

**Reprint  
as at 1 September 2017**



## **Carriage of Goods Act 1979**

Public Act      1979 No 43  
Date of assent      14 November 1979  
Commencement      see section 1(2)

Carriage of Goods Act 1979: repealed, on 1 September 2017, by section 345(1)(a) of the Contract and Commercial Law Act 2017 (2017 No 5).

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#### **Note**

Changes authorised by subpart 2 of Part 2 of the Legislation Act 2012 have been made in this official reprint.  
Note 4 at the end of this reprint provides a list of the amendments incorporated.

**This Act is administered by the Ministry of Business, Innovation, and Employment.**

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**An Act to restate and reform the law relating to the carriage of goods within New Zealand**

**1 Short Title and commencement**

- (1) This Act may be cited as the Carriage of Goods Act 1979.
- (2) This Act shall come into force on 1 June 1980.

**2 Interpretation**

In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires,—

**actual carrier**, in relation to the carriage of any goods, means every carrier who, at any material time, is or was in possession of the goods, or of any container, package, pallet, item of baggage, or any other thing in or on which the goods are or were believed by him to be, for the purpose of performing the carriage or any stage of it or any incidental service; and includes the contracting carrier where he performs any part of the carriage

**carriage** includes any incidental service; and **carry** has a corresponding meaning

**carrier** means a person who, in the ordinary course of his business, carries or procures to be carried goods owned by any other person, whether or not as an incident of the carriage of passengers; and, except in sections 21 to 24, includes a person who, in the ordinary course of his business, performs or procures to be performed any incidental service in respect of any such goods

**checked baggage** means baggage, personal effects, or other articles, checked or registered with the carrier, or put in any place at the carrier's direction, or in any other way handed over to and accepted by the carrier (whether or not a check or form of receipt is issued), as baggage intended to be carried incidental to a contract for carriage of a passenger

**contract of carriage** means a contract for the carriage of goods

**contracting carrier**, in relation to a contract of carriage, means the carrier who, whether as a principal or as the agent of any other carrier, enters or has entered into the contract with the contracting party

**contracting party**, in relation to a contract of carriage, means the consignor or (as the case may require) the consignee of the goods who enters or has entered into the contract with the contracting carrier

**court** means any court of competent jurisdiction

**goods** means goods, baggage, and chattels of any description; and includes animals and plants; and also includes money, documents, and all other things of value

**hand baggage** means baggage, personal effects, or other articles, not being checked baggage

**incidental service**, in relation to any goods, means any service (such as that performed by consolidators, packers, stevedores, and warehousemen) the performance of which is to be or is undertaken to facilitate the carriage of the goods pursuant to a contract of carriage

**international carriage**,—

- (a) in relation to the carriage of goods by air, means carriage in which, according to the contract of carriage, the place of departure and the place of destination (whether or not there is a break in the carriage or a transshipment) are within the territories of 2 countries, or within the territory

of a single country if there is an agreed stopping place within the territory of another country:

- (b) in relation to the carriage of goods by sea, means carriage from any port in New Zealand to any port outside New Zealand, or to any port in New Zealand from any port outside New Zealand, commencing when the goods are loaded onto a ship and ending when they are discharged from a ship

**loss**, in relation to any goods, includes the non-delivery or destruction of the goods

**passenger** means a person carried pursuant to a contract of carriage of that person

**ship** means any vessel used for the carriage of goods by sea.

Compare: 1948 No 66 s 2; 1967 No 151 s 18

### 3 Meaning of unit of goods

- (1) In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires, **unit of goods** or **unit**,—
  - (a) in relation to bulk cargo, means the customary freight unit; that is, the unit of bulk, weight, or measurement upon which the freight for that type of cargo is customarily computed or adjusted:

provided that, where the freight payable under a contract of carriage is computed or adjusted upon a specified unit of bulk, weight, or measurement, references in this Act to unit of goods or unit shall be deemed, for the purposes of the carriage of goods pursuant to that contract, to be references to that specified unit:
  - (b) in relation to goods contained in a container, means the container load of goods; and includes, where the container is provided by the contracting party, the container:
  - (c) in relation to goods loaded on a pallet, means the pallet load of goods; and includes, where the pallet is provided by the contracting party, the pallet:
  - (d) in relation to goods contained in a package that is not contained in a larger package or in a container, nor loaded on a pallet, means the package of goods:
  - (e) in relation to goods that are unitised for the purposes of carriage in any manner not referred to in any of the preceding paragraphs of this subsection, means the unit of goods as so unitised:
  - (f) in relation to goods (other than baggage) not referred to in any of the preceding paragraphs of this subsection, means each item of the goods:
  - (g) in relation to baggage, means each item of baggage.
- (2) For the purpose of determining the limit of the liability of any carrier, the limit of liability prescribed by section 15 in respect of each unit of goods relates to

the unit of goods as accepted for carriage by the actual carrier or, where the carriage is undertaken by more than 1 carrier, by the first actual carrier, whether or not that unit is subsequently packed, repacked, or unpacked, or otherwise aggregated with or segregated from any other goods, at any stage of the carriage.

