



Speech by

**Mrs J. SHELDON**

**MEMBER FOR CALOUNDRA**

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Hansard 28 April 1999

### **DOLPHINS**

**Mrs SHELDON** (Caloundra—LP) (10.17 a.m.): I rise on an issue of grave concern to environmentalists, to dolphin lovers in general, and to those people who are very concerned about what Minister Henry Palaszczuk is doing in terms of the fishing industry and the killing of dolphins. Certainly, some questions need to be answered.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mrs SHELDON:** Members of the Government may well laugh, but most people love dolphins. The Minister needs to answer why nine dolphins were killed and 76 entrapped within purse seine fishing nets in an experimental Government supervised trial in the last six months of last year despite a scientific observer from the Queensland Fish Management Authority being on board the fishing vessel. What happened to the information that was supposed to be logged by the scientific officer? Was it passed on? If not, why not? If so, why was it not acted upon immediately? Why did it take until February 1999 for this evidently to come to the attention of the Minister, Henry Palaszczuk? Why were the concerns of the environmentalists and recreational fishermen—and there are a large number of them—ignored by the QFMA, which is under the Minister's control? Why have the Minister and the QFMA failed to police the Government's own permit conditions, particularly No. 14 of those permit conditions? Why has the Minister allowed the QFMA to repeal the emergency suspension, despite clear breaches of the permit conditions? Furthermore, Federal authorities responsible for marine mammal protection were not notified.

I have a letter from the Minister for Primary Industries dated 19 April setting out the fact that the emergency closure, which was imposed in order to review bycatch dolphin take in the fishery, has now been repealed and the decision to reopen the fishery was taken by the QFMA management after an investigation of the matter. The Minister for Primary Industries states in the letter, "after investigation". There is no surety that this is not going to happen again, because when it did happen the last time, the Minister allowed it to happen so that nine dolphins were killed and 76 were entrapped before he did a thing. Despite the presence of the Minister's scientific officers and the fact that they supposedly report to him, what guarantee is there that more dolphins will not be killed and entrapped?

Time expired.

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