BELIZE

SUGAR CANE INDUSTRY (CONTROL) ACT
CHAPTER 283

REVISED EDITION 2000
SHOWING THE LAW AS AT 31ST DECEMBER, 2000

This is a revised edition of the law, prepared by the Law Revision Commissioner under the authority of the Law Revision Act, Chapter 3 of the Laws of Belize, Revised Edition 1980 - 1990.

This edition contains a consolidation of the following laws-

ARRANGEMENT OF SECTIONS

SUGAR CANE INDUSTRY (CONTROL) ACT

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Amendments in force as at 31st December, 2000.
BELIZE

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SUGAR CANE INDUSTRY (CONTROL) ACT 6

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CHAPTER 283

SUGAR CANE INDUSTRY (CONTROL)

ARRANGEMENT OF SECTIONS

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CHAPTER 283

SUGAR CANE INDUSTRY (CONTROL)

5th January, 1960

PART I

Preliminary

1. This Act may be cited as the Sugar Cane Industry (Control) Act.

2. In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires-

   “Association” means the Belize Cane Farmers’ Association established under section 3 of the Sugar Cane Farmers’ Association Act;

   “basic quota” means each grower’s normal production of sugar cane per crop year (expressed in tons) and shall be determined by the Board in accordance with section 16 (h);

   “BSI” means Belize Sugar Industries Limited, a company by that name duly incorporated under the laws of Belize, its successors and assigns;

   “Board” means the Belize Sugar Cane Board established under section 9;

   “cane farmer” means a person who cultivates sugar cane;

   “Committee” means the Committee of Management of the Association established by section 17 of the Sugar Cane Farmers’ Association Act;
“crop year” means the period between 1st December in any year and 30th November of the following year;

“current price” means the price, per ton of sugar cane delivered to manufacturers, as is determined in accordance with section 21;

“divisional committee” means a divisional committee of management established under section 8 of the Sugar Cane Farmers’ Association Act;

“ethanol” means ethyl alcohol derived from sugar cane or from any derivative of sugar cane;

“export” means to take or cause to be taken out of Belize, and the time at which sugar or ethanol or any derivative of sugar cane is taken on board any vessel for the purpose of being exported shall be deemed to be the time of the exportation of such sugar or ethanol or derivative of sugar cane;

“grinding season” means the period or periods, fixed by the Board in accordance with section 16 (i), during which time manufacturers shall accept sugar cane for manufacture into sugar, ethanol or any derivative of sugar cane;

“grower” means a cane farmer who is a member of the Association;

“import” means to bring or cause to be brought into Belize, or the territorial waters thereof;

“manufacturer” means a producer of sugar, ethanol or any other product from sugar cane to whom a licence has been issued in accordance with section 4;

“manufacturer’s quota” means the amount of sugar cane which a manufacturer is licensed by the Board to receive from the members of the Association;

“mature sugar cane” means sugar cane which is suitable for processing and which conforms to standards laid down by the Board;
“Petrojam” means Petrojam Limited, a company by that name duly incorporated under the laws of Jamaica, its successors and assigns, and includes Petrojam Belize Limited (PBL), a company by that name duly incorporated under the laws of Belize;

“sugar” means sugar in any of its recognised commercial forms, including non-centrifugal sugar known locally as wet sugar, raw sugar or rapadora, but excluding final molasses;

“ton” means a long ton of 2,240 pounds avoirdupois.

PART II

Imports and Exports

3.- (1) Subject to subsection (2), from and after the commencement of this Act, no person shall export from or import into Belize any sugar, ethanol or any other derivative of sugar cane except in accordance with the terms and conditions of a valid licence issued to him for the purpose by the Minister or such person as may be appointed by him.

(2) Subsection (1) shall not apply to sugar, ethanol or any other derivative of sugar cane which is imported and exported while in transit to a destination outside Belize.