#### **4 Act to bind Crown**

- (1) Subject to subsection (2), this Act binds the Crown.
- (2) Nothing in this Act applies to—
  - (a) the carriage of goods by the New Zealand Defence Force or the Ministry of Defence, except for the purpose of providing a public service in New Zealand or elsewhere for payment (other than payment by or on behalf of the military authorities of any other State).

(b) *[Repealed]*

Compare: 1948 No 66 s 9; 1967 No 151 ss 2, 19(3)

Section 4(2): substituted, on 1 April 1990, by section 105(1) of the Defence Act 1990 (1990 No 28).

Section 4(2)(b): repealed, on 1 April 1998, by section 62(1) of the Postal Services Act 1998 (1998 No 2).

#### **5 Application of Act**

- (1) Subject to subsections (4) and (4A) and to section 4, this Act applies to every carriage of goods, not being international carriage, performed or to be performed by a carrier pursuant to a contract entered into after the commencement of this Act, whether the carriage is by land, water, or air, or by more than 1 of those modes.
- (2) Subject to subsection (1), this Act applies to every carriage of goods whether the carriage is or is not incidental to the carriage of passengers.
- (3) Subject to subsection (1), this Act applies to every carriage by air or by water whether or not the aircraft or ship by which the carriage takes place is at the same time also engaged in international carriage.
- (4) This Act does not apply to any carriage by air performed as part of an air transport service for the carriage of passengers operated by any club that is affiliated with the Royal New Zealand Aero Club (Incorporated), if the carriage is performed in an aircraft owned or hired by the club, and if all persons carried on the aircraft, whether as crew or passengers, are members of the club with full rights of membership:  
provided that the provisions of this subsection do not apply in any case where any such passenger is not carried by reason of the fact that he is a member of the club but for the purpose of carrying out a function not related to his membership.
- (4A) This Act does not apply to the carriage of letters by a postal operator, whether by the postal operator's agents or otherwise.

- (4B) For the purposes of subsection (4A), the terms **postal operator** and **letter** have the same meaning as they have in the Postal Services Act 1998.

(5) *[Repealed]*

Compare: 1940 No 31 s 2; 1967 No 151 s 19(1), (2), (4)

Section 5(1): amended, on 1 April 1998, by section 62(1) of the Postal Services Act 1998 (1998 No 2).

Section 5(4A): inserted, on 1 April 1998, by section 62(1) of the Postal Services Act 1998 (1998 No 2).

Section 5(4B): inserted, on 1 April 1998, by section 62(1) of the Postal Services Act 1998 (1998 No 2).

Section 5(5): repealed, on 1 February 1995, by section 212(2) of the Maritime Transport Act 1994 (1994 No 104).

## 6 Other remedies affected

Notwithstanding any rule of law to the contrary, no carrier shall be liable as such, whether in tort or otherwise, and whether personally or vicariously, for the loss of or damage to any goods carried by him except—

- (a) in accordance with the terms of the contract of carriage and the provisions of this Act; or
- (b) where he intentionally causes the loss or damage.

## 7 Contracting out

The parties to a contract of carriage are free to make their own terms in respect of any matter to which any of sections 10, and 18 to 27 apply; and, where they do so, the relevant section or sections shall, in relation to that matter, have effect subject to those express terms.

Compare: 1940 No 31 s 4; 1948 No 66 ss 4, 5; 1967 No 151 s 30

## 8 Kinds of contract of carriage

- (1) For the purpose of determining upon whom liability for the loss of or damage to any goods is to fall, every contract of carriage shall be one of the following kinds:
- (a) a contract for carriage **at owner's risk**, under which the carrier shall not be liable for the loss of or damage to any goods, except where the loss or damage is intentionally caused by the carrier:
  - (b) a contract for carriage **at limited carrier's risk**, under which the carrier shall be liable for the loss of or damage to any goods in accordance with sections 9, 14, and 15:
  - (c) a contract for carriage **at declared value risk**, under which the carrier shall be liable for the loss of or damage to any goods up to an amount specified in the contract and otherwise in accordance with sections 9, 14, and 15:

- (d) a contract for carriage **on declared terms**, under which the carrier shall be liable for the loss of or damage to any goods in accordance with the specific terms of the contract.
- (2) Subject to the succeeding provisions of this section, where in any contract of carriage the term “at owner’s risk” or the term “at limited carrier’s risk” or the term “at declared value risk” or the term “on declared terms” is used, the contract shall be deemed for the purposes of this Act to be one to which paragraph (a) or paragraph (b) or paragraph (c) or paragraph (d) (as the case may require) of subsection (1) applies.
- (3) Subject to the succeeding provisions of this section, the kind of contract of carriage to be entered into in a particular case is a matter for agreement between the parties.
- (4) Where the contract does not purport to be of a particular kind, it shall be deemed for the purposes of this Act to be a contract for carriage at limited carrier’s risk.
- (5) No contract of carriage purporting to be a contract for carriage at owner’s risk shall have effect as such (but instead shall have effect as a contract for carriage at limited carrier’s risk) unless—
  - (a) the contract is—
    - (i) in writing; and
    - (ii) expressed to be at owner’s risk; and
    - (iii) signed by the parties or their agents; or
  - (b) before, or at the time when, the goods are accepted for carriage, the contracting party or his agent signs a statement in the following terms:

“These goods are to be carried at owner’s risk. This means that the carrier will pay no compensation if the goods are lost or damaged, unless he intentionally loses or damages them.”

