property must have been purchased by an adjoining owner who has been assisted under the farm build-up provisions to make the purchase or the applicant must have been unable to secure assistance under the debt reconstruction provisions because his property is assessed not to have sound prospects of long term commercial viability; and
- (b) Taking into account the financial position of the applicant after his property has been sold, he will suffer financial hardship which will be alleviated by assistance under these provisions.

(3) Nature of Assistance

A loan on such conditions as to interest rate, if any, and repayment as are determined by the Authority up to a maximum of \$5 000 in any one case. The loan may be converted to a grant at the discretion of the Authority.

(4) Method of Operation

The assistance will be available at the discretion of the Authority administering the Scheme.

Part 6—Carry-on Finance

(1) Purpose

To provide advances for essential carry-on purposes in rural industries which it is agreed from time to time between the Commonwealth and State or States are suffering a severe market downturn or similar situation (but excluding circumstances covered by natural disaster arrangements).

(2) Tests of Eligibility

- (a) The applicant has reasonable prospects of long term commercial viability having regard to his asset structure, on the assumption of a market recovery to the long term trend.
- (b) The applicant is unable to obtain carry-on finance on reasonable terms from any other normal source.
- (c) Assistance is merited and the applicant's difficulties are not substantially due to circumstances within his control.

(3) Nature of Assistance

Advances for essential carry-on expenses.

(4) Method of Operation

- (a) In relation to the rural industries referred to in Clause 1 of this Part, the Commonwealth and the State will agree upon the terms and conditions upon which assistance is to be given to farmers within those rural industries and the Commonwealth will thereupon publish a notice to that effect in the *Australian Government Gazette*.
- (b) Farmers within those rural industries who fulfil the eligibility requirements set out above will then apply to the Authority in their own State for carry-on assistance.
- (c) Assistance will be made available at the discretion of the Authority and will be limited to the minimum which the Authority considers is required to enable the farmer to carry on and free himself from dependence on the Authority's assistance.

Part 7—Household Support

(1) Purpose

To provide assistance for up to one year to non-viable farmers having insufficient resources to meet living expenses and who are in need of assistance to alleviate conditions of personal and family hardship while the farmer considers whether to adjust out of farming.

(2) Tests of Eligibility

The applicant is assessed as non-viable in the long term, is unable to obtain financial assistance from any other normal source and will suffer personal and family hardship which will be alleviated by assistance under these provisions.

(3) Nature of Assistance

- (a) An advance provided for one year sufficient to raise the applicant's estimated future income from all sources to the level of payment which would be applicable to him if he were eligible for unemployment benefits. An extension to two years may be allowed at the discretion of the Authority in those cases where a demonstrable effort has been made to move out of farming.
- (b) Where it would take some time to assess an applicant's entitlement, interim assistance may be granted by the Authority as a loan at a level of payment which would be applicable to him if he were eligible for unemployment benefits provided there is prima facie evidence of urgent need and unavailability of alternative sources of finance.
- (c) If the Authority subsequently determines that the applicant has a viable enterprise, the interim assistance will be regarded as carry-on finance.
- (d) The carry-on finance would represent part or all of the finance to be provided under a Scheme operative at the time and would be repaid under the conditions pertaining to that Scheme.
- (e) If the Authority determines that an applicant does not have a viable enterprise he will be eligible for household support assistance, and any interim assistance he may have received will be regarded as household support assistance.
- (f) Advances of household support assistance are to be paid to the farmer at intervals decided by the Authority, but not exceeding three months.

Prospective income for each period will be assessed by the Authority on the basis of declarations made by the applicant. Each applicant's income situation is to be reviewed by the Authority, on the basis of declarations made by the applicant, when further advances are to be made to him.

- (g) Where a farmer obtains employment or his income is higher than allowed for by the Authority when making an advance, the farmer is required to notify the Authority and repay any excess household support assistance he may have received.
- (h) In the event of the Authority becoming aware that an applicant has received more than he was entitled to it may exercise its discretion in seeking repayment of the excess.
- (i) At the end of the first period of six months for which a farmer receives household support assistance the advances made to him may be converted by the Authority to a grant.
- (j) If the farmer adjusts out of farming within three years of the time he first received household support, any advances made to him and not already converted to a grant may be so converted by the Authority.
- (k) If an applicant does not adjust out of farming within three years after first receiving household support assistance any advances made to him and not converted to a grant will be repayable to the Authority, together with interest accruing from the commencement of the advance, within a further period of seven years.
- (l) A farmer who is eligible for household support and who is prepared to adjust out of farming may, at the discretion of the Authority, receive in lieu of household support assistance a lump sum payment of \$3 000 less any household support assistance paid to him prior to adjusting out of farming. Such payment is additional to any other payments that might be available to him under the Scheme.

For the purposes of these provisions a farmer is regarded as having adjusted out of farming when, in the judgement of the Authority, he has effectively disposed of his productive resources.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF this agreement has been signed for and on behalf of the parties respectively as at the day and year first above written.

SIGNED by the Right Honourable JOHN MALCOLM FRASER, Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of Australia, in the presence of—  
K. E. HEYDON.

MALCOLM FRASER

SIGNED by the Honourable NEVILLE KENNETH WRAN, Premier of the State of New South Wales, in the presence of—  
D. G. DARLOW

NEVILLE WRAN

SIGNED by the Honourable RUPERT JAMES HAMER, Premier of the State of Victoria, in the presence of—  
K. D. GREEN

R. J. HAMER

SIGNED by the Honourable JOHANNES BJELKE-PETERSEN, Premier of the State of Queensland, in the presence of—  
I. I. MAYZE

JOH. BJELKE-PETERSEN

SIGNED by the Honourable DONALD ALLAN DUNSTAN, Premier of the State of South Australia, in the presence of—  
A. L. McMAHON.

DON DUNSTAN.

SIGNED by the Honourable SIR CHARLES COURT, Premier of the State of Western Australia, in the presence of—  
B. V. JOHNSON.

CHARLES COURT.

SIGNED by the Honourable WILLIAM ARTHUR NEILSON, Premier of the State of Tasmania, in the presence of—  
R. GRIERSON.

W. A. NEILSON.