



STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE ECONOMY

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STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE ECONOMY

Ms. Colleen Young, Chair
Lloydminster

Ms. Vicki Mowat, Deputy Chair
Saskatoon Fairview

Mr. David Buckingham
Saskatoon Westview

Mr. Terry Dennis
Canora-Pelly

Mr. Delbert Kirsch
Batoche

Mr. Warren Michelson
Moose Jaw North

Mr. Doug Steele
Cypress Hills

[The committee met at 18:59.]

The Chair: — Good evening, everyone. Welcome. Committee members here this evening to work on this bill are myself, Colleen Young, as Chair this evening; member David Buckingham; Eric Olauson sitting in for Doug Steele; Hugh Nerlien sitting in for Terry Dennis. We have Delbert Kirsch, Warren Michelson, and Carla Beck sitting in for Vicki Mowat. So thank you.

This evening the committee will be considering two bills: Bill No. 101, *The Agricultural Implements Amendment Act, 2017*, and Bill No. 102, *The Agri-Food Amendment Act, 2017*.

Bill No. 101 — *The Agricultural Implements Amendment Act, 2017*

Clause 1

The Chair: — We'll begin this evening with the consideration of Bill No. 101, *The Agricultural Implements Amendment Act, 2017*, clause 1, short title. We have Minister Stewart here this evening with his officials. Minister, please introduce your officials and make any opening comments you wish.

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Thank you, Madam Chair. Good evening, Ms. Beck, committee members. First the officials with me here this evening are Ashley Anderson, chief of staff; Rick Burton, deputy minister; Cammy Colpitts, assistant deputy minister; Becky Hoehn, manager, board governance and operations.

We're here today, Madam Chair, to review proposed amendments to *The Agricultural Implements Act*. The proposed changes to this legislation will better reflect modern advances in technology and farming practices; remove the Agricultural Implements Compensation Fund and have future transactions handled through the General Revenue Fund; increase compensation levels and penalties to reflect current costs and lost revenue due to inadequate parts and service and increased costs; update notification requirements and include Sundays in the time frame by which parts are required; and remove the exemptions for snowplows, snow blowers, and scrapers as these are now more commonly used for farming purposes.

During consultation, stakeholders have stated the Act should be updated to better reflect modern agricultural realities. The proposed amendments will update the Act to ensure it is more effective in dealing with situations resulting from agricultural implements that require prompt replacement or repair. And I welcome any questions that the committee may have.

The Chair: — Thank you, Minister. I'll open the floor to questions. Ms. Beck.

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Madam Chair. And thank you, Minister Stewart and committee members and to your officials for joining us here this evening to go over, first off, Bill 101, *The Agricultural Implements Act*.

As you noted in your second reading comments, Minister Stewart, it's been 14 years since this legislation was last

updated, and there have been, as you've noted, considerable changes with agriculture and agricultural implements that have necessitated some of the changes. I wonder if you could just walk us through, in rather broad strokes, some of those changes and the genesis for the changes that we have before us today.

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Yes, in very broad strokes, technology has advanced dramatically. We have, you know, commonplace technology that we didn't even know of 14 years ago, or maybe had just heard of but weren't using, like GPS [global positioning system] and things of that nature. We have equipment that are run with, a lot of the functions are operated by iPads and the electronics has advanced dramatically. And the equipment itself is larger, more complex, and more expensive. Repairing this equipment, particularly with all the electronic features that we see today and didn't see so much 14 years ago, drives costs.

And you know, I'd say probably the main reason that we needed to update this was that the maximum payment that could be obtained through the Act was \$10,000 for a repair. And in my own experience I can tell you that there are very few repairs that can be done for \$10,000 anymore. And so these are, in broad strokes as you said, some of the reasons for the changes.

Ms. Beck: — And as you mentioned, increased penalties being one of them.

But if we could, what I'd like to do is just move through some of the proposed changes. And I'm just going to try to do this in a rather orderly fashion starting with the Act and just compare it side by side with the existing legislation just so your officials and those who may be following at home are able to figure out where we're at.

