




Speech By  
**Linus Power**  
**MEMBER FOR LOGAN**

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Record of Proceedings, 14 October 2015

## **FISHERIES AND ANOTHER REGULATION AMENDMENT REGULATION (NO. 1)**

### **Disallowance of Statutory Instrument**

 **Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (8.42 pm): My father was not a great fisherman. He was not an expert in the field, but a cherished memory I have is my father teaching me to fish. He showed me how to fix the rod and add line to the reel, to thread the line through the runners to tie a blood knot and to get bait and cast the line. If we were lucky—and mostly we were not lucky—we would catch a fish and he would teach us how to scale, dress and cook a fish. That taught us a love of nature and the sea and the patience to learn skills and to apply those skills with patience and diligence before getting any reward. I cannot think of any better life lesson that a father could give his kids.

I bought an Alvey Reels junior rod-and-reel combo for my own son and daughter and, while thinking of my father, I again threaded the line through the runners and showed my son how to add the sinker, the trace and the hook to the line. I watched as they learned the skills of patience and diligence and I was so proud that my son could catch his first fish. These are the opportunities that should be available for every Queenslander young and old and this government wants to ensure that it is available for all.

It should be mentioned in this debate that the recreational fishing industry supports many Queenslanders. I have already mentioned the world-famous Alvey reels, of which I am a great supporter. I do not know how many members in this place know that the reels are manufactured just down Johnson Road near my office in Carole Park, providing employment and, of course, a fantastic Queensland product. Wilson Fishing makes landing nets, gaffs and their famous bait pumps in Tingalpa and have done so since 1946. Recently, I spoke to the Minister for Innovation about a great local manufacturer in the Crestmead Industrial Estate, which makes an innovative retractable crab pot float. These were designed in Townsville, built at Crestmead and used all over the world.

In my electorate, I know that every Saturday morning locals stream through the door of BCF or Rays Outdoors buying GPSs, fish finders, rods and locally made Alvey reels or, as I did last Sunday, buy a life jacket for my four-year-old daughter. These manufacturers and retailers provide jobs all over Queensland and enable millions of Queenslanders to be involved in fishing. The Minister for Tourism would no doubt be disappointed if I did not mention the many tourism and accommodation operators who owe their business to fishing tourism throughout coastal Queensland.

During the last election campaign I told fishing enthusiasts in the electorate of Logan that I supported the policy that we took to the people to create three net-free zones to enhance recreational fishing in those zones. Today, I am disappointed that some members in this place seek to disallow this policy, which was voted on at the last election as a culmination of a very long process of discussion that has happened over 20 years.

The proposed zones will set aside an area where recreational line fishing enthusiasts will have a far better chance to catch the fish that they want to catch in an area that they can reach safely. I have

never caught a barramundi, but I would like myself and my kids to have that opportunity and to have a small share in the Queensland barramundi catch. These net-free zones will make that more likely to happen.

In some ways the argument for net-free zones is quite simple. I would like to read from this piece of social media titled, 'Who wins with net-free zones in the bay?' It then has four ticks: recreational fishers, local tourism, Moreton Bay and the environment. Who made that argument? It was an LNP member who sees the value of net-free zones, and many of them do. Today, we have seen a split between the members of the party on the other side that is wider than their split over their future leadership. They are split over whether they support—

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. This disallowance motion is about the process. I know the member is new to this place, but it is about the process. So relevance, Mr Speaker.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Thank you, member for Nanango. I would urge the member for Logan to remain relevant to the matter that we are debating.

**Mr POWER:** I take the member for Nanango's point. She, too, was split. Throughout her speech, the member managed to be on both sides of the debate.

As part of our consideration of the regulation, the members of the Agriculture and Environment Committee listened to those who had reservations about the regulation as well as those who strongly supported the net-free zones. I thank them all for their input and participation in the process. I would also like to thank those who sent me emails, including those fishing families who feel very strongly about the policy. Transition can be difficult, even when there is—and I believe there is—a strong public benefit in a transition. I have spoken with the minister directly about those who are making this transition and I know that the minister has a strong understanding of their position.

There are some licence holders who primarily fish within these zones and many can substitute their fishing efforts in other areas just outside the zones or, if it is the right stage of their lives, can take the compensation and have their licence bought back. Of course, this process is voluntary. The buyback will ensure that those remaining in the industry will have enough area to work sustainably and do not face increased competition from net fishers who have been displaced from net-free zones.

I have heard claims from others in this House and from some of those who gave evidence to the committee that the reduction in the number of licence holders would damage the industry. However, I have also heard from many others who held licences and who used them in a limited fashion. There was also a consensus that the licence numbers should be reduced.

Fisheries Queensland has reported that, between 2012 and 2014, the previous LNP government bought back 74 commercial fishing licences. At that time the LNP minister for fisheries stated—

Industry has asked for a 50 per cent reduction of net licences, so we will work towards that target.

Not only was the LNP goal to reduce licences by 50 per cent but also at that time the spokesperson for the Queensland Seafood Industry Association was supporting the policy goal of reducing the number of fishing licences.

One submission that stuck with me from the presentations referred to the fact that we have talked for 16 years about spatial restrictions on activities to better manage our fantastic resources of fish stock. This government will fulfil the promises that it made and create net-free zones to enhance our fish stocks for a sustainable future. I urge the members of this House not to support this disallowance motion.