
EXPLANATORY NOTE

(This note is not part of the Regulations)

These Regulations enable the Minister to levy a charge on the occupiers of slaughterhouses and cutting premises at which specified risk material (“SRM”) is removed from the carcasses of cattle, sheep and goats (as required by the Specified Risk Material Regulations 1997, S.I.1997/2965) in respect of the cost incurred by the Minister in undertaking the inspections and controls permitted by regulations 10(9) and 15(4) of those Regulations (“the SRM inspections”).

These Regulations provide that the Minister must notify the occupier of each place in which SRM inspections have taken place in any accounting period of the charge for that inspection as soon as practicable after the end of the accounting period. Where such a notification has been made that occupier and the owner of the establishment in respect of which the charge arose will be jointly and severally liable for the charge (*regulation 3*).

These Regulations provide that the Minister may require any person to provide him with such information as he may reasonably require to calculate the SRM charge, or to verify information provided for that purpose. A person who knowingly or recklessly provides information which is false or misleading is guilty of an offence (*regulation 4*).

These Regulations amend the Specified Risk Material Regulations 1997 to provide that the Minister may withdraw the inspections and controls provided for in regulation 10(9) of those Regulations and may suspend the authorisation of a plant authorised pursuant to regulation 15(7) thereof where the person liable to pay the SRM charge under these Regulations fails to do so, despite judgment for the sum owed having been entered against him (appropriate modifications are made insofar as these Regulations apply to Scotland). The amendments to the Specified Risk Material Regulations also prohibit the sale for human consumption of the carcase of a ruminant animal which has not been inspected and marked in accordance with regulation 10(9) of those Regulations and of the carcasses of certain sheep and goats which have not been inspected in accordance with regulation 15(4) thereof (*regulation 5*).

The Schedule to these Regulations specifies how the SRM charge is to be calculated, and provides that the Minister shall determine the hourly rates used in the calculation of that charge following consultation with the relevant occupier.

A regulatory impact assessment has been prepared and placed in the library of each House of Parliament. Copies can be obtained from the Meat Hygiene Division of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, Ergon House, Room 534, 17 Smith Square, London SW1P 3JR.