One of the first changes I wanted to note here is the changes to article 2(e)(i) around "a bank to which the *Bank Act* (Canada) applies." And that's repealed and substituted with . . . Maybe I'll skip over that one for now and move on to "implement." There's a change to the definition of "implement," and I think this is just an updating of language, but I just wanted to confirm that with you. Instead of "prescribed in the regulations" that now just stands as "prescribed." And that is a language update throughout the Act, is that correct?

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Yes, I believe so, with the inclusion as an implement of things like snow blowers, dozers, things of that nature, scrapers, that weren't considered farm implements in the previous Act.

Ms. Beck: — There are a number of changes around the use of the word "repair." I'm looking on page 4 of the existing Act, and the definition of "part." Currently that language reads, a "part" means a part for an implement. It includes repair. The new language strikes out that word "repair," and it's done so in a number of places in this bill. Could you just speak to the reasons? I can understand there may be some confusion there. Just walk us through why those changes were made.

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Sure. The change to the definition has been incorporated to provide greater clarification of the meaning of the term "repair" in the Act. And this will be done

by providing a definition for the word “part” to mean a part for an implement, but it does not include any services for installing the part. Where the word “repair” was used as a noun in the Act, it will be replaced with the word “part” to provide better clarification.

Ms. Beck: — So was that existing language — and I can imagine that was a cause for some confusion for those who were reading the Act — if I may imagine that where we’re talking a part in terms that we may all understand here, the use of the word “repair” was sort of substituted for “part.”

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — (i) had led folks to believe that that included the labour and time to install the part as well but didn’t necessarily, and that was confusing.

Ms. Beck: — Okay. I just wanted to clarify that. Moving on to the substitutions, so one of the major changes with this bill is moving from the agricultural implement fund, dissolving that fund and moving those penalties to be paid out of the GRF [General Revenue Fund] and the fees to be paid into the GRF. Can you just walk us through why those changes were made?

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — With our government’s move to budgeting and financial reporting on a summary basis, the results of the Agricultural Implements Compensation Fund are to be reported as part of government finances as a whole. And as such, segregation of the amounts into a separate fund no longer serves a purpose, so it’s about summaries.

Ms. Beck: — Okay. So those will be accounted for just through the GRF.

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Yes.

Ms. Beck: — There were a number of changes to penalties prescribed within the Act. There were no changes made to the levies, the amount charged in levies to the distributors and the dealers. Is that correct, or those are as prescribed?

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — No changes. However, Ms. Hoehn indicates that it’s currently been gazetted to zero recently because the fund had a large surplus. And so we hadn’t been taking any of those fees, but we will continue at the same rate.

Ms. Beck: — So it’s been the case for the last two years I believe that no fees have been levied of dealers and distributors. And if I remember correctly, the fund was holding a balance of about 200,000 year over year for a number of years. Penalties were, I think back, the last five years the maximum that had been paid out is about \$10,000.

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Okay, I’m informed that the penalties would have been the same as any compensation that was provided under a claim.

Ms. Beck: — Right. So that they cancel out. Right, okay. Something that’s proposed with this bill is the repeal of section 6 and that is with regard to employees. Currently the Act reads, “The minister may appoint employees that are required for the purposes of this Act; and upon appointment the employees are subject to *The Public Service Act*.” Just curious for the reasons for that repeal of that clause.

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — It was duplicating what’s already laid out for us in *The Public Service Act*, so we just rely on *The Public Service Act*.

Ms. Beck: — Okay. Section 7(1) is repealed and the following substituted. The substitution made:

The Agricultural Implements Board is continued, consisting of not fewer than 3 nor more than 7 members appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council.

The change there, what was the reason for the change there?

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — It’s just a wording change to make it more succinct. We didn’t need all the three paragraphs of wording. Justice gave us the more modern wording and we’re going with that.

Ms. Beck: — Okay. And it puts a term limit on the board members as well?