For the purposes of this paragraph, that statement may be included in the consignment note or any other document relating to the carriage, but in that case the statement shall be conspicuous and shall be separately signed by the contracting party or his agent.
- (6) No contract of carriage purporting to be a contract at declared value risk shall have effect as such (but instead shall have effect as a contract for carriage at limited carrier’s risk) unless the contract is in writing.
- (7) No contract of carriage purporting to be a contract for carriage on declared terms shall have effect as such (but instead shall have effect as a contract for carriage at limited carrier’s risk) unless the contract is—
  - (a) freely negotiated between the parties; and
  - (b) in writing; and
  - (c) signed by the parties or their agents.

- (8) Where, in any proceeding, the question of whether any contract of carriage was or was not freely negotiated is in issue, the court in determining that question shall have regard to the following matters:
- (a) the respective bargaining strengths of the parties;
  - (b) the course of dealing between the parties in respect of the particular transaction in question, and any other transactions between them;
  - (c) the value of the transaction;
  - (d) any extraordinary features of the goods to be carried or the route over which they are to be carried;
  - (e) any other matters that the court considers may properly be taken into account,—
- and either party may adduce evidence relating to any such matter.
- (9) No contract of carriage at owner's risk or at declared value risk shall have effect as such (but instead shall have effect as a contract for carriage at limited carrier's risk) unless the amount by which the freight charged by the contracting carrier under the contract differs from the amount that he would have charged for the same carriage at limited carrier's risk is fair and reasonable, having regard to the difference in the risk actually undertaken by the carrier and the risk that he would have undertaken if the carriage had been at limited carrier's risk.
- (10) For the purposes of subsection (9), any rate of freight prescribed by or under any enactment in respect of any mode of carriage pursuant to any kind of contract of carriage shall be deemed to be a fair and reasonable rate to charge for such carriage.
- (11) Any contract of carriage entered into by a contracting carrier with an actual carrier, or between actual carriers, may be of any kind, regardless of the kind of contract that subsists between the contracting carrier and the contracting party; but subsections (5) to (8) shall not apply in respect of any such contract.
- (12) The provisions of sections 9, 14, and 15 apply to contracts for carriage at limited carrier's risk and to contracts for carriage at declared value risk.
- (13) Sections 9(1), 14, and 15 do not apply to contracts for carriage at owner's risk or to contracts for carriage on declared terms.
- (14) Notwithstanding anything in section 7, the provisions of subsections (2) to (7) of section 9 apply to contracts for carriage at owner's risk and to contracts for carriage on declared terms, subject to any express term in the contract.

### *Liability of carriers*

#### **9 Liability of contracting carrier**

- (1) Subject to the other provisions of this Act, a contracting carrier is liable as such to the contracting party for the loss of or damage to any goods occurring while



- he is responsible for the goods in accordance with the succeeding provisions of this section, whether or not the loss or damage is caused wholly or partly by him or by any actual carrier.
- (2) The responsibility of the contracting carrier for goods begins when the goods are accepted for carriage in accordance with the contract.
  - (3) Subject to subsection (4), the responsibility of the contracting carrier for goods ends—
    - (a) in a case where the goods are to be delivered to the consignee,—
      - (i) when they are tendered to the consignee in the manner expressed or implied in the contract; or
      - (ii) where any amount by way of freight is due and payable to or on behalf of the contracting carrier at any time before, or at the time at which, the goods are to be tendered to the consignee under the contract and that amount has not been paid in full, when the contracting carrier or (as the case may require) the last actual carrier is capable of tendering the goods to the consignee in accordance with the contract and gives notice to any person liable to pay the amount or (as the case may require) the balance of the amount that he is so capable:
    - (b) in a case where the goods are to be collected by the consignee,—
      - (i) when the goods are collected by the consignee; or
      - (ii) on the expiry of the 5th day (excluding any day on which the carrier's premises are not open for the collection of goods) after the date on which the contracting carrier or (as the case may require) the last actual carrier notifies the consignee that the goods are available for collection.
  - (4) In any case where, at the time when the contracting carrier or (as the case may require) the last actual carrier is able to tender the goods to the consignee in accordance with the contract, the consignee's whereabouts are unknown to that carrier, the responsibility of the contracting carrier for the goods ends when he or (as the case may require) the last actual carrier has taken reasonable steps to find the consignee and notify him of the matters referred to in paragraph (a)(ii) or (as the case may require) paragraph (b)(ii) of subsection (3).
  - (5) No notice referred to in subsection (3)(a)(ii) shall take effect until it is received by the person liable to pay the freight.
  - (6) Notwithstanding any of the foregoing provisions of this section, the responsibility of a contracting carrier who contracts for the carriage of goods to a destination outside New Zealand ends for the purposes of this Act at the time when the international carriage of those goods begins.
  - (7) Notwithstanding any of the foregoing provisions of this section, the responsibility of a contracting carrier who contracts for the carriage of goods from a

destination outside New Zealand to a destination in New Zealand begins for the purposes of this Act at the time when the international carriage of those goods ends.