(3) Any person who contravenes this section commits an offence, and the sugar, ethanol or other derivative of sugar cane in connection with which the offence was committed shall be forfeited, and shall be disposed of in such manner as the Minister may direct.
PART III

Manufacturers

4.- (1) From and after the commencement of this Act, no person shall manufacture any sugar, ethanol or any derivative of sugar cane, or receive or purchase any sugar cane for the purpose of being manufactured into sugar, ethanol or any derivative of sugar cane, except under and in accordance with the terms and conditions of a valid licence issued to him for the purpose by the Minister.

(2) Any person who contravenes subsection (1) commits an offence.

5.- (1) The Minister, if he considers it in the public interest, may by Order under his hand require any manufacturer to reserve for sale in Belize any portion of the sugar manufactured by him, and may by Order published in the Gazette fix the price or prices at which sugar shall be sold in Belize.

(2) Any person who fails to comply with any order issued under this section commits an offence.

6.- (1) Every manufacturer shall after the end of each crop year and not later than 30th September in each year make a return to the Board, in such form as may be prescribed by the Board, showing-

(a) the number of tons of sugar cane received by him from each cane farmer for manufacture into sugar, ethanol or any other derivative of sugar cane during the preceding crop year;

(b) the number of tons of sugar manufactured by him during the preceding crop year for the purpose of being exported, and the number of tons of such sugar manufactured by him for
consumption in Belize;

\[(c)\] his estimate of the number of tons of sugar to be manufactured by him.

(2) Every manufacturer who fails to comply with subsection (1) commits an offence, and is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding one hundred dollars or to imprisonment for a period not exceeding six months.

7.-(1) No manufacturer shall purchase, or take delivery of any sugar cane, except-

\[(a)\] from a grower holding a valid licence issued by the Association permitting the grower to sell and deliver such sugar cane to him, or

\[(b)\] from a cane farmer or grower holding a valid licence issued by the Board permitting such cane farmer or grower to sell and deliver the sugar cane to him.

(2) No person shall sell or deliver any sugar cane to a manufacturer unless he is-

\[(a)\] a grower holding a valid licence issued by the Association permitting him to do so; or

\[(b)\] a cane farmer or grower holding a valid licence issued by the Board permitting him to do so.

(3) No delivery of sugar cane to manufacturers shall be made by licensed growers or cane farmers, otherwise than in accordance with a programme of deliveries issued by a divisional committee.
(4) Subject to subsection (5), every manufacturer shall, during the grinding season, accept and pay for all clean and mature sugar cane cut and delivered to him by growers and cane farmers holding valid licences to deliver sugar cane to him.

(5) Subsection (4) shall not apply to a manufacturer who has served notice on the Minister, the Committee and the divisional committee concerned and has obtained the Minister’s consent to cease to operate the factory and has complied with any conditions imposed by the Minister.

(6) Deliveries of sugar cane accepted by manufacturers shall be paid for at the current price for sugar cane, less any cess that may be levied under section 25 of the Sugar Cane Farmers’ Association Act.

(7) Any person who contravenes subsection (1), (2), (3), (4) or (6) commits an offence, and any manufacturer found guilty of such offence shall, in addition to any penalty imposed by the court, be liable to have his licence cancelled by the Minister, or suspended for such period as the Minister may determine; and any licensed grower or cane farmer found guilty of such offence shall, in addition to any penalty imposed by the court, be liable to have his licence cancelled by the Board, or suspended for such period as the Board may determine.

PART IV

Production of Sugar Cane

8. From and after the commencement of this Act, no person shall produce sugar cane for the purpose of being manufactured into sugar, ethanol or any other derivative of sugar cane, except in accordance with the terms and conditions of a licence issued to him for the purpose under this Act or under the Sugar Cane Farmers’ Association Act.
PART V

Establishment of Sugar Cane Board

9.- (1) There shall be established a Board to be known as the Belize Sugar Cane Board which shall consist of-

(a) the Permanent Secretary to the Ministry responsible for the Sugar Industry and the Chief Agricultural Officer, who shall be ex officio members of the Board;

(b) four representatives of the Association elected by the Committee each year in the month of November, two of whom shall be registered members of a district branch of the Orange Walk District Divisional Association, and two registered members of a district branch of the Corozal District Divisional Association;

(c) two representatives, or their alternates, appointed to the Board by each manufacturer;

(d) four persons, having no connection whatever with the sugar industry, appointed to the Board by the Minister.