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Yes, four years.

Ms. Beck: — Four years. Okay. And then I think there is just some updating of language which I appreciate throughout, the adoption of non-gender specific language throughout the Act, so I won’t pay particular attention, just note that those are there and are appreciated.

Section 10, I have to admit I was having a little bit of trouble following the section 10 amendments. Oh, this is going back to the substitutions and the changes to the . . . moving from the use of the agricultural implement fund to the General Revenue Fund, so I think I’ll just move along there.

Section 10.1. There is an addition under section 10.1(c), the addition of “the minister considers it appropriate to impose a penalty fee.” There seemed to be some changes with regard to ministerial approval for the penalties. Currently some functions of the board are now moved to ministerial control. And I was just wondering if you could walk us through that and the reasons for that.

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Yes. Adjudication is handled by the board, but enforcement is in the hands of the minister.

Ms. Beck: — Okay. And is that on advice from the Ministry of Justice?

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Yes.

[19:15]

Ms. Beck: — Okay. And that is in a number of places. I think that that changes some of the reasons for some of the subsequent changes here.

And we come to, in section 11, the first note of the increased penalty. So there are a number of increases throughout, moving from 10 to 50,000. Some penalties increased up to 25,000. In your consultations — and you noted that you did a scan of legislation in other jurisdictions — where do these penalties fall in line with other provinces?

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Well I think in general what we've moved to is pretty close to what our neighbouring provinces and other Canadian provinces that have significant agriculture are at. And we were pretty much out of step previously, but we think we're kind of middle-of-the-pack now with the new changes.

Ms. Beck: — I guess I'd like to go back and just talk a little bit about the nature of the consultations that were undertaken with regard . . . I know that I looked at a report — I think it's in *The Western Producer* — noting that both the Agricultural Manufacturers of Canada and the Western Equipment Dealers Association had noted their consultation on this bill and had expressed satisfaction. Were these penalties in line with what you were hearing in your consultation? You noted that they were mid-pack.

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Yes. We didn't run into any opposition to these changes at all in the consultations. In fact if I remember right, the dealers' association suggested that the previous rates were too low and so there was good co-operation in the consultations and very little dissension. I think the new bill and the new wording has good support from the stakeholders.

Ms. Beck: — One of the other things I wanted to note in preparing for committee tonight, I noted that there was fairly broad consensus that the manufacturers and dealers within Saskatchewan, that there hadn't been complaints with regard to their timeliness of shipping parts. But there were some concerns with perhaps those who were outside of the province or outside of the country. How many complaints would the board receive in a year?

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — I don't know if we have complaints here. There's a number of complaints every year, but the board always finds a way to get them settled, or almost always. But when it comes to hearings, in '09-10 there were none. In '10-11 there was one. In '11-12 there was one. In '12-13 there were none. In '13-14 there were none. In '14-15 there was one. In '15-16 there was one. In '16-17 there was one, and in '17-18 there was zero. So there are very few issues.

Ms. Beck: — I did know that those numbers were very low.

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Yes. Very few issues that don't get worked out.

Ms. Beck: — Mediation . . . I mean obviously one of the desired outcomes is to avoid those hearings as possible, but mediation and investigation services are also noted as being one of the functions. How many of those investigations and mediations would typically be entered into in a year?

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — I'm informed that we don't have any really accurate numbers, but in general terms I'm told that it would be no more than two to four in a month. So, you know, the system works pretty good on its own, but for those cases that can't be settled, we have to have some rules in place, I guess.

Ms. Beck: — And with regard to those processes, those preventative, as opposed to remedial processes, there are no changes that are proposed in this Act that would impact those.

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — No, not in the process.

Ms. Beck: — Okay. Going through side-by-side legislation is a bit tedious at times, but I just want to make sure that I'm not missing anything.

So section 16 and 17 are repealed, and that is because of the move from the fund to running funds out of the GRF.

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — That's correct.