Compare: 1948 No 66 s 7

## **10 Liability of actual carrier**

- (1) The provisions of this section apply, subject to the other provisions of this Act, where a contract of carriage is to be or is performed wholly or partly by 1 or more actual carriers other than the contracting carrier (whether or not the contracting carrier himself performs part of the carriage).
- (2) In any case to which this section applies where 1 actual carrier is involved, that carrier is, subject to the terms of his contract with the contracting carrier, liable as such to the contracting carrier for the loss of or damage to any goods occurring while the actual carrier is separately responsible for the goods in accordance with subsection (6), whether or not the loss or damage is caused wholly or partly by the actual carrier.
- (3) In any case to which this section applies where more than 1 actual carrier is involved,—
  - (a) subject to subsection (4), the actual carriers are, subject to the terms of their respective contracts, jointly liable as such to the contracting carrier for the loss of or damage to any goods occurring while the actual carriers are jointly responsible for the goods in accordance with subsection (5), whether or not the loss or damage is caused wholly or partly by the actual carriers or any of them;
  - (b) each actual carrier is, subject to the terms of his contract, separately liable as such to the contracting carrier for the loss of or damage to any goods occurring while he is separately responsible for the goods in accordance with subsection (6), whether or not the loss or damage is caused wholly or partly by the actual carrier.
- (4) No actual carrier is liable under subsection (3)(a) if he proves that the loss or damage occurred otherwise than while he was separately responsible for the goods in accordance with subsection (6).
- (5) For the purposes of subsection (3)(a), the actual carriers are jointly responsible for the goods from the time when the goods (or the container, package, pallet, item of baggage, or any other thing in or on which the goods are believed to be) are accepted for carriage until the time when the contracting carrier's responsibility ends in accordance with subsection (3) or subsection (4) of section 9.
- (6) For the purposes of subsections (2) to (4), each actual carrier is separately responsible for the goods from the time when the goods (or the container, package, pallet, item of baggage, or any other thing in or on which the goods are believed to be) are accepted by him for carriage until the time—

- (a) when they are duly tendered by him to the next actual carrier in accordance with the contract of carriage; or
  - (b) in the case of the last actual carrier, when the contracting carrier's responsibility ends in accordance with subsection (3) or subsection (4) of section 9.
- (7) For the purposes of subsection (3)(a), the actual carriers shall be liable in proportion to the amount of freight or other consideration payable to each of the actual carriers for the carriage performed by him.
- (8) For the purposes of subsection (7), where the contracting carrier himself performs any part of the carriage, the amount of freight or other consideration payable to him shall be the difference between the total amount payable under the contract of carriage and the aggregate amount payable to the actual carriers.
- (9) For the purposes of subsections (7) and (8), where any actual carrier (in this subsection referred to as the **secondary actual carrier**) performs any part of the carriage pursuant to a contract with any other actual carrier (in this subsection referred to as the **primary actual carrier**) (and not pursuant to a contract with the contracting carrier), the amount of the freight or other consideration payable to the primary actual carrier shall be the difference between the amount actually payable to him and the amount payable by him to the secondary actual carrier.

**11 Rights of contracting party where contracting carrier insolvent or cannot be found**

- (1) Notwithstanding anything in section 10, where the contracting carrier is liable to the contracting party for the loss of or damage to any goods but the contracting carrier is insolvent or cannot with reasonable diligence be found, the contracting party shall be entitled to the same rights (if any) against the actual carrier as the contracting carrier has under section 10(3)(b).
- (2) Where the liquidator or assignee in bankruptcy of an insolvent contracting carrier brings any proceeding against an actual carrier in respect of any right referred to in subsection (1), the sum recovered from the actual carrier, less all costs and expenses reasonably incurred by the liquidator or assignee in bringing and prosecuting the proceeding and not recovered by him from the actual carrier, shall be held by the liquidator or assignee upon the following trusts:
  - (a) for or towards the payment of the whole of the sum payable by the contracting carrier to the contracting party in respect of the loss of or damage to the goods;
  - (b) subject to that payment, as an asset in liquidation or bankruptcy.
- (3) Where the contracting party brings any proceeding against an actual carrier in respect of any right referred to in subsection (1),—
  - (a) the actual carrier shall have the same rights (if any) against the contracting party (including the right of set-off) as he would have had under the

contract if the proceeding had been brought against him by the contracting carrier:

- (b) if judgment in the proceeding is awarded against the actual carrier, that judgment shall be an absolute bar to the bringing by the contracting carrier, or by any person claiming through the contracting carrier, of any proceeding to enforce the same right.
- (4) This section applies notwithstanding anything in the Companies Act 1993 or the Insolvency Act 2006 or any other enactment.

Section 11(4): amended, on 5 December 2013, by section 14 of the Companies Amendment Act 2013 (2013 No 111).

Section 11(4): amended, on 3 December 2007, by section 445 of the Insolvency Act 2006 (2006 No 55).