(2) The Permanent Secretary to the Ministry responsible for the Sugar Industry shall be the Chairman of the Board.

(3) The Board shall be a body corporate having perpetual succession and a common seal, which shall be judicially noticed, and may sue and be sued in its corporate name, and may hold and dispose of land and other property for the purpose of carrying out its functions under this Act. Until a seal is obtained by the Board, a rubber stamp bearing the inscription “Belize Sugar Cane Board” may be used in place of such seal.
10.-(1) Each manufacturer shall in each year at such time as the Board may
determine appoint two representatives to the Board. Such representatives shall
be either officials of the manufacturers, their alternates or accredited agents.

(2) The Minister may by Order prescribe the manner in which such
representatives may be selected for appointment to the Board.

11.-(1) Representatives elected or appointed to the Board shall hold office for
one year from the date of their election or appointment but shall be eligible for
re-election or re-appointment.

(2) A member of the Board appointed by the Minister shall hold office at
the pleasure of the Minister, or for such period not exceeding two years as may
be stated in his appointment.

(3) Any member of the Board, other than the ex officio members, may by
writing under his hand addressed to the Chairman resign his seat on the Board.

(4) Any member of the Board-

(a) who dies, is certified insane, is adjudicated a bankrupt, or holds
any office of profit in the gift or disposal of the Board;

(b) other than the ex officio members, who is absent without leave
of the Board from four consecutive meetings of the Board,

shall be deemed to have vacated his seat.

(5) Any representative of the Association, or any representative of a
manufacturer who ceases to be eligible for election or appointment to the Board,
as the case may be, shall thereupon vacate his seat.

(6) Subject to the existence of a quorum, the powers of the Board shall not
be affected by any vacancy in the membership thereof.
(7) If any representative of the Association or the representative of a manufacturer on the Board resigns his office or vacates his seat in accordance with subsection (3), (4) or (5), the Association or the manufacturer, as the case may be, shall elect or appoint another representative to the Board who shall hold office for the remainder of the term of office of the member who has so resigned or vacated his seat.

(8) If any member of the Board appointed by the Minister resigns his office or vacates his seat in accordance with subsection (3), (4) or (5), the vacancy created shall be filled by the appointment of another person similarly qualified, and such person shall hold office for the remainder of the term of office of the member so resigning or vacating his seat.

12.-(1) The Board shall hold meetings for the transaction of its business, at such time and place and upon such days as the Board may determine.

(2) The Chairman may at any time call a special meeting of the Board, and shall call a special meeting within seven days of a requisition for that purpose addressed to him by any three members of the Board.

(3) The Chairman shall preside at all meetings of the Board at which he is present, and in his absence the members present and constituting a quorum shall elect one of their number to act as Chairman of the meeting.

(4) At any meeting of the Board, seven members, of whom one shall be either the Permanent Secretary to the Ministry responsible for the Sugar Industry or the Chief Agricultural Officer, shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

13.-(1) The expenses of the Board shall be met out of funds to be provided in equal proportions by the Committee and by manufacturers.

(2) The Board shall, on or before 30th September in each year, submit to the manufacturers and to the Committee an estimate of its expenditure for the
year commencing on 1st November next ensuing, and the manufacturers and
the Committee shall deposit with the Board their respective shares of such
estimated expenditure on or before 30th October next following the receipt of
such estimate of expenditure.

14. No member of the Board shall be personally liable for any act or default of
the Board, done or omitted to be done in good faith in the course of the operations
of the Board.

15. The Board shall cause proper accounts to be kept of its financial
transactions. Such accounts shall be made up in respect of each financial year
and audited by an auditor appointed by the Board, and when so audited shall
be published in the Gazette within six months of the close of the financial year.

