# **NIGERIAN DOCK LABOUR ACT 1999**

#### NIGERIAN DOCK LABOUR ACT

1999

An Act to establish the Joint Dock Labour Industrial Council, to register dock workers and dock labour employers, and for other matters connected therewith. [1999 No. 37.] [10th May, 1999.] [Commencement.]

**1.** (1) There is hereby established a body to be known as the Joint Dock Labour Industrial Council (in this Act referred to as the "Council") which shall- (a) be a body corporate with perpetual succession and a common seal; and(b) may sue or be sued in its corporate name.

Establishment
of the Joint
Dock Labour
Industrial
Council.

2. (1) The Council shall-(a) register dock workers and dock labour employers; (b) maintain and keep a register of dock workers and dock labour employers; (c) regulate the conditions of service of dock workers;(d) ensure direct payment of wages to each dock worker by the employer;(e) set out guidelines which will ensure that dock work is rotated evenly among dock workers in the pool;(f) ensure that dock labour employers comply with the existing regulations and standards relating to wages, welfare and training of dock workers in the ports;(g) determine the number of the permanent dock workers to be employed by the dock labour employers.(h) ensure that the activities of dock workers are not inimical to the peace, security, industrial harmony and smooth operations at the nation's sea ports;(i) serve as a medium for resolving disputes and complaints among the interest groups in the port and dock industry;(j) conduct a census of dock workers in the pool every three years;(k) ensure that dock labour employers provide adequate cargo handling gears, plant and equipment and in this regard shall inspect such facilities from time to time;(I) ensure that dock labour employers provide adequate protective gears for the safety of dock workers;(m) ensure that dock labour employers provide group insurance policy against industrial accidents for dock workers; and(n) do such other things as are necessary or expedient for the purpose of

Functions of the Council

**3.** (1) There is hereby established for the management of the Council a Governing Board (in this Act referred to as "the Board") which shall consist of

achieving its objectives under this Act.

Establishment and

the following members, that is-(a) an Executive Chairman who shall be the membership accounting officer;(b) one representative of the Federal Ministry of Transport; of the (c) one representative of the Federal Ministry of Employment, Labour and Governing Productivity;(d) two representatives of the Nigerian Ports Authority;(e) one Board representative of the Nigerian Shippers' Council;(f) one representative of the Maritime Workers Union;(g) one representative of the National Association of Dock Labour Employers;(h) two representatives of the shipping companies; and(i) the Secretary to the Board.(2) The Chairman and members of the Board shall be appointed by the President on the recommendation of the Minister. (3) The members of the Board, other than ex-officio members, shall be nominated by the organisations or groups which they represent and where there is no such nomination the Minister shall cause to be appointed from those organisations or groups such persons as appear to him to be appropriate in each circumstance.(4) The provisions of the First Schedule to this Act shall have effect with respect to the proceedings of the Board and the other matters therein mentioned. 4. (1) The members of the Board, other than ex-officio members, shall each hold office for a term of three years in the first instance and may be reappointed for a further term of three years and no more.(2) The members of the Board shall be paid such allowances as the Minister may, from time to Tenure of time, determine.(3) A member of the Board, other than an ex-officio member, office. may resign his appointment by notice in writing under his hand, addressed to' the Minister and which resignation shall take effect only upon acknowledgement by the Minister. **5.** (1) A member of the Board shall cease to hold office if-(a) he becomes of unsound mind; or(b) he becomes bankrupt or makes a compromise with his creditors; or(c) he is convicted of a felony or of any offence involving dishonesty; or(d) he is guilty of serious misconduct in relation to his duties.(2)

**5.** (1) A member of the Board shall cease to hold office if-(a) he becomes of unsound mind; or(b) he becomes bankrupt or makes a compromise with his creditors; or(c) he is convicted of a felony or of any offence involving dishonesty; or(d) he is guilty of serious misconduct in relation to his duties.(2) A member of the Board may be removed from office by the Minister if, on the recommendation of the Council, he is satisfied that it is not in the interest of the Council or the interest of the public that the member should continue in office.(3) Where a vacancy occurs in the membership of the Board, it shall be filled by the appointment of a successor to hold office for the remainder of the term of office of his predecessor, so however, that the successor shall represent the same interest and shall be appointed by the Minister.