## 12 Special rules relating to liability of carrier in respect of baggage

- (1) A carrier is not liable as such with respect to baggage that is left in his custody pending his acceptance of it for carriage, or pending its collection from him after the completion of the carriage.
- (2) Nothing in section 8, or in subsections (1) to (5) of section 9, or in sections 10, 11, and 13 shall apply to the carriage of hand baggage.
- (3) Subject to subsection (2), in respect of the carriage of hand baggage and checked baggage, the provisions of this Act shall apply, with the necessary modifications, as if that carriage were or were to be performed pursuant to a contract of carriage of goods.
- (4) A carrier is liable as such for the loss of or damage to any hand baggage occurring during the period in which the passenger is on board the mode of transport or in the course of any of the operations of embarking or disembarking, if the loss or damage is caused wholly or partly by the negligence or wilful default of the carrier.
- (5) Without limiting section 14, if, in respect of the loss of or damage to any hand baggage, the carrier proves that the loss or damage was contributed to by the negligence or wilful default of the passenger, the court may, in accordance with the provisions of the Contributory Negligence Act 1947, exonerate the carrier from any part of his liability.

Compare: 1967 No 151 ss 23, 24

## 13 Contracts of successive carriage by air

- (1) In this section the term **contract of successive carriage** means a contract or contracts for the carriage of any goods exclusively by air, where the carriage—
  - (a) is or is to be performed by 2 or more carriers in successive stages; and
  - (b) is regarded by the parties as a single operation;—
 and the term **successive carrier** has a corresponding meaning.

- (2) Nothing in sections 8 to 12 applies in respect of a contract of successive carriage.
- (3) Subject to subsection (4) and to the other provisions of this Act, the successive carriers under a contract of successive carriage are jointly and severally liable as such to the contracting party for the loss of or damage to any goods occurring while the carriers are jointly responsible for the goods in accordance with subsection (5), whether or not the loss or damage is caused wholly or partly by the carriers or any of them.
- (4) No successive carrier is liable under subsection (3) if he proves that the loss or damage occurred otherwise than while he was separately responsible for the goods in accordance with subsection (6).
- (5) The successive carriers are jointly responsible for the goods from the time when the goods are accepted by the first successive carrier for carriage in accordance with the contract until the time when, if the contract were not a contract of successive carriage, the contracting carrier's responsibility would have ended in accordance with subsection (3) or subsection (4) of section 9.
- (6) Each successive carrier is separately responsible for the goods from the time when the goods are tendered to him in accordance with the contract until the time—
  - (a) when they are duly tendered by him to the next successive carrier in accordance with the contract of carriage; or
  - (b) in the case of the last successive carrier, when, if the contract were not a contract of successive carriage and he were the contracting carrier, his responsibility would have ended in accordance with subsection (3) or subsection (4) of section 9.

Compare: 1940 No 31 s 3; 1967 No 151 ss 25–27

#### **14 Carrier not liable in certain circumstances**

Notwithstanding any of the other provisions of this Act, a carrier is not liable as such for the loss of or damage to goods occurring while he is responsible for them under a contract of carriage to the extent that he proves that the loss or damage resulted directly and without fault on his part from—

- (a) inherent vice; or
- (b) any breach of either of the terms implied in the contract by section 17; or
- (c) seizure under legal process; or
- (d) saving or attempting to save life or property in peril.

#### **15 Limitation of amount of carrier's liability**

- (1) For the purposes of this Act,—
  - (a) the liability of the contracting carrier to the contracting party; and
  - (b) the separate liability of any actual carrier to the contracting carrier; and

- (c) the joint liability of any actual carriers (where there are more than 1) to the contracting carrier; and
  - (d) the joint and several liability of every successive carrier under a contract to which section 13 applies,—
- is limited in amount in each case to the sum of \$2,000 for each unit of goods lost or damaged or, in the case of a contract at declared value risk, the amount specified in the contract.
- (2) The limitation of amount for the time being specified in subsection (1) does not apply to—
- (a) any liability for the loss of or damage to any goods intentionally caused by the carrier; or
  - (b) any liability arising out of the terms of the contract for damages other than for the loss of or damage to the goods; or
  - (c) any liability arising out of the terms of the contract for damages consequential upon the loss of or damage to the goods.

Compare: 1940 No 31 s 6; 1948 No 66 s 6; 1967 No 151 s 28

Section 15(1): amended, on 17 June 2014, by section 4 of the Carriage of Goods Amendment Act 2013 (2013 No 147).

### *Liability of employees*

#### **16 Liability of carrier's employee**

- (1) Every employee of a carrier who, in the course of his employment, intentionally causes the loss of or damage to any goods being carried by the carrier shall be liable to the owner of the goods for that loss or damage.
- (2) Subject to subsection (1), no employee of a carrier shall be liable as such, whether under this Act or otherwise, to the owner of any goods being carried by the carrier for the loss of or damage to any of those goods.

### *Warranty by contracting parties*

#### **17 Contracting party to warrant condition of goods, etc**

- (1) In every contract of carriage there shall be implied on the part of the contracting party a term—
  - (a) that, except as disclosed in accordance with subsection (2), the goods are fit to be carried and stored in accordance with the contract in the condition and packed in the manner in which they are tendered for carriage:
  - (b) that, except as disclosed in accordance with subsection (2), the provisions of every other enactment (if any) that he is required to comply with relating to the consignment for carriage of the goods to be carried pursuant to the contract have been complied with.