16. The powers and duties of the Board shall be as follows-

(a) to employ such officers and servants upon such terms and
conditions as it may think fit;

(b) to request, receive and deal with returns from manufacturers
and from the Committee;

(c) in each year to authorise the Committee to issue licences to
growers to produce and deliver sugar cane to manufacturers,
in such quantities and during such periods and subject to such
terms and conditions as may be specified in such authorisation;

(d) in any crop year where the total amount of sugar cane which
manufacturers have been licensed to purchase in respect of
that crop year shows an increase over the total amount of sugar
cane which manufacturers were licensed to purchase during
the preceding crop year, the Board may issue licences to such
small producers as the Board may think fit, to produce sugar
cane in such quantities, and to deliver it to such manufacturers

Liability of
members of the
Board.

Accounts of
the Board.

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duties of the
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as the Board may determine:

Provided that no such licence shall be issued to a small producer to produce less than five tons of sugar cane;

(e) when requested, to be arbitrator in any dispute, issue or disagreement arising between manufacturers and the Association and the decision of the Board in any such arbitration shall be binding upon the parties requesting the Board to act as arbitrator;

(f) to advise manufacturers and the Committee, on any matter in connection with this Act, which they may refer to the Board;

(g) to advise the Minister on the granting of licences to manufacturers, exporters and importers of sugar, ethanol or any derivative of sugar cane, and on the control of sales of sugar, ethanol or any derivative of sugar cane in Belize including the fixing of the prices thereof;

(h) to determine the basic quota of each grower which shall be based on the estimated deliveries to be made by such grower to manufacturers during the 1985 crop, and upon such other information as the Board may consider requisite in the circumstances of any particular grower;

(i) in respect of each crop year, to fix, after consultation with manufacturers and the Committee, the period or periods to be known as the “grinding season” during which manufacturers shall accept deliveries of sugar cane from growers and cane farmers; and the dates of the commencement and the termination of such period shall be published in the Gazette;

(j) to comply with any directions, whether general or
special, given by the Minister in connection with the exercise or discharge of any powers or duties conferred upon it by this Act or the Sugar Cane Farmers’ Association Act;

(k) in each year to issue licences to manufacturers to purchase and receive sugar cane from the members of the Association in such quantities as are specified in section 23, and to grind such sugar cane at their respective factories;

(l) in each year to issue licences to manufacturers to grow sugar cane on lands owned by or leased to them, and to grind such sugar cane at their respective factories;

(m) to hear and determine appeals by any person aggrieved by the refusal of a divisional committee to register him as a member of a district branch under the provisions of section 12 of the Sugar Cane Farmers’ Association Act or to issue him with a licence under the provisions of section 23 of the same Act or with the terms and conditions of any licence;

(n) to borrow and take up at interest or otherwise any sum or sums of money for any purpose and to deal in any way with property of the Board both real and personal as will give effect to or further its objects;

(o) to supervise or arrange for the supervision of elections or by-elections to branch councils, divisional committees and the Committee;

(p) to do generally all such things as are conducive to attaining the objects of this Act; and

(q) to hear and determine complaints and disputes between manufacturers arising out of the provisions of Part VII of this Act;
17.- (1) No licence issued, in accordance with this Act, or by the Committee under the Sugar Cane Farmers’ Association Act, shall be bought, sold or otherwise transferred, except in accordance with subsection (2).

(2) If a grower sells or leases the lands on which he is producing sugar cane for delivery to manufacturers, he may, with the prior approval of the Board given in writing, transfer his licence to produce such sugar cane to the new owner or lessee of the land in question.

(3) Any grower or cane farmer who contravenes subsections (1) and (2) commits an offence, and upon conviction the licence in connection with which the offence was committed shall become null and void.

PART VI

Field Surveys

18.- (1) There is hereby established a Field Survey and Sugar Cane Estimating Committee which shall consist of-

(a) the Chief Agricultural Officer or his nominee as Chairman;

(b) the secretary of the Board;

(c) one representative, or an alternate, appointed by each manufacturer;

Provided that there shall be two representatives from BSI, or their alternates;

(d) for surveys and inspection in the Corozal District, a representative appointed by the Corozal District divisional committee;
(e) for surveys and inspection in the Orange Walk District, a representative appointed by the Orange Walk District divisional committee;

(f) one person appointed by the Minister.