Cessation of membership.

**6.** (6) Where –(a) it appears to the Minister that a member of the Board should be removed from office on grounds of misconduct or inability to perform the functions of his office;(b) the Minister is satisfied that the continued presence

Termination of Board's membership.

on the Board of any member is not in the national interest or interest of the Board, the Minister shall declare in writing the office of that member vacant.	
<b>7.</b> (1) There shall be four ordinary Board meetings in one calendar year.(2) Without prejudice to section 6 of this Act any member who is absent from two consecutive ordinary meetings of the Board shall file his explanation in writing with the Secretary for consideration by the Board and where the explanation is unacceptable to the Board the Board may recommend to the Minister that the member be removed and the Minister may declare in writing, such a removal.	Frequency of Board meetings.
8. (1) There shall be appointed for the Council by the President on the recommendation of the Minister, a Secretary who shall(a) be the Head of the Secretariat of the Council;(b) have such qualification and experience as are appropriate for a person required to perform the functions of that office under this Act; and(c) hold office on such terms and conditions as to emolument, conditions of service as may be specified in his letter of appointment.(2) The Secretary shall, subject to the general direction of the Board and the Minister, be responsible –(a) for the day to day administration of the Council(b) for keeping the books and proper records of the proceedings of the Board; and(c) for – (i) the administration of the secretariat of the Council and the Board , and (ii) the general direction and control of all other employees of the Council, subject to the directives of the Board and the Chairman.(3) The Board shall have power to –(a) employ either directly or on secondment from any civil or public service in the Federation such number of employees as may, in the opinion of the Board, be required to assist the Board in the discharge of any of its functions under this Act; and(b) pay to persons so employed such renumeration (including allowances) as the Board may, after consultation with the Federal Civil Service Commission, determine.	Appointment of the Secretary and other staff of the Council.
<b>9.</b> (1) Service in the Council shall be approved service for purposes of the Pensions Act.(2) Employees of the Council shall be entitled to pensions, gratuities and other retirement benefits as are enjoyed by persons holding equivalent grades in the civil service of the Federation.(3) Nothing in subsections (1) and (2) of this section or in this Act shall prevent the appointment of a person to any office on terms which preclude the grant of pension and gratuity in respect of that office.(4) For the purposes of the application of the provisions of the Pensions Act any power exercisable thereunder by a Minister or other authority of the Government of the Federation, other than the power to make regulations under section 23 thereof, is hereby vested in and shall be exercisable by the Board and not by any other person or authority.	Service in the Council to be pensionable

<b>10.</b> There shall be established and maintained for the Council, a fund into which shall be paid and credited –(a) 5 per cent of the stevedoring earnings of registered dock labour employers deducted at source and subject to review from time to time;(b) all subventions and extra-budgetary allocations from the Federal Government;(c) all sums accruing to the Council by way of gifts, endowments, bequests, grants or other contributions by persons and organisations;(d) foreign aid and assistance from bilateral agencies(e) all other sums borrowed with the approval of the Minister as monies required by the Council for meeting its obligations and discharging its functions under this Act; and(f) all other sums which may, from time to time, accrue to the Council.	Fund of the Council.
11. The Council shall, from time to time, apply the funds at its disposal to –(a) pay allowances, expenses and other benefits of members of the Board and committees of the Board;(b) pay the salaries, allowances and benefits of members of staff of the Council;(c) the payment of pension, welfare scheme and medical expenses of dock workers so however, that no payment of any kind under this paragraph shall be made to any person who is in receipt of endowments from the Federal, State or any other paid employment:(d) pay other overhead allowances, benefits and other administrative costs of the Council;(e) train its members of staff; and(f) undertake such other activities as are connected with all or any of the functions of the Council under this Act.	Expenditure of the Council
<b>12.</b> (1) The Council may accept gifts of land, money or other property on such terms and conditions, if any, as may be specified by the person or organisation making the gift.(2) The Council shall not accept any gift if the conditions attached by the person or organisation making the gift are inconsistent with the functions of the Council under this Act.	Power to accept gifts
13. (1) The Board shall cause to be prepared and submitted to the Minister, not later than 30 September in each year, an estimate of the expenditure and income of the Council during the next succeeding year.(2) The Board shall cause to be kept proper accounts of the Council and proper records in relation to those accounts and when certified by the Board, the accounts shall be audited by auditors appointed by the Board from the list and in accordance with the guidelines supplied by the Auditor-General of the Federation.	Annual estimates, account and audit.
<b>14.</b> The Board shall, not later than 30 June in each year, submit to the Minister a report on the activities and administration of the Council during the immediately preceding year and shall include in the report the audited accounts of the Council and the auditor's report on those accounts.	Annual report.
15. (1) The Council shall be exempted from the payment of income tax on any	Exemption

