



Land Drainage Act 1991

1991 CHAPTER 59

PART I

INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARDS

Constitution etc. of boards

1 Internal drainage districts and boards

- (1) For the purposes of the drainage of land, there shall continue to be—
- (a) districts, known as internal drainage districts, which shall be such areas within the areas of the regional flood defence committees as will derive benefit, or avoid danger, as a result of drainage operations; and
 - (b) boards, known as internal drainage boards, each of which shall be the drainage board for an internal drainage district;
- and, subject to the following provisions of this Part, the internal drainage districts which were such districts immediately before the coming into force of this section, and the boards for those districts, shall continue as such districts and boards.
- (2) An internal drainage board shall—
- (a) exercise a general supervision over all matters relating to the drainage of land within their district; and
 - (b) have such other powers and perform such other duties as are conferred or imposed on internal drainage boards by this Act.
- (3) Subject to subsections (4) and (6) below, an internal drainage board shall be a body corporate and shall consist of—
- (a) members who shall be elected and hold office in accordance with provisions made by or under Schedule 1 to this Act; and
 - (b) members appointed in accordance with those provisions by charging authorities.

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- (4) The first members of an internal drainage board shall be persons appointed by the relevant Minister, together with any persons appointed as mentioned in subsection (3) (b) above.
- (5) Subject to subsection (6) below, Schedule 2 to this Act shall have effect with respect to the proceedings of internal drainage boards.
- (6) The following provisions, that is to say, the provisions of Schedule 1 to this Act, except so far as it relates to the appointment of members by a charging authority, the provisions of Schedule 2 to this Act and the provisions of subsection (3) above, so far as it requires members of an internal drainage board to be elected, shall have effect in relation to an internal drainage board in existence on 1st August 1930 only to such an extent as—
 - (a) those provisions are applied to the board by a scheme made or having effect as if made under section 3 below; or
 - (b) immediately before the coming into force of this Act, corresponding provision otherwise applied in relation to that board by virtue of section 7(4) of the Land Drainage Act 1976.

2 Review of boundaries of internal drainage districts

- (1) Subject to subsection (7) below, where—
 - (a) a petition for the alteration of the boundaries of an internal drainage district is made to the NRA by a sufficient number of qualified persons or by a qualified authority; and
 - (b) the boundaries of that district have for a period exceeding ten years been neither reviewed on such a petition nor altered,the NRA shall review those boundaries.
- (2) Subject to subsection (7) below, where a petition under subsection (1) above is received by the NRA in the circumstances mentioned in subsection (1)(b) above, the NRA shall—
 - (a) inform the relevant Minister; and
 - (b) publish, in one or more newspapers circulating in the internal drainage district, a notice stating—
 - (i) that the petition has been received;
 - (ii) that a review of the boundaries is being undertaken; and
 - (iii) that representations may be made to the NRA within a period (which shall not be less than thirty days) stated in the notice.
- (3) In carrying out any review required by this section the NRA shall—
 - (a) consult the drainage board for the internal drainage district in question, unless it is itself the drainage board; and
 - (b) consider any representations duly made to it.
- (4) Within six months after a petition under this section is made or such longer period as the relevant Minister may allow, the NRA shall inform the relevant Minister—
 - (a) whether, as a result of the review, it proposes to submit to him a scheme under section 3 below; and
 - (b) if so, what provision it proposes to make by the scheme.
- (5) Subject to subsection (6) below, where—

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- (a) the NRA does not propose, as a result of the review, to submit to the relevant Minister a scheme under section 3 below; but
- (b) it appears to the NRA that an order under section 38 below, or an order varying or revoking such an order, should be made by the drainage board for the internal drainage district in question,

the NRA may direct the drainage board to make such an order in such terms as may be specified in the direction.

- (6) If an internal drainage board to which a direction has been given under subsection (5) above object to the direction, the direction shall have no effect unless it is confirmed (with or without modifications) by the relevant Minister.
- (7) This section does not require the NRA to carry out a review or publish any notice on a petition which, in the opinion of the relevant Minister, is frivolous.

3 Schemes for reorganisation of internal drainage districts etc

(1) The NRA—

- (a) may at any time (in consequence of a review under section 2 above or otherwise) prepare and submit to the relevant Minister for confirmation a scheme making provision for any of the matters specified in subsection (2) below; and
- (b) shall prepare and so submit such a scheme if it is directed to do so by the relevant Minister.

(2) The matters mentioned in subsection (1) above are—

- (a) the alteration of the boundaries of any internal drainage district;
- (b) the amalgamation of the whole or any part of any internal drainage district with any other such district;
- (c) the abolition as from such date as may be specified in the scheme of Commissioners of Sewers exercising jurisdiction within the area for which the NRA carries out functions that are flood defence functions within the meaning of the Water Resources Act 1991;
- (d) the abolition or reconstitution of any internal drainage district and of the drainage board for that district;
- (e) the constitution of new internal drainage districts;
- (f) the constitution of internal drainage boards for all or any of the separate internal drainage districts constituted by the scheme;
- (g) where it appears desirable so to provide in the case of any internal drainage board, the amendment of the method of constituting that board so far as is necessary to secure that members of the board shall include persons elected as such in accordance with the provisions for that purpose contained in section 1 above and Schedule 1 to this Act;
- (h) the making of alterations in, and the addition of supplemental provisions to, the provisions of any local Act or of any award made under any such Act, where such alterations or supplemental provisions are necessary or expedient for enabling the area for the benefit of which drainage works are authorised by the local Act or award to be drained effectually;
- (i) any matters supplemental to or consequential on the matters mentioned in paragraphs (a) to (h) above for which it appears necessary or desirable to make provision, including the transfer to the NRA or an internal drainage board of

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any property, rights, powers, duties, obligations and liabilities vested in or to be discharged by the NRA or by the internal drainage board affected by the scheme.