- (2) If, before the goods are accepted for carriage, the contracting party notifies the contracting carrier or the first actual carrier of any material particular that would otherwise constitute a breach of either of the terms specified in subsection (1), the carrier may refuse to carry the goods, or undertake to carry them subject to such reasonable terms and conditions as he may require having regard to the circumstances of the case.
- (3) Notwithstanding anything in section 7, the provisions of this section apply, with the necessary modifications, to contracts of carriage between contracting carriers and actual carriers, and between actual carriers, subject to any express term in the contract.

*Actions against carriers*

**18 Notice of claim of damage or partial loss to be given within 30 days**

- (1) Subject to the succeeding provisions of this section, and except in the case of fraud by the carrier, no action may be brought against a contracting carrier for damage to or partial loss of goods occurring while he is responsible for them under this Act unless written notice giving reasonable particulars of the alleged damage or partial loss is given, in accordance with subsection (4), within 30 days after the date on which, in accordance with section 9, the carrier's responsibility for the goods ceased.
- (2) Subject to the succeeding provisions of this section, and except in the case of fraud by the actual carrier, no action may be brought by the contracting carrier against an actual carrier for damage to or partial loss of goods occurring while the actual carrier is responsible for them under this Act unless the contracting carrier, within 10 days after receiving notice of a claim under subsection (1), notifies the actual carrier of that claim.
- (3) No notice is required if it is apparent from all the circumstances of the case that the carrier is or ought to be aware of the damage or partial loss.
- (4) Notice for the purpose of subsection (1) shall be given—
  - (a) where the contract was performed entirely by the contracting carrier, to that carrier; or
  - (b) where the contract was not performed entirely by the contracting carrier, to—
    - (i) the actual carrier or, as the case may require, the last actual carrier; and
    - (ii) the contracting carrier, unless (where notice of the claim is to be given by the consignee) the identity of the contracting carrier is unknown to the consignee.
- (5) A carrier may consent to an action being brought against him notwithstanding that notice of the claim was not properly given.

- (6) Where the carrier does not consent, application may be made to the court, after notice to the carrier, for leave to bring the action at any time before the expiration of the period prescribed by subsection (1) or (as the case may require) subsection (2) of section 19.
- (7) On an application under subsection (6), the court may, if it thinks it just to do so, grant leave accordingly, subject to such conditions (if any) as it thinks just to impose, where it considers that the failure to give notice was occasioned by mistake of fact or by mistake of any matter of law (other than the provisions of this section) or by any other reasonable cause, and that the intended defendant was not materially prejudiced in his defence or otherwise by the failure to give proper notice.

Compare: 1950 No 34 s 262A; 1967 No 151 s 38

Section 18(1): amended, on 23 December 1980, by section 2 of the Carriage of Goods Amendment Act 1980 (1980 No 102).

## **19 Limitation of actions**

- (1) Subject to subsections (2) to (5), and except in the case of fraud by the carrier, no action may be brought against a carrier for the loss of any goods occurring while he is responsible for them under this Act after the expiration of a period of 12 months from the date on which the carriage should have been completed in accordance with the contract.
- (2) Subject to subsections (3) to (5), and except in the case of fraud by the carrier, no action may be brought against a carrier for damage to or partial loss of any goods occurring while he is responsible for them under this Act after the expiration of a period of 12 months from—
  - (a) the date on which notice is served on the carrier under subsection (1) or (as the case may require) subsection (2) of section 18; or
  - (b) where no such notice is served in proper reliance on subsection (3) of that section, the date on which, in accordance with section 9, the contracting carrier's responsibility for the goods ceased.
- (3) A carrier may consent to an action being brought against him notwithstanding that the period specified in subsection (1) or subsection (2) has expired.
- (4) Where the carrier does not consent, application may be made to the court, after notice to the carrier, for leave to bring the action at any time within 6 years after the relevant date referred to in subsection (1) or subsection (2).
- (5) On an application under subsection (4), the court may, if it thinks it just to do so, grant leave accordingly, subject to such conditions (if any) as it thinks just to impose, where it considers that the delay in bringing the action was occasioned by mistake of fact or by mistake of any matter of law (other than the provisions of this section) or by any other reasonable cause, and that the inten-



ded defendant was not materially prejudiced in his defence or otherwise by the delay.

Compare: 1967 No 151 s 39

## **20 Actions by consignee if not contracting party**

- (1) Notwithstanding anything in this Act or any rule of law to the contrary, an action against a contracting carrier in respect of the loss of or damage to any goods occurring while he is responsible for the goods in accordance with section 9 may, if the property in the goods has passed to the consignee and he is not the contracting party, be brought by the consignee.
- (2) Where the consignee brings an action in accordance with subsection (1),—
  - (a) he shall be deemed to be the contracting party and be entitled to sue and recover under the contract accordingly:
  - (b) the contracting carrier shall be entitled to raise the same defences and to make the same counterclaims as he would have been entitled to raise or make if the action had been brought against him by the contracting party.