income derived by the Council under this Act or accruing to it from any of its investments.(2) Accordingly, the provisions of any enactment relating to the taxation of companies or trust funds shall not apply to the Council.

from tax.

**16.** (1) An application for registration as a dock worker shall be in such form as may be prescribed by the Board, from time to time, and shall be accompanied with the following –(a) two passport photographs of the applicant(b) a medical certificate of fitness issued to the applicant by a medical practitioner in any Government hospital or clinic established for dock workers;(c) one copy of the applicant's birth certificate or statutory declaration of age.(2) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (1) of this section an applicant seeking registration as a dock worker under this Act shall satisfy the Board that -(a) he is a person of proven integrity; (b) he is between 18 - 35 years of age;(c) he has not been convicted of any criminal offence in Nigeria or in any other country.(3) An applicant who satisfies the requirements specified in subsections (1) and (2) of this section shall be registered as a dock worker and issued with a registration certificate to that effect.(4) No person, other than a registered dock worker, shall be engaged in the performance of any dock work in any of the ports specified in Schedule 2 to this Act.(5) Any person who is not registered as a dock worker and who engages in any dock work in any part of the ports specified in this Act is guilty of an offence and liable on conviction to imprisonment for a term of six months or a fine of N5000 or to both such imprisonment and fine.(6) Any applicant seeking registration as a dock worker under this Act who knowingly makes a false statement or produces a false document in order to procure registration as a dock worker is guilty of an offence and liable on conviction to imprisonment for a term of six months or a fine of N5,000 or to both such imprisonment and fine.

Registration of dock workers

17. (1) An application for registration as a dock labour employer shall be made in such form as may be prescribed by the Board, from time to time, and shall be accompanied with the following, that is –(a) a certified true copy of the certificate of incorporation;(b) a certified true copy of the Memorandum and Articles of Association;(c) a certified true copy of the last annual report filed with the Corporate Affairs Commission;(d) evidence of tax payment as and when due, for a period of three years immediately preceding the year of the application;(e) an undertaking by a reputable insurance company signifying that the employees shall be covered under an insurance policy issued against any form of industrial accident.(2) An applicant seeking registration under this section of this Act shall in addition satisfy the Council that –(a) it has a minimum paid up share capital of N1,000,000 and provides a bank guarantee equal to the same amount; and(b) it has adequate equipment

Registration of dock labour employers.

required for stevedoring operations.(3) An applicant who satisfies- the requirements specified in subsections (1) and (2) of this section shall be –(a) registered as a dock labour employer on payment of a registration fee of N50,000; and(b) issued with a registration certificate.(4) A registration certificate issued under this Part of this Act to a dock labour employer shall be renewed annually on payment to the Council of the sum of N10,000 or such sums as may be specified by the Board from time to time.(5) No body corporate shall engage any person as a dock worker in a port specified in this Act unless he is registered as a dock labour employer.	
<b>18.</b> (1) Where an offence under this Act which has been committed by a body corporate is proved to have been committed on the instigation or with the connivance of or to be attributable to any neglect on the part of a director, manager, secretary, head of branch or project manager or other similar officer of the body corporate, or any person purporting to act in any such capacity, he, as well as the body corporate, where practicable, shall be deemed to be guilty of that offence and liable to be proceeded against and punished accordingly.(2) Where a person is convicted of an offence under subsection (1) of this section, he shall –(a) in the case of an individual, be liable to a fine of N5,000 or imprisonment for a term of six months; and(b) in the case of the body corporate, be liable to a fine of not less than N50,000.	Offences by bodies corp orate.
19. (1) A registered dock worker shall –(a) while on duty, carry his identity card on his person and produce it on demand for inspection to authorised personnel;(b) while on the port premises conduct himself properly and not constitute himself into a public nuisance or security risk;(c) carry out his duties in accordance with the provisions of this Act and the conditions of employment specified by the dock labour employer(2) Any dock worker who – (a) fails to carry out his duties in accordance with the provisions of this Act and the conditions of his employment; or(b) fails to comply with any lawful orders given to him by his registered dock labour employer; or(c) is inefficient or negligent in the discharge of his duties; or(d) absents himself from duty without permission or other acceptable reason, is liable to be suspended from duty for a period not exceeding 90 days.(3) Any dock worker who –(a) engages in any malpractices or fraudulent act; or(b) conducts himself in a disorderly manner in a port area or the pool, is guilty of an offence under this Act and liable to have his registration certificate cancelled by the Board.	Obligations of dock workers.
<b>20.</b> (1) A registered dock labour employer shall –(a) keep such records as may be required to be kept, from time to time, by the Council;(b) furnish in such form as may be specified, from time to time, by the Board such true and	Obligations of the dock