Ms. Beck: — Okay. And there's a change, I believe, in section 25. Well actually 25 is repealed, and there's some formatting changes which I note throughout the Act which do make it a bit easier to follow. But in section 25 this refers to supply of repairs by distributors. "This section applies to implements that are being operated in Saskatchewan." The replaced subsection (2) refers to:

No distributor who has sold or distributed implements or has implements sold or distributed on the distributor's behalf shall fail to maintain in Saskatchewan an adequate supply of parts that may be required for those implements.

Were there concerns about those parts not being housed in Saskatchewan? Was that the reason for that change?

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Well I'm sure that's what some of the complaints were about, but generally speaking I think the distributors do a pretty good job, and the low number of complaints and the very low number of hearings support that. But we have increased the fine from \$5,000 max to \$50,000 maximum for not maintaining an adequate supply of parts. Doesn't happen often but it could be an issue.

Ms. Beck: — One of the increased penalties within the Act is failure to comply with inspections. So there are inspection rights under this Act to go in and ensure that there's an adequate supply. Has that been an issue in the past with failing to grant access to those inspectors?

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — We've never had to use that in the past.

Ms. Beck: — Okay. So that's . . .

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — It's theoretically possible, but it hasn't been an issue.

Ms. Beck: — It hasn't been an issue. Okay. I was curious if that ever happened and what that looked like.

Again, section 31, changes to the repairs. And I think we've already gone over that. One of the other changes in the Act . . . And I think this has come to be common practice that the 72 hours used to exclude Sundays; it no longer excludes Sundays. Was that already the practice they're using out there?

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Well it pretty much is. At least in busy seasons, dealerships are open and offering service seven days a week.

Ms. Beck: — They might not get away with closing on Sundays.

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — No, not really.

Ms. Beck: — Okay. How are these parts . . . I can imagine, you know, we have producers in all corners of the province and dealerships that are perhaps not in all of those corners. How are these parts, typically, how are they delivered to the producers?

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Well there's a number of ways. Couriers are used. Oftentimes distributors will have their own vehicles that are on the road, and particularly for larger parts, they'll go out in the country and deliver. Not usually just one part at a time, but if they're going to an area of the province with a particular vehicle, they'll load up several parts and distribute them in that area of the province. In many occasions when producers, farmers themselves, are not far from a dealership or parts depot, they'll just go and pick them up to save time. I think those are the main ways.

Ms. Beck: — I remember having that job.

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Yes.

Ms. Beck: — When there is a cost, like for the courier cost for example, who pays that cost?

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Generally in my experience it's — well not generally, always — it's been the dealer or distributor. I'm not sure who ends up bearing it but . . . I'm just not sure, but it's never been me in my experience.

Ms. Beck: — Okay. I just note that under 33(6), "Any extra costs in excess of the current list price charged to a purchaser for obtaining repair parts shall be shown separately . . ." So if there is a premium being charged then they have to separate that out on the invoice.

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Yes, I shouldn't say . . . I was a little too broad with that comment. Sometimes when you put a rush on a part it may have to come by air or something, some means that's more expensive. You can be asked to pick up the difference in a case like that.

Ms. Beck: — Okay. Has there been impact . . . I remember one of the last days when STC [Saskatchewan Transportation Company] was running, we were down in Weyburn and just noting the number of . . . I think it was more veterinary supplies at that point, but that was a means for parts distribution in the province. Has there been any noted impact with regard to that discontinuation? And how has that service been made up to producers?

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Most dealers tell us that they were already using independent couriers for parts delivery. Not to say that there might not be a circumstance somewhere where STC might have filled that gap, but in general terms the dealers, I don't think that they're disadvantaged in any way using couriers.

Ms. Beck: — Okay, the dealers, and the producers as well — there haven't been any complaints there?

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Yes, we haven't had any complaints about slow delivery or anything of that nature. Of course, the

distributors and dealers are responsible for having the parts delivered in a timely fashion, so they do.

Ms. Beck: — Right. I'll move on to section 34, which I think we talked about already, and that's the right of inspection. We've established that doesn't happen currently, but in case, that fine has been moved up from 500 to \$25,000 . . .