### *Rights of carriers*

## **21 Right to sue for freight**

- (1) The right to sue for the recovery of freight payable under a contract of carriage arises—
  - (a) in the case of a contracting carrier, when he ceases to be responsible for the goods in accordance with section 9:
  - (b) in the case of an actual carrier, when he ceases to be separately responsible for the goods in accordance with section 10.
- (2) Nothing in subsection (1) shall limit or affect the right of any carrier to refuse to accept any goods for carriage unless the freight is prepaid.

## **22 Actions for recovery of freight**

- (1) Notwithstanding anything in this Act or any rule of law to the contrary, an action for the recovery of freight may, if the property in the goods has passed to the consignee and he is not the contracting party, be brought against the consignee.
- (2) Where the action is brought against the consignee in accordance with subsection (1),—
  - (a) he shall be deemed to be the contracting party and be liable for the payment of freight under the contract accordingly:
  - (b) he shall be entitled to raise the same defences and to make the same counterclaims as the contracting party would have been entitled to raise or make if the action had been brought against him.

## 23 Carrier's liens

- (1) In this section,—

**owner**, in relation to any goods, means the person whom, under any contract of carriage or in accordance with section 22, the carrier is entitled to sue for recovery of freight due in respect of the carriage of those goods

**recoverable expenses**, means all expenses and charges that the carrier, in accordance with subsection (6)(b), is entitled to recover from the owner of any goods in respect of which the carrier is exercising or has exercised a lien in accordance with this section.

- (2) As from the time when, in accordance with section 21(1), a carrier's right to sue for the recovery of freight arises, the carrier is entitled to an active and particular lien over the goods, which may be exercised in accordance with this section.
- (3) Every carrier claiming a lien over any goods under this section shall give notice of his claim to the owner of the goods, specifying the amount and particulars of his claim, and requiring the owner to pay or secure to the carrier the amount of the freight claimed and all recoverable expenses.
- (4) Pending settlement of the claim,—
- (a) the carrier may remove the goods to any suitable premises for storage (such premises being reasonably convenient to enable the owner of the goods, or any other person entitled to the goods, to collect them on payment of all freight owing and recoverable expenses so far incurred), and shall notify the owner of the goods of the address of the premises:
  - (b) the carrier shall take all reasonable steps to preserve the goods.
- (5) If, within 2 months after the date on which the carrier serves notice of his claim on the owner of the goods in accordance with subsection (3), payment in full of all freight owing and recoverable expenses so far incurred has not been tendered to the carrier, he shall be entitled to sell the goods by public auction.
- (6) From the proceeds of such sale, the carrier shall be entitled to deduct—
- (a) the amount of freight owing to him in respect of the carriage of the goods; and
  - (b) all expenses reasonably incurred by him in removing, preserving, and storing the goods pending settlement of his claim, and in arranging and conducting the sale of the goods,—
- and shall pay the balance (if any) to the owner of the goods.
- (7) Where the amount of the proceeds is less than the amount of freight owing to the carrier and all recoverable expenses, the deficiency constitutes a debt due to the carrier by the owner of the goods.

- (8) Nothing in this section shall limit or affect the right to have and enforce a general lien over any goods to which a carrier may be entitled by virtue of any provision expressed or implied in the contract of carriage.

## **24 Storage and disposal of unclaimed or rejected goods**

- (1) Where, under any contract of carriage,—
- (a) any goods are to be collected by the consignee and they are not collected by him forthwith after the responsibility of the contracting carrier for the goods ends in accordance with section 9; or
  - (b) any goods are to be delivered to the consignee and he cannot be found or (otherwise than because of any default by the carrier) he refuses to accept the goods,—

the carrier is entitled to remove the goods, at the consignee's expense, to suitable premises for storage.

- (2) In respect of any goods held by the carrier under this section, the carrier is entitled to an active and particular lien over the goods, which may be exercised in the same manner and to the same extent as if it were a lien to which section 23 applies, and the provisions of that section, so far as they are applicable and with the necessary modifications, shall apply accordingly.
- (3) Notwithstanding any of the foregoing provisions of this section, before selling any goods to which this section applies, the carrier shall offer to carry the goods to, or to the order of, the consignor, at the cost in all things of the consignor.

Compare: 1967 No 151 s 41

## **25 Disposal of perishable goods**

- (1) Notwithstanding any of the other provisions of this Act, if, at any time while any perishable goods are subject to a contract of carriage (including any time while they are held under section 23 or section 24), the goods appear to be deteriorating and likely to become offensive, the carrier may—
- (a) sell the goods to the best advantage; or
  - (b) if sale is not reasonably practicable, destroy or otherwise dispose of the goods.
- (2) If the goods are sold, the carrier may deduct from the proceeds of sale the amount of freight or other consideration owing to him in respect of the carriage of the goods and all reasonable expenses incurred by him in holding the goods and in conducting the sale, and shall tender the balance (if any) to the consignee.
- (3) If the goods are destroyed or otherwise disposed of, the reasonable expenses incurred by the carrier shall be recoverable by him from the contracting party.

