

EMERGENCY SERVICES REFORM AMENDMENT BILL 2023; STATE EMERGENCY SERVICE BILL 2023; MARINE RESCUE QUEENSLAND BILL 2023

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Submitter Comments:

I know that there are several Coast Guard or VMR stations along the Queensland coast. Some are several hundred kilometres apart (eg, Mackay - Rockhampton; Port Douglas - Cooktown; Cooktown - Bamaga). Many are only staffed on weekends. When MRQ is established, who will monitor radio traffic on weekdays? If I am 60 NM offshore, and I need assistance, who do I call? Mobile telephone reception is non-existent beyond about 20 NM offshore. I am aware that VTS constantly monitor the emergency radio channel (Ch 16). BUT, this is for emergencies. If my vessel breaks down, the only communication I will have, is with the Vessel Tracking Service (VTS) - if my radio is good enough. Will VTS call the nearest Marine Rescue Unit? FURTHER, if I do have telephone reception after hours, who do I call for assistance? I have had previous experience with Policelink, and I am aware that it can take up to 25 minutes to connect to an Operator. Is this waiting time likely to improve after MRQ is established? If a local Marine Rescue Unit is unable to assist, are the Water Police then obliged to render assistance? Marine Rescue Units will be funded by the Qld Govt. Will there be an increase in registration fees for my vessel and boat trailer to supplement the Govt funding. If so, will I be exempt from any fee increase if no Marine Rescue Unit covers my locale? Who will train the MRQ members? For that matter, if a member of the public wants to join MRQ, does he/she apply to MRQ or Qld Police? My local Coast Guard unit (Townsville), offers radio courses to the public. Will this continue? I interact with my local Coast Guard unit by using a database called TRIPWATCH. Without using a 'phone or radio, I can log a trip using this database. Will this continue?