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Yes, that keeps it in line with other penalties in the Act. Hope we don't ever have to use it.

Ms. Beck: — Yes, that wouldn't be good press for the deal.

Moving on, at the end of this bill, as you've noted, a lot of the substance of the bill is updating language and formatting and removing that ambiguity around the word "repair" and increasing fines.

There are a couple of new sections that are added at the very end of this, new sections 53.1 and 53.3. They're rather lengthy, and I'm just wondering if you could walk me through some of the reasons for adding the administrative penalty. And then there's some language around the rights to appeal to the Court of Queen's Bench and compliance orders, so a little bit of increased use of courts being proposed here. And I'm just wondering if you can walk us through that.

[19:30]

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Yes. First of all, the board makes adjudications, and then there is an appeal process if there's disagreement with the board. And then if there's still not agreement, there's the option for one party or the other to take this to the Court of Queen's Bench. And Justice has set up and approved this process for us, and a lot of the wording that goes along with the Act as well.

So I don't know if, I'm not sure if that answers your question.

Ms. Beck: — So just to walk me through, currently there was a penalty prescribed. There was a right to appeal and it was already the purview of the person if they had a problem with that appeal to take this to the Court of Queen's Bench. And so this is just codifying that.

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — I think I had that a little bit wrong the first time around. They don't get to the Court of Queen's Bench if they go through our appeal process.

Ms. Beck: — Okay.

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — If they choose not to do that, they can opt to go to Court of Queen's Bench.

Ms. Beck: — Okay. Was . . .

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Sorry, and the minister can also take any of the parties to the Court of Queen's Bench to force compliance.

Ms. Beck: — Was that . . . those options were already there and just weren't in the Act or these are new options?

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — This is new. Justice asked us to set it up this way, but it's so there can be some real enforcement and still expedite the process as much as possible.

Ms. Beck: — And I'm sorry, how would that expedite the process?

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — We wouldn't necessarily have to attend court. You register this in court, it would be Court of Queen's Bench chambers, and the justice system would enforce compliance. You apply for an order, and then it's enforced through the justice system.

Ms. Beck: — For compliance with the ministerial order, the right to appeal at the Court of Queen's Bench, did that already exist for those who were prescribed penalty?

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — No.

Ms. Beck: — So that is new as well. Okay. And I just wanted to make sure that we went over it. I usually ask this at the start, so I apologize.

The consultations that were conducted, what was the period that you conducted those consultations over?

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — We started this a while back. Written submissions were requested from stakeholders in April 2017. The Agricultural Manufacturers of Canada, Western Equipment Dealers Association, Association of Equipment Manufacturers, SARM [Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities], and other producer groups provided written submissions at that time, and as well I met and ministerial staff met with a number of those groups to review their responses. And we've recently had another face-to-face consultation with those parties, mostly to deal with regulations around the Act.

Ms. Beck: — Okay. So there was a request for written submissions.

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Yes.

Ms. Beck: — Okay. Great. I'm not sure if others have questions, but I think that I've gone through my questions. And I do thank you, Minister Stewart, and your officials for answering all of my questions and for taking the time to be here with us this evening.

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Thank you, Ms. Beck.

The Chair: — Are there any questions from any other committee members or comments? Seeing none, we will move now to vote on the clauses. All right. Bill No. 101, *The Agricultural Implements Amendment Act, 2017*, clause 1, short title, is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried.

[Clause 1 agreed to.]

[Clauses 2 to 41 inclusive agreed to.]

Clause 42

The Chair: — Clause 42, coming into force. I recognize Mr. Buckingham.

Mr. Buckingham: — I move an amendment to clause 42 of the printed bill:

Amend Clause 42 of the printed Bill by striking out “on March 31, 2018” and substituting “on proclamation”.

The Chair: — Do committee members agree with the amendment as read?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Is clause 42, coming into force as amended, agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried.

