

8 September 2008

Senator McEwen, Chair
Senate Standing Committee on Environment, Communications and the Arts

Dear Senator McEwen,
Please accept this submission to the inquiry into the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2008.

I have been in the tackle industry for more than 20 years and have two small children, in that time have accepted the fact that we do need to look after the fisheries that we have and the marine park zoning may have some merits. I am part owner now of Townsville Fishing Warehouse and get to meet and talk to local anglers all the time. Many have accepted the zones that have been implemented and are happy in this era that we live to try and do the right thing. However to have criminal record against your name for fishing in the incorrect area is more than overkill when you look at families only trying to enjoy this great country. It all but divides the community where hard working people can record a criminal conviction on the spot for taking the kids for a fish. This needs to be changed.

I reference to amendment 9 Subsection 3 for fishing to mean searching for, or taking, fish or attempting to search for, or take fish will make it impossible for any vessel to travel through a green zone to any of the farther reefs. To simply travel through these zones it would be obvious that under way boats in most situations weren't trying to catch a fish in that proposed area, just trying to get better distance on their fuel, to expect boaties to go around a zone or incur a fine is simply ridiculous. Maybe removal of the search section may clear a grey line.

In memorandum 67 for the prosecutor to not have to show that the accused knew or was reckless as to the fact that an action is taken in the Marine Park. This will give the accused no ability to contest any infringement and prosecutors no reason to clarify intent.

Patrick Dass
Director
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