labour accurate information relating to- (i) the number of registered dock workers in its permanent employment, (ii) the number of registered dock workers employer. employed on casual basis, (iii) the basic and overtime wage rates paid to its dock workers, (iv) any disciplinary action involving the dismissal or suspension of any registered dock worker;(c) engage the services of only registered dock workers on the roster on duty at the pool;(d) pay wages and other legal entitlement of dock workers as and when due;(e) carry out disciplinary action against erring dock workers under its employment;(f) provide adequate cargo handling plants and equipment which are necessary for the discharge of any of its duties in the ports;(g) provide adequate protective gears for the safety of its dock workers;(h) provide group insurance cover from a reputable insurance company against any form of industrial accidents;(i) pay such levies and statutory contributions provided for by this Decree or such other levies as may be imposed by the council from time to time.(2) A registered dock labour employer who fails to comply with the provisions of this section of this Act or any regulation made thereunder is liable to have its registration certificate cancelled by the Board. 21. (1) It shall be an implied condition in any contract of employment between a registered dock worker and a registered dock labour employer that the rate of remunerations and conditions of service shall be in accordance with any Training, local or national collective agreements for the time being in force.(2) The medical conditions of service for pensionable dock workers includes –(a) training;(b) services. the provision of medical services; and(c) the establishment of a welfare and welfare and pension scheme.(3) For the avoidance of doubt, it shall be the duty of the pensions. Council to prescribe and fund the training, medical and welfare scheme of registered casual dock workers. **22.** A registered dock labour employer shall –(a) pay wages or other remunerations directly to a dock worker for services rendered; and(b) not pay Wages and remunerations wages or remunerations through a supervisor, headman or any person in charge of a gang of dock workers. 23. Any registered dock labour employer who contravenes the provisions of Penalty for section 22 of this Act is guilty of an offence and liable on conviction to a fine contravention. of N10,000. **Establishment** 24. There is hereby established the Dock Labour Monitoring Committee (in

this Act referred to as "the Committee") which shall be charged with such

port or a group of ports.

responsibility as the Board may determine, from time to time, in relation to a

of Dock
Labour
Monitoring
Committee.