[Clause 42 as amended agreed to.]

The Chair: — Her Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan, enacts as follows: *The Agricultural Implements Amendment Act, 2017*. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. I would ask a member to move that we report Bill No. 101, *The Agricultural Implements Amendment Act, 2017* with amendment.

I recognize Mr. Olauson. He moves that we report that Bill No. 101, *The Agricultural Implements Amendment Act, 2017* with amendment. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried.

Bill No. 102 — *The Agri-Food Amendment Act, 2017*

Clause 1

The Chair: — Now that we have completed our review of that piece of legislation, we will continue on with consideration of Bill No. 102, *The Agri-Food Amendment Act, 2017*, clause 1, short title. Minister Stewart, if you have new officials you'd like to introduce and make any opening comments, you may begin.

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Well thank you Madam Chair. We have the same officials. We've moved Mr. Corey Ruud up to beside me because he's the most familiar with this new piece of legislation, and we're here today to review the proposed amendments to *The Agri-Food Act, 2004*.

The proposed amendments promote the principles of accountability, transparency, and efficiency while reducing

unnecessary red tape and increasing flexibility for agencies. The amendments include granting agencies the power to make governance and operational changes using a board order rather than always through regulations; granting marketing board power to develop and deliver animal welfare and food safety initiatives; clarifying the role of council to ensure the Act reflects council's role as advisor and facilitator as well as the supervisory body; and housekeeping amendments such as clarifying timelines for notification and ensuring agencies can use a variety of options to notify producers.

Stakeholders have voiced their support for these amendments. These amendments will build on the foundation of the Act and its purpose of promoting, developing, regulating and, in some cases, controlling the production and marketing of agriculture products in Saskatchewan.

The Chair: — Thank you, Minister Stewart. I'll open the floor to any questions now. Ms. Beck.

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Madam Chair. I've only got one page this time so I'll think we'll be able to move through this fairly quickly.

Just quickly, changes to the business day, I think that's pretty straightforward. But the repeal in section 7, clause 7(f) is repealed as proposed in this bill, and that is that . . . Currently, the power to set out terms of office for members of the agency lies with Lieutenant Governor in Council. And there is a move, I guess one of the major features of this Act, is to allow that responsibility to lie with the agencies themselves. And I'm wondering if you could just walk us through the reasons for that change.

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Council encourages governance best practices and facilitates governance training for agencies. Succession planning is an important part of effective board governance, as well as term limits to encourage board turnover. New people bring new ideas and different viewpoints, which is vital to the growth and long-term success of the organization. So that's basically the thinking behind it.

Ms. Beck: — And that is something as well that is proposed here, is to adding those term limits in legislation, not at the agency or at the council level. A maximum of four terms, and that would be across all of the members of council. I think one of the other . . .

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Three four-year terms, I think . . . Oh, four three-year terms. Okay.

Ms. Beck: — Yes. Four, four terms. Some of the other pieces, housekeeping, updating language, that we recognize that we have other means of contacting people other than a registered letter. Other prescribed means — I would presume email would be the most likely.

[19:45]

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Email.

Ms. Beck: — And who knows what it will be in five years, right?

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — I'll be left behind once again.

Ms. Beck: — One of the other pieces, of course, here is that it allows agencies to not only set the number of directors elected and the terms of office, it also grants the agencies "the power to develop, deliver or develop and deliver traceability, animal welfare and food safety strategies, programs and initiatives." Who does that responsibility currently lie with in existing legislation? Or in practice?

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — All of our supply-managed agencies have already developed and deliver various animal welfare and food safety programs for producers. Including this power in the Act will formally recognize this as an activity that these agencies currently undertake.

Ms. Beck: — Was it considered at all that those not lie with individual agencies but that they be prescribed at the ministerial level?

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — These powers are really conferred nationally, I'm informed, and the new Act gives the province the power to delegate to the board the responsibility to carry these duties out.