(2) The Field Survey and Sugar Cane Estimating Committee shall conduct, under the supervision of the Board, detailed surveys at the commencement of each crop year and during each of the months of March, April and May to determine the availability of sugar cane in the Orange Walk and Corozal Districts and shall report its findings to the Board; and the Board shall use these reports as the basis for allocating sugar cane to the manufacturers:

Provided that the Board may direct any person at any time to carry out a survey of any sugar cane cultivation.

(3) The Field Survey and Sugar Cane Estimating Committee may appoint any person in writing to carry out inspections on its behalf.

(4) For the purposes of a survey or an inspection, the Field Survey and Sugar Cane Estimating Committee may enter any land on which sugar cane is cultivated and survey and inspect such cultivation and any person appointed under subsection (2) or (3) may enter and inspect any such land.

(5) Not less than twenty-four hours notice of any survey or inspection shall be given to the occupier of any land to be inspected or surveyed.

(6) Any person who wilfully obstructs any person entitled under this section to survey or inspect land on which sugar cane is cultivated in the performance of his duties under this Act commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine of two hundred and fifty dollars or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding six months.

19. Any person guilty of an offence against this Act, for which no other

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**Penalty.**

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penalty is provided, shall be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding five hundred dollars or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding six months.

20.- (1) The Board may, with the approval of the Minister, make regulations generally for the control of the sugar cane industry, and for better giving effect to the provisions of this Act, and without prejudice to such general powers, may make regulations-

(a) containing the form of licences, application for licences, reports, returns and other documents;

(b) prescribing the records to be kept and the returns to be made by persons licensed under this Act;

(c) specifying the method of examining or testing sugar cane;

(d) estimating the standard of sucrose content of sugar cane, or the juices expressed therefrom;

(e) specifying the method of weighing sugar cane delivered to manufacturers and the correction of manufacturers’ scales;

(f) requiring every licensed cane farmer or grower to produce his licence to deliver sugar cane to manufacturers at the time of such sale, or at other times as may be specified by the Board;

(g) requiring every grower to produce his certificate of registration to manufacturers or such other persons as may be specified by the Board;

(h) prescribing all things required to be prescribed.

(2) Any person who contravenes or fails to comply with any regulations made under this section is for each offence liable on summary conviction to a
penalty not exceeding two hundred and fifty dollars or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding six months.

21.- (1) The current price of sugar cane shall be the price per ton of sugar cane as shall be agreed upon between manufacturers and the Committee from time to time. Should the manufacturers and the Committee fail to agree upon the current price for sugar cane, they shall report to the Board that they have failed to reach an agreement. Upon receipt of the report, the Board may appoint an arbitrator or arbitrators to determine the current price of sugar cane, and the decision of the arbitrator or arbitrators as to the current price of sugar cane shall be final and conclusive.

(2) In determining the price of sugar cane as mentioned in subsection (1), the following factors shall be taken into consideration, namely, the value of sugar on the export market and the local market, the quantities of sugar available for export and for local consumption, and the value of rum and other sugar products.

PART VII

BSI and Petrojam: Special Provisions

22. Notwithstanding anything contained in this or any other enactment, the next following sections shall have effect as regards the sugar cane supplies to BSI and Petrojam for so long as either of them is a manufacturer to which a licence has been issued in accordance with section 4.