Compare: 1967 No 151 s 42

**26 Disposal of dangerous goods**

- (1) Notwithstanding any of the other provisions of this Act, if, at any time while any goods are subject to a contract of carriage (including any time while they are held under section 23 or section 24), the carrier believes on reasonable grounds that the goods are in or are about to enter a dangerous state and that it is necessary, in order to avoid the threat of harm to any persons or property, to destroy or otherwise dispose of the goods forthwith, he may do so.
- (2) In any such case, the reasonable expenses incurred by the carrier in destroying or otherwise disposing of the goods shall be recoverable by him from the contracting party.

**27 Liability of carrier extinguished**

Notwithstanding any of the other provisions of this Act, where any goods are sold or destroyed or otherwise disposed of under and in accordance with any of sections 23 to 26, neither the contracting carrier nor any actual carrier shall be under any liability (whether under this Act or otherwise) in respect of that sale, destruction, or other disposition; but that sale, destruction, or other disposition shall not affect any liability for any loss or damage that had already occurred in respect of the goods before the sale, destruction, or other disposition.

*Miscellaneous provisions***28 Common carrier of goods abolished**

- (1) Notwithstanding any rule of law, but subject to the provisions of any enactment and of any contract entered into by the carrier, no carrier is under any duty or obligation to accept or carry goods that are offered to him for carriage.
- (2) Every reference in any other enactment to the liability of common carriers as such shall be deemed to be a reference to the liability of carriers under this Act.

**29 Proceedings against New Zealand agent of overseas carrier**

Subject, in the case of a contract for carriage by sea, to section 11 of the Sea Carriage of Goods Act 1940, proceedings arising out of a contract of carriage may be brought in accordance with the provisions of this Act against a New Zealand agent, whether acting under general or special authority, of an overseas contracting carrier if—

- (a) the contract is or is to be performed wholly or partly in New Zealand; and
- (b) the agent plays some part in relation to the contract.

**30 Certain other Acts not affected**

Nothing in this Act shall limit or affect any of the provisions of the Explosives Act 1957, the Restricted Drugs Act 1960, the Radiation Safety Act 2016, the Dangerous Goods Act 1974, or any other enactment relating to goods of a par-

particular nature or class; and in any case where any of the provisions of this Act are inconsistent with any of the provisions of any such other enactment, the provisions of that other enactment shall prevail.

Compare: 1967 No 151 s 44

Section 30: amended, on 7 March 2017, by section 99 of the Radiation Safety Act 2016 (2016 No 6).

### **31 Amendments and repeals**

- (1) The enactments specified in Schedule 1 are hereby amended in the manner indicated in that schedule.
- (2) The enactments specified in Schedule 2 are hereby repealed.

## Schedule 1

### Enactments amended

s 31(1)

**Carriage by Air Act 1967 (1967 No 151)***Amendment(s) incorporated in the Act(s).***Government Railways Act 1949 (1949 No 40) (Reprinted 1973, Vol 2, p 1403)***Amendment(s) incorporated in the Act(s).***Government Railways Amendment Act 1962 (1962 No 13) (Reprinted 1973, Vol 2, p 1516)***Amendment(s) incorporated in the Act(s).***Government Railways Amendment Act 1963 (1963 No 124) (Reprinted 1973, Vol 2, p 1517)***Amendment(s) incorporated in the Act(s).***Harbours Act 1950 (1950 No 34) (Reprinted 1966, Vol 3, p 2395)***Amendment(s) incorporated in the Act(s).***Shipping and Seamen Act 1952 (1952 No 49) (Reprinted 1965, Vol 3, p 1631)***Amendment(s) incorporated in the Act(s).*

**Schedule 2**  
**Enactments repealed**

s 31(2)

**Carriers Act 1948 (1948 No 66) (Reprinted 1979, RS Vol 1, p 423)**

**Carriers Amendment Act 1962 (1962 No 14) (Reprinted 1979, RS Vol 1, p 427)**

**Sea Carriage of Goods Act 1940 (1940 No 31) (1957 Reprint, Vol 13, p 709)**

*Amendment(s) incorporated in the Act(s).*

## Reprints notes

### **1     *General***

This is a reprint of the Carriage of Goods Act 1979 that incorporates all the amendments to that Act as at the date of the last amendment to it.

### **2     *Legal status***

Reprints are presumed to correctly state, as at the date of the reprint, the law enacted by the principal enactment and by any amendments to that enactment. Section 18 of the Legislation Act 2012 provides that this reprint, published in electronic form, has the status of an official version under section 17 of that Act. A printed version of the reprint produced directly from this official electronic version also has official status.

### **3     *Editorial and format changes***

Editorial and format changes to reprints are made using the powers under sections 24 to 26 of the Legislation Act 2012. See also <http://www.pco.parliament.govt.nz/editorial-conventions/>.

### **4     *Amendments incorporated in this reprint***

Contract and Commercial Law Act 2017 (2017 No 5): section 345(1)(a)

Radiation Safety Act 2016 (2016 No 6): section 99

Carriage of Goods Amendment Act 2013 (2013 No 147)

Companies Amendment Act 2013 (2013 No 111): section 14

Insolvency Act 2006 (2006 No 55): section 445

Postal Services Act 1998 (1998 No 2): section 62(1)

Maritime Transport Act 1994 (1994 No 104): section 212(2)

Defence Act 1990 (1990 No 28): section 105(1)

Carriage of Goods Amendment Act 1980 (1980 No 102)