25. The Committee shall consist of a Chairman to be appointed by the Board and the following other members, that is –(a) one representative of the Federal Ministry of Transport;(b) one representative of the Federal Ministry of Employment, Labour and Productivity;(c) two representatives of the Nigerian Ports Authority;(d) one representative of the Nigerian Shippers' Council;(e) one representative of the Maritime Workers Union;(f) one representative of the National Association of Dock Labour Employers;(g) one representative of shipping companies.	Composition of the Committee.
<b>26.</b> Subject to the provisions of this Act, a person appointed as a member of any Committee shall hold office for a period of two years from the date of appointment.	Tenure of office.
<b>27.</b> The Committee shall –(a) register dock workers employed in the ports in accordance with the conditions specified by the Board;(b) ensure that no person, other than a registered dock worker, is engaged to perform any dock work;(c) have power to prevent entry to or removal of any dock worker from any place to which this Act applies who is not registered in accordance with the provisions of this Act;(d) carry out such other functions as may, from time to time, be referred to it by the Board.	Functions of the Committee.
28. (1) There is hereby established a pool for dock workers (in this Act referred to as "the pool") outside the port which shall be a central reserve consisting of the following, that is(a) permanent skilled dock workers; and(b) casual dock workers.(2) Permanent dock workers shall be on the permanent payroll of dock labour employers.(3) The pool shall consist of such other number or category of registered dock workers and registered dock labour employees engaged in dock work in any part of Nigeria as may, from time to time, be determined by the Council.	Establishment of a pool of dock workers
<b>29.</b> The dock labour employers shall have the right to engage dock workers of their choice from the pool subject to the guidelines as may be issued by the Board from time to time.	Choice of dock workers by dock labour employers.
<b>30.</b> Where the Board orders the cancellation of a registration certificate issued under this Act in relation to –(a) a dock worker; or(b) a dock labour employer, it shall direct the submission of the registration certificate to the Secretary to the Council within three days thereof.	Cancellation of registration.
<b>31.</b> The Magistrate Court shall have jurisdiction to try related offences and offences created in this Act and to which no penalties have been prescribed	Jurisdiction.

under any section of this Act.	
<b>32.</b> The Minister may in addition to any other powers conferred on him under this Act, make regulations generally for the purposes of this Act.	Power to make regulations.
33. The National Dock Labour Act is hereby consequentially repealed.	Repeal of Cap. 251 LFN 1990.
34. (1) Accordingly, the statutory functions, rights, interests, obligations and liabilities of the National Dock Labour Board existing before the commencement of this Act under any contract or instrument or in la w or in equity shall, by virtue of this Act, be deemed to have been assigned to and vested in the Joint Dock Labour Industrial Council established by this Act.(2) Any such contract or instrument as is mentioned in subsection (1) of this section, shall be of the same force and effect against or in favour of the Joint Dock Labour Industrial Council established by this Act and shall be enforceable as fully and effectively as if instead of the National Dock Labour Board existing before the commencement of this Act, the Joint Dock Labour Industrial Council established by this Act has been named therein or had been a party thereto.(3) The Joint Dock Labour Industrial Council established by this Act shall be subject to all the obligations and liabilities to which the National Dock Labour Board existing before the commencement of this Act was subject immediately before the commencement of this Act and all other persons shall have the same rights, powers and remedies against the Joint Dock Labour Industrial Council established by this Act as they had against the National Dock Labour Board existing before the commencement of this Act.(4) Any proceeding or cause of action existing immediately before the commencement of this Act, by or against the Fund in respect of any right, interest, obligation or liability of the Fund, may be continued or as the case may be, commenced in any court of law. tribunal or before any other authority or person; and any determination of a court of law, tribunal or other authority or person; and any determination of a court of law, tribunal or other authority or person, may be enforced by or against the Board to the same extent that such proceedings or cause of action or determination might have been continued, commenced or enforced by or against the Fund established under the repeale	Savings and transfer of liabilities, staff, etc.

Act is the holder of any office in the National Dock Labour Board existing before the commencement of this Act shall, on the commencement of this Act, continue in office and be deemed to have been appointed to his office by the Joint Dock Labour Industrial Council established by this Act unless the authority by which the person was appointed terminates the appointment.	
<b>35.</b> In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires- "Board" means the Governing Board of the Council established under section 3 of this Act; "Committee" means the Dock Labour Monitoring Committees established under section 24 of this Act; "Council" means the Joint Dock Labour Industrial Council established under section 1 of this Act; "dock labour employer" means a body corporate registered by the Council who employs dock workers to perform dock work; "dock worker" means a person registered under this Act to perform duties connected with the loading and discharging of ships; "Minister" means the Minister charged with responsibility for matters relating to transport; "pool" means a central reserve of such number or class or description of registered dock workers as the Board may, from time to time, determine; "register" means the register of dock workers and dock labour employers to be maintained by the Council.	Interpretation.
<b>36.</b> This Act may be cited as the Nigerian Dock Labour Act.	Citation.

