




Speech By
Patrick Weir

MEMBER FOR CONDAMINE

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FISHERIES (VESSEL TRACKING) AMENDMENT REGULATION

Disallowance of Statutory Instrument

 **Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (6.47 pm): I rise to offer my support for the motion to disallow the Fisheries (Vessel Tracking) Amendment Regulation 2018. It is no secret within the commercial fishing industry just how much angst and frustration the botched rollout of the vessel monitoring system has caused. The Fisheries (Vessel Tracking) Amendment Regulation 2018 was tabled in the parliament on 13 November 2018 and required all crab, line, net fishers and commercial fishing boats and licensed charter operators to have vessel technology installed and operational by 1 January 2019. Unfortunately, since the rollout of VMS trackers the shadow minister, Tony Perrett, has been flooded with examples of faulty VMS responders and general mismanagement from the department.

Responder devices have been recording incorrect polling times and are subject to software failures which have stopped them from working. Safety concerns about the appropriateness of the VMS trackers has completely undermined the rollout and it needs to be reviewed. No regulatory impact statement was conducted before rolling out the VMS regulation and quite clearly, given the results of the implementation, questions are now being raised about the suitability of the VMS responder trials. The VMS regulation was an ideological rollout, not one based on science or fact. The minister is so disorganised that he passed the regulation without any amendment to the penalties, even though he promised on ABC *Country Hour* that the updated fisheries legislation with the penalties would pass the House by the end of 2018. That did not happen and the Fisheries (Sustainable Fisheries Strategy) Amendment Bill 2018 is still sitting on the *Notice Paper*.

As I stated, this amendment was introduced on 13 November 2018, which meant that there was no opportunity to debate the amendment in this House before it was enacted on 1 January 2019. This was a deliberate act by the minister. If ever there were a time to pause and consult meaningfully with the industry on an issue, this was it. A high level of distrust already exists between the fishers and the department. This action by the minister has only added to that distrust.

What did the minister do? The minister—no doubt with the approval of the Premier—snuck this amendment into the parliament to ensure that there was no opportunity to scrutinise it. This was a sneaky and deceitful act. It fails the good governance test. The Palaszczuk government talks loud and long about being open and transparent. The actions of this minister are anything but.