Ms. Beck: — In preparing for this, I was able to find some of the federal language around livestock identification and traceability, of course, which is a federal. It did have a link. One thing I found was a little bit curious, there was a link to traceability programs within each of the provinces, and I was able to get onto all of them except for Saskatchewan's. I needed a PIN [personal identification number] to get into that. Is there a reason for that? Or just how the website's set up?

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Yes, producers engaged in the program would all have a PIN number, and so the system is set up here that you need the PIN number to get into the system.

Ms. Beck: — Okay. So there would be, presumably, some benefits that had been noted with developing the traceability in animal welfare and food safety strategies at the individual agency or commission level. Were there any risks involved with that that were noted?

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — No, we don't believe so. These agencies are self-governing in every way except that in the past, in order to make changes, we'd have to get orders in council. And I think that these agencies . . . We generally, if they ask us for an order in council, we go and get one because they know their business better than we do. And so I don't think there's any risk, really.

Ms. Beck: — Well it's certainly no doubt that they know their business, and that is important. So this basically just streamlines the process. It gets around the need to apply for or to ask for an order in council, and it allows those changes to be made right at the individual commission or agency.

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Saves time and money and meetings.

Ms. Beck: — Right. Okay. One of the other things I was curious about in terms of responsibility of the council, and now I think I heard you say that this maybe is already practice, but

adding the responsibility to review agency minutes, board orders, and regulations, and providing governance training to new agencies and working to ensure governance best practices are followed. Is that something that was already going on and has just been added to the Act to update practice?

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — It was, yes. Yes, it was carried on. Most of the changes in the updated Act are just to streamline the processes to get through these things, and to take cabinet out of the loop in most cases and let the boards govern themselves.

Ms. Beck: — Themselves, okay. And I think you did note this in your second reading comments, Minister Stewart, but the extent of the consultations and where these changes, the proposed changes came from, if you could just comment on that a little bit.

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Yes. There are 20 boards and commissions established under the Act, and all 20 agencies were consulted during this process. As well, both provincial poultry processors and the provincial dairy processor were consulted, and all of the proposed amendments were compiled into a discussion document and provided to stakeholders for review and feedback. And all stakeholders supported the proposed amendments.

Ms. Beck: — So was this a matter of conversations? Or were there written submissions requested?

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — I know that we've had conversations. Yes, originally documents were supplied to the agencies proposing the changes or setting out the proposed changes, and then we had feedback from that.

Ms. Beck: — Feedback from that, and there was consensus that these were welcome?

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Yes, every agency agreed with what we're . . . the direction we're going.

Ms. Beck: — Okay. Well, as you stated, Minister Stewart, they know their business, so I think with that I will conclude my questions and thank your officials for their time.

The Chair: — Thank you. Are there any other questions or comments from committee members? Okay, none noted. We will now begin to vote on Bill No. 102, *The Agri-Food Amendment Act, 2017*. Clause 1, short title, is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried.

[Clause 1 agreed to.]

[Clauses 2 to 13 inclusive agreed to.]

The Chair: — Her Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan, enacts as follows: *The Agri-Food Amendment Act, 2017*.

I would ask a member to move that we report Bill No. 102, *The Agri-Food Amendment Act, 2017* without amendment.

Mr. Michelson: — I so move.

The Chair: — Mr. Michelson moves. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. Minister, if you have any final comments that you would like to make this evening.

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Well only to thank you, Madam Chair, Ms. Beck for constructive questions, and committee members and my chief of staff and ministry officials for helping us out here tonight. Thank you.

The Chair: — Thank you, everyone. Ms. Beck, do you have any closing remarks you'd like to make?

Ms. Beck: — I think the minister has thanked almost everyone. I'd like to join in his comments and also thank the folks at Hansard who are following along with us tonight. I appreciate everyone's time.

The Chair: — Thank you, everyone. Now that we've completed our business for the day, I would ask a member to move a motion of adjournment. Mr. Buckingham has moved. All agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. This committee now stands adjourned until the call of the Chair. Thank you, everyone.

[The committee adjourned at 19:54.]