23.- (1) In each crop year, BSI shall be licensed to purchase and receive up to a maximum of one million one hundred thousand tons of sugar cane, of which, subject to availability, five hundred and fifty thousand tons shall be from the members of the Corozal Division of the Association, and the balance shall be from the members of the Orange Walk Division of the Association.
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<th>Section</th>
<th>Provisions</th>
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<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>(2) In each crop year, Petrojam shall be licensed to purchase and receive from the members of the Association, the excess quantity of the sugar cane available above the manufacturer’s quota of BSI, up to a maximum of three hundred thousand tons.</td>
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<td>(3) In any crop where there is a surplus of sugar cane (other than that grown by manufacturers) over and above the manufacturers’ quotas as set out in subsections (1) and (2), the Board shall determine the allocation of such surplus.</td>
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<td>(4) The Board shall review and may revise each manufacturer’s quota annually, provided that the manufacturer’s quota as specified in subsections (1) and (2) shall not be reduced.</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>No manufacturer shall purchase, or take delivery of, any sugar cane from the members of the Association in excess of that manufacturer’s quota allocated by the Board in accordance with section 23: Provided that it shall be lawful for each manufacturer to accept mature sugar cane with the written approval of the other manufacturer and with the approval of the Board.</td>
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<td>25</td>
<td>(1) Each manufacturer shall maintain records indicating separately the quantity of sugar cane grown by him and that received from the members of the Association.</td>
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<td>(2) Each manufacturer shall have the right to inspect the records of the other manufacturer maintained under subsection (1).</td>
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<td>26</td>
<td>(1) If any manufacturer purchases, or takes delivery of, sugar cane in contravention of section 24, he shall be liable to pay to the other manufacturer a fine at the rate of twenty three Belize dollars per ton of sugar cane (or such higher rate as may be decided by the Board pursuant to a review carried out</td>
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under subsection (3)) received or purchased by that manufacturer in excess of his quota, and in addition, be liable to have his licence cancelled by the Minister or suspended for such period as the Minister may determine:

Provided that no licence shall be cancelled or suspended and no fine shall be payable under this subsection if the excess amount of sugar cane received or purchased by a manufacturer does not exceed-

(a) in the case of BSI, thirty thousand tons;

(b) in the case of Petrojam, ten thousand tons or ten per cent of its quota, as set out in section 23(2), whichever is less.

(2) Subsection (1) of this section shall not prejudice-

(a) any liability incurred by a manufacturer under section 7 of this Act; or

(b) the right of the aggrieved manufacturer to recover by civil proceedings in a court of law additional compensation for breach of contract, or to any other civil remedy.

(3) The Board shall review and may revise the fine annually;

provided that the rate of the fine as set out in subsection (1) of this section shall not be reduced.

27.- (1) All complaints, claims or disputes arising out of the provisions of this Part shall be referred to the Board in writing.

(2) At the meeting of the Board to hear and determine complaints or disputes under this Part, seven members, of whom one shall be either the Permanent Secretary to the Ministry responsible for the Sugar Industry or the Chief Agricultural Officer, shall constitute a quorum.
Chairman of the Board.

(3) The Chairman shall preside at all meetings of the Board under this Part at which he is present, and in his absence the members present and constituting a quorum shall elect one of their members to act as Chairman of the meeting.

Decisions by majority.

(4) The decisions of the Board under this Part shall be by a majority of the members present at the meeting and voting.

Procedure of the Board.

(5) Subject to the provisions of this Act, the Board may regulate its own procedure.

Board to communicate decisions.

(6) The Board shall complete its investigation of a complaint made under subsection (1) within thirty days and communicate its decision promptly to the manufacturers by registered mail or by other suitable means.

Right of appeal.

(7) Any manufacturer aggrieved by the decision of the Board under this Part may, within twenty-one days of the notification of the Board’s decision, appeal to the Supreme Court, and the provisions of Part X of the Supreme Court of Judicature Act and the Inferior Courts (Appeals) Rules shall, so far as may be, apply to such appeals.

No licence to defaulting manufacturer.

(8) Subject to subsection (7), the Board shall not issue a licence to any manufacturer to purchase, or take delivery of, any sugar cane, if that manufacturer has failed to pay the fine or fines imposed under this Part of this Act.

Enforcement of Board’s decisions.

(9) Any fine payable under this Part may be enforced in the same manner as if the amount thereof were a judgment debt or in such other manner as the law for the time being allows.