



Speech by

**Ted Malone**

**MEMBER FOR MIRANI**

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## **FISHERIES AMENDMENT BILL**

**Mr MALONE** (Mirani—NPA) (3.46 pm): It is with pleasure that I rise to speak to the Fisheries Amendment Bill before the House. I will speak briefly because I believe the shadow minister has covered all of the aspects of this bill and of the industry very well.

I would just like to make the point that in my electorate from Rockhampton through to Mackay and out to the outer barrier the fishing industry, both recreational and commercial, is a very strong part of our community wellbeing. Indeed, the commercial industry has taken a very hard hit over recent years in terms of its ability to access the fishery and the recreational fishers have also been imposed upon pretty extensively. In our area the central Queensland coast has an extensive ability to entertain and to cater for recreational fishers, whether that is in estuary fishing in the Stanage Bay area right through almost up to Seaforth and on the onshore islands or in the Percy Islands, where those who have bigger craft go 50 or 60 miles off the coast.

It is an extensive fishery. Unfortunately, when the federal government, through the GBRMPA program, instigated closures the people who came through were devious enough to be able to glean from the fishermen the best areas to fish in that area and promptly closed off those areas. That has been a real disincentive for the attitude of fishers from there on in. It has created some problems. When the representative areas came in that the state government put in place they basically replicated those on the coastal side as well. With the closure of about 30 per cent of the reef, almost 70 per cent of the affected fishery was taken away from those people.

The ownership of recreational boating on the central Queensland coast is possibly the highest in all of Queensland. Indeed, going fishing has been part of the weekend entertainment for a number of years. That has been curtailed very much in recent times. I myself still own a boat that I have not put in the water for many years. I am afraid that, if I do put it in the water now, I would almost have to take my solicitor with me and certainly a GPS to make sure that when I drop a line over the side it is in the right area. That is a real difficulty for some people because they are occasional fishers. They may not go fishing for 12 months and then throw the kids on board and head out with all the safety implications. They are not regular fishers and, therefore, quite often are not proficient in the GPS systems that they have had to instal on their boats. That can be a problem.

If people are caught marginally inside a green zone there are extensive fines. That is a tremendous impost on somebody who might make a slight miscalculation. Recently a friend of mine was fishing not very far off the coast with a couple of his mates. A Fisheries boat pulled up alongside them and they said, 'Are you aware of the green zones?' He indicated that he was and he certainly is. They said, 'According to our GPS you are marginally inside a green zone.' He was smart enough to say, 'Let me have a look at the GPS reading.' They indicated that they did not have it on their boat at that time. There was some discussion from there on in. He asked what he had to do to get out of the green zone and they said that he had to move five metres.

Sometimes I think things are taken too far. In the green zones that are in more extensively used areas buoys could be used to mark the boundaries of those zones. If Fisheries are going to impose tight

boundary identification on those people who do not fish regularly, buoys would help. Commercial fishermen have taken a real hit over the years. It is good to see that something is being done to help out. It may be a bit late in most cases, but it will certainly be a help. With those few words, I commend the bill to the House.