



Rent (Agriculture) Act 1976

1976 CHAPTER 80

PART V

POWER TO OBTAIN INFORMATION

30 Information about housing accommodation

- (1) The Minister may exercise the powers conferred on him by section 31 of this Act for the purpose of obtaining information about the housing accommodation which is on, or held in connection with, or used for, agricultural or forestry land.
- (2) The Minister may give information so obtained—
 - (a) to the housing authority concerned for any part of the area to which the information relates, and
 - (b) where, since the giving of the information, other land has come into common ownership or occupation with the first-mentioned land, to the housing authority concerned for any part of the other land,and information so given may be transmitted to any other authority to whom the Minister may give it under this subsection.
- (3) The Minister may also give the information so obtained to any agricultural dwelling-house advisory committee which is to give advice under section 29 of this Act concerning any part of the area to which the information relates.
- (4) No information relating to any particular land or business which has been obtained under section 31 of this Act shall be published or otherwise disclosed without the previous consent in writing—
 - (a) of the person giving the information, or
 - (b) (if different) of any person who at the time of the disclosure is the owner or occupier of the land, or as the case may be, the owner of the business.
- (5) Subsection (4) does not apply—
 - (a) to disclosure under subsection (2) or (3) (but does apply to those to whom disclosure is so made),

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- (b) to disclosure for the purposes of any criminal proceedings, or of any report of those proceedings.
- (6) A person who contravenes subsection (4) shall be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding £400.
- (7) In this section and in section 31 of this Act—
 - " agricultural land " means land used for agriculture as defined in section 109 of the Agriculture Act 1947,
 - " forestry land " does not include agricultural land,
 - " occupier " includes a person responsible for the carrying on of any activity on agricultural or forestry land as servant or agent of the occupier,
 - " owner " includes a person exercising, as servant or agent of the owner, functions of estate management in relation to the land.
- (8) In this section and in section 31 of this Act reference to the Minister are references to the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food and, so far as the reference relates to forestry land, to the Forestry Commissioners.

31 Kinds of information obtainable

- (1) The Minister may serve on any owner or occupier of agricultural or forestry land a notice requiring him to give such information as is specified in the notice concerning housing accommodation on, or held in connection with, or used for, the land, being information within section 30 of this Act.
- (2) The notice shall be complied with within such period, being not less than four weeks from service of the notice, as may be specified in the notice.
- (3) The notice may in particular require information about—
 - (a) the extent and nature of the accommodation,
 - (b) the condition and location of the accommodation, including the state of repair of any dwelling-house, and the means of access to it,
 - (c) whether any accommodation is wholly or partly occupied by a person who is or has been employed in agriculture or by a person who has been married to such a person, or whether the accommodation is vacant, and any impending change in the state of occupation,
 - (d) so far as it lies within the knowledge of the person on whom the notice is served, facts about, or related to, housing accommodation on, or held in connection with, or used for, the land at some time or times prior to the service of the notice, or even prior to the operative date, but not at a time more than 5 years before the service of the notice.
- (4) If the person served is not the owner or occupier of the land, the notice may require him to give any information in his possession which may identify the true owner or occupier and his address, or to state that he has no such information.
- (5) The notice may be served either—
 - (a) by delivering it to the person on whom it is to be served, or
 - (b) by leaving it at the usual or last known place of abode of that person, or
 - (c) by sending it by the recorded delivery service or by registered post in a prepaid letter addressed to that person at his usual or last known place or abode, or

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- (d) in the case of an incorporated company or body, by delivering it to the secretary or clerk of the company or body at their registered or principal office or sending it, by the recorded delivery service or by registered post, in a prepaid letter addressed to the secretary or clerk of the company or body at that office, or
 - (e) if it is not practicable after reasonable inquiry to ascertain the name or address of an owner or occupier of the land, as being a person having any interest in the land or having particular functions or responsibilities, by addressing it to him by the description of the person having that interest in the land (naming it), or as the case may be having that function or responsibility (naming it), and delivering the notice to some responsible person on the land, or by affixing it, or a copy of it, to some conspicuous object on the land.
- (6) If any person—
- (a) without reasonable excuse fails in any respect to comply with a notice under this section, or
 - (b) in purported compliance with a notice under this section knowingly or recklessly furnishes any information which is false in a material particular,
- he shall be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding £400.