- (3) A scheme under this section may provide for the revocation or amendment of, and for the retransfer of property, rights, powers, duties, obligations and liabilities transferred by, any previous scheme under this section.
- (4) As soon as any scheme under this section has been submitted to the relevant Minister, the NRA shall—
 - (a) send copies of the scheme to every internal drainage board, local authority, navigation authority, harbour authority and conservancy authority affected by it; and
 - (b) publish in one or more newspapers circulating in the area affected by the scheme a notice stating—
 - (i) that the scheme has been submitted to that Minister; and
 - (ii) that a copy of it is open to inspection at a specified place; and
 - (iii) that representations with respect to the scheme may be made to that Minister at any time within one month after the publication of the notice.
- (5) The relevant Minister may by order made by statutory instrument confirm any scheme submitted to him under this section, either with or without modifications.
- (6) Schedule 3 to this Act shall apply with respect to an order confirming a scheme under this section.
- (7) An order confirming a scheme under this section may contain provisions with respect to the persons by whom all or any of the expenses incurred by the relevant Minister or other persons in connection with the making or confirmation of the order, or the making of the scheme, are to be borne.
- (8) Where the boundaries of an internal drainage district are altered under this section, all powers exercisable under any local Act by the drainage board for the district with respect to land included in it shall be exercisable with respect to land added to the district, except so far as provision is otherwise made by the scheme effecting the alteration or by the order confirming that scheme.

4 Powers to make the NRA a drainage board

- (1) The relevant Minister may, on a petition for the purpose presented to him by the NRA, by order made by statutory instrument transfer to the NRA the powers, duties, liabilities, obligations and property (including deeds, maps, books, papers and other documents) of the drainage board for any internal drainage district.
- (2) On a transfer under this section, the NRA shall for the purposes of this Act become the drainage board for the district in question; and any expenses incurred by the NRA as the drainage board for that district shall be defrayed under and in accordance with the powers transferred by the order under this section and not in any other manner.
- (3) Without prejudice to the preceding provisions of this section, a scheme under section 3 above which makes provision for the constitution of a new internal drainage district may provide—
 - (a) for the NRA to be constituted the drainage board for that district; and

- (b) for conferring on the NRA in relation to that district the powers and duties of an internal drainage board;

and any expenses incurred by the NRA as the internal drainage board for such a district shall be defrayed under and in accordance with the powers so conferred and not in any other manner.

- (4) Schedule 3 to this Act shall apply with respect to an order under this section.
- (5) An order under this section may contain provisions with respect to the persons by whom all or any of the expenses incurred by the relevant Minister or other persons in connection with the making or confirmation of the order are to be borne.

5 Transfer of functions etc. back from the NRA

- (1) Where—
 - (a) the NRA is (whether by virtue of a scheme under section 3 above or an order under section 4 above) the drainage board for an internal drainage district; and
 - (b) a petition for constituting an internal drainage board for that district is made to the NRA by a sufficient number of qualified persons or by a qualified authority,

the relevant Minister may by order made by statutory instrument constitute an internal drainage board for that district and transfer to it the property and liabilities of the NRA, so far as vested in or incurred by the NRA in its capacity as the drainage board for that district.

- (2) On receiving such a petition as is mentioned in subsection (1) above the NRA shall send a copy of it to the relevant Minister.
- (3) The NRA shall inform the relevant Minister, within six months of the date on which such a petition is received, whether in its opinion an order under subsection (1) above ought to be made.
- (4) Before making an order under subsection (1) above the relevant Minister shall consider the views expressed by the NRA in accordance with subsection (3) above.
- (5) Schedule 3 to this Act shall apply with respect to an order under this section.
- (6) An order under this section may contain provisions with respect to the persons by whom all or any of the expenses incurred by the relevant Minister or other persons in connection with the making or confirmation of the order are to be borne.

6 Schemes and orders under sections 3 to 5: compensation for loss of office

- (1) The appropriate Minister shall by regulations provide for the payment, subject to such exceptions or conditions as may be specified in the regulations, of compensation—
 - (a) if it is specified for the purpose in the regulations, by the NRA; or
 - (b) by such internal drainage board or boards as may be so specified,to any officer or other employee of a drainage body who suffers loss of employment or loss or diminution of emoluments which is attributable to a scheme under section 3 above or anything done in pursuance of such a scheme.
- (2) The appropriate Minister shall by regulations provide for the payment, subject to such exceptions or conditions as may be specified in the regulations, of compensation by the NRA—

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- (a) to any officer or other employee of an internal drainage board who suffers loss of employment or loss or diminution of emoluments which is attributable to an order under section 4 above or anything done in pursuance of such an order;
 - (b) to any officer or other employee of the NRA who suffers loss of employment or loss or diminution of emoluments which is attributable to an order under section 5 above or anything done in pursuance of such an order.
- (3) Regulations under this section may include provision—
- (a) as to the manner in which and the persons to whom any claim for compensation by virtue of the regulations is to be made; and
 - (b) for the determination of all questions arising under the regulations;
- and may make different provision for different classes of person.
- (4) In this section “the appropriate Minister”—
- (a) in relation to employees of a drainage body wholly in Wales, means the Secretary of State;
 - (b) in relation to employees of a drainage body partly in Wales, means the Ministers; and
 - (c) in any other case, means the Minister;
- but in relation to employees of the NRA, the powers and duties conferred or imposed on the appropriate Minister by this section shall be exercisable or, as the case may be, shall fall to be performed by either of the Ministers.