




Speech By  
**Shane King**

**MEMBER FOR KURWONGBAH**

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### **FISHERIES (SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES STRATEGY) AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mr KING** (Kurwongbah—ALP) (4.33 pm): Today I rise to make a contribution on the Fisheries (Sustainable Fisheries Strategy) Amendment Bill 2018. As the son of a proud fisher, the father of a fisher and a fisher myself who has noticed over the years that you just do not catch as much anymore, I was pretty happy to be able to speak on this bill today to say that these changes are long overdue. The amendments in the bill will finally modernise fisheries management in Queensland and give effect to the government's Sustainable Fisheries Strategy 2017. The bill will ensure our fisheries resources stay sustainable and will ensure that future generations can enjoy recreational fishing and local Queensland seafood.

The majority of my community will support these changes and the bill will not affect the average fisher. The changes will bring Queensland in line with other Australian fisheries jurisdictions and best practice management. I was fortunate to have the opportunity to sit in on one of the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee's public hearings in Scarborough during its consideration of the bill and heard concerns from both commercial and recreational fishers. I got that excited that day that afterwards I had to duck next door to Morgans to get a piece of fish. It was pretty good to hear from everyone on the day, and I did note with irony that the chair was a Whiting.

One of the key components of the bill that we heard about on that day related to the stronger compliance powers and penalties for serious offences such as seafood black marketing. This was heavily supported by the recreational fishers on the day. For the purpose of stamping out black marketing, this bill will provide fisheries inspectors the powers needed to effectively investigate such offences. While fisheries inspectors will have greater powers to inspect commercial premises, these changes do not provide fisheries inspectors with any powers beyond those granted to inspectors under other Queensland legislation. Individuals convicted of trafficking in priority fish species could face a maximum penalty of up to 3,000 penalty units. These penalties are in line with those in place in other Australian states where they have proven effective in combating black marketing.

On the day of the hearing Mr Savige, a commercial fisherman, raised a point about the training of fisheries inspectors when carrying out the proposed powers. He lamented that in his opinion the powers were too hard and that the powers were similar to those that the police have and he wanted to know what training the inspectors would have. In response to these and other concerns raised by stakeholders regarding inspectors' powers, the department advised the committee—

The changes that are to be made to fisheries inspectors powers through the Bill are intended to:

- Re-establish fisheries inspectors powers of entry to commercial premises that were inadvertently removed during the adoption of the Seafood Food Safety Scheme ...

With regard to the training of compliance officers, the department stated—

We have a standard training program that we run every year for our compliance officers, and for new recruits we have a one-year training process. The 20 new recruits that we appointed about 12 months ago have just become fully authorised officers, and they go through a comprehensive training process around that.

Another subject that had strongly opposing views at the hearing was VMS, vessel monitoring systems. While no-one disputed that VMS would help to curb fishing in protected areas, the commercial fishers were concerned about their fishing markers being discovered and potentially being disclosed or even sold off, they said, which would limit future catches in their key fishing spots. They consider their marker spots intellectual property which can take years to develop and they said that there was a high commercial value to them. One witness from a commercial fishing business said—

I cannot speak for all fishermen, but I can tell you that our family is very reluctant to give away our fishing marks to any fisheries organisation, which could then disseminate that information to other agencies for uses that we do not even know.

On the day though I got the feeling that most of the commercial fishers knew each other's marks and it would only be a major concern if these locations were divulged outside the circle of the commercial fishers. That is why I was so happy to see that the bill strengthens protections for individuals' private data, including their vessel location data, with penalties on anyone disclosing that private information, including third parties and public servants. As the department stated—

In terms of intellectual property, we heard a lot about that today. That is part of the reason that the bill has a new penalty in there for anybody disclosing private information. That includes public servants who may disclose information and third parties.

...

If we issued that to the marine park authority, parks and wildlife, the Queensland police or somebody like that, those penalties would apply to them as well.

Commercial fishers can take some comfort from that. I will leave my comments at that, but I will finish as I started: our fish stocks belong to everyone. Recreational fishers deserve to be able to catch fish. This legislation is long overdue and I commend it to the House.