## Section 3(4)

# SUPPLEMENTARY PROVISIONS RELATING TO THE BOARD, ETC.

# **Proceedings of the Board**

- 1. Subject to the provisions of this Act and section 27 of the Interpretation Act (which provides for decisions of a statutory body to be taken by the majority of members of the body and for the person presiding to have a second or casting vote) the Board may make standing orders regulating its proceedings or those of any of it's committees.
- (2) The quorum of the Board or of a committee of the Board shall be determined by the Board.
  - 2. **2**. (1) The Chairman shall preside at any meeting of the Board, but in the absence of the Chairman, the members present shall appoint one of their number to preside at that meeting.
    - (2) The provisions of sub-paragraph (1) of this paragraph shall also apply to meetings of the committees.

3. **3**. Where standing orders made under paragraph 2 of this Schedule provide for the Board or a committee to co-opt persons who are not members of the Board or committee, any such person may advise the Board or committee on any matter referred to him by the Board or committee but shall not be entitled to vote at a meeting of the Board or committee or count towards a quorum.

#### **Committees**

- 4. (1) The Board may appoint one or more committees to carry out, on behalf of the Board, such of its functions as the Board may determine.
  - (2) A committee appointed under this paragraph shall consist of such number of persons (not necessarily all members of the Board) as may be determined by the Board; and a person other than a member of the Board shall hold office on the committee in accordance with the terms of his appointment.
  - (3) Subject to this Act a decision of a committee of the Board shall be of no effect until it is confirmed by the Board.
- 5. **5**. The validity of any proceedings of the Board or of a committee thereof shall not be affected by any vacancy in the membership of the Board or committee, or by any defect in the appointment of a member of the Board or of a committee, or by reason that a person not entitled to do so took part in the proceedings of the Board or a committee.
- 6. (1) Any member of the Board and any person holding office on a committee of the Board, who.has a personal interest in any contract or arrangement entered into or proposed to be consideredby the Board or a committee thereof .shall forthwith disclose his interest to the Board-and shall not vote on any question relating to the contract or arrangement.
  - (2) At any time while the office of the Chairman is vacant or the Chairman is in the opinion of the Board temporarily or permanently unable to perform the functions of his office, a member of the Board duly appointed by the Board shall perform those functions and references in this Act to the Chairman shallbe construed accordingly

#### Miscellaneous

- 7. (1) The fixing of the seal of the Council shall be authenticated by the signature of the Chairman or of any other person authorised in that behalf by the Board.
- 8. Any contract or instrument which, if made or executed by a person not being a body corporate, would not be required to be under seal may be made or executed on behalf of the Council by any person generally or specially authorised to act for that purpose by the Board.
- 9. Any document purporting to be a document duly executed under the seal or on behalf of the Council or a committee shall be received in evidence and presumed to be so executed unless the contrary is provided.

10. The Board or a committee may act notwithstanding any vacancy in its membership or any defect in the appointment of amember or in the absence of a member.

### Section 16(4)

#### PORTS TO WHICH THIS DECREE APPLIES

- 1. Lagos Port Complex, Apapa;
  - 2. Tin Can Island Port, Lagos
- 2. Roro Port, Lagos;
  - 4. Container Terminal, Lagos;
  - 5. Kirikiri Lighter Terminal, Lagos;
  - 6. Port-Harcourt Port;
  - 7. Federal Lighter Terminal, Onne;
  - 8. Federal Ocean Terminal, Onne;
  - 9. Calabar Port;
  - 10. Warri Port;,
  - 11. Burutu Port;
  - 12. Koko Port;
  - 13. Koko Town Port;
  - 14. Sapele Port;
  - 15. Akassa Port;
  - 16. Bonny Port;
  - 17. Degema Port;
  - 18. Forcados Port:
  - 19. The Private Jetties;
  - 20. Tiko,

and any other port as may be designated by the Minister.

MADE at Abuja this 10th day of May 1999.

GENERAL ABDULSALAMI ALHAJI ABUBAKAR, Head of State, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, Federal Republic of Nigeria.

#### **EXPLANATORY NOTE**

(This note does not form part of the above Act but is intended to explain its purport)

The Act provides, among other things, for -

(a) the repeal of the National Dock Labour Act; and

(b) the re-enactment of a new Act which establishes the Joint Dock Labour Industrial Council to register dock workersand dock labour employers.