

Question on Notice

No. 463

Asked on 2 April 2019

MR E SORENSEN ASKED MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT AND FISHERIES (HON M FURNER)—

QUESTION:

Will the Minister advise what support is available to individuals in the commercial fishing industry who are suffering hardships because of Labor's policies?

ANSWER:

The Government released its Sustainable Fisheries Strategy in June 2017, paving the way for a world class fisheries management system. This followed our tabling of the LNP commissioned MRAG report in 2015, and consultation on the Fisheries Green Paper. To support the reforms, the Government has invested an additional \$20 million over three years to deliver 20 more frontline compliance officers, more monitoring, better engagement and communication as well as more responsive decision making. The Government, in partnership with the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, has made \$3 million available through the Vessel Tracking Rebate Scheme to mitigate the costs incurred by commercial fishers to purchase and install vessel tracking units on their fishing boats.

Following extensive consultation with fishery stakeholders, the fisheries working groups and the Sustainable Fisheries Expert Panel, the Government has now agreed to a number of key directions for a number of fisheries, including the crab, inshore and trawl fisheries.

The Directions Paper, released in January 2019, provides certainty about fisheries changes to be implemented later in 2019 which will apply to commercial fishers, as well as recreational fishers.

Consultation is currently open on the proposed commercial allocation options for the crab, inshore and trawl fisheries. This provides an opportunity for individuals to understand what the proposed quota allocation would mean for their businesses and to talk to a fisheries manager about this. All commercial fishers are encouraged to make a submission.

The Queensland Rural and Industry Development Authority administers the Farm Debt Restructure program which is open to all primary producers including fishers. This program provides assistance to primary producers experiencing financial distress by providing independent expert financial information and analysis of their business operations and planning.

The Palaszczuk Government is committed to making our fisheries sustainable for our children and grandchildren.