



Speech by

Dr Mark Robinson

MEMBER FOR CLEVELAND

Hansard Wednesday, 6 October 2010

MORETON BAY, ARTIFICIAL REEFS

Dr ROBINSON (Cleveland—LNP) (9.36 pm): I rise to address the issue of artificial reefs in Moreton Bay. The government committed to provide six new artificial reefs at a cost of \$2 million during this electoral period. The LNP has been and continues to be supportive of artificial reefs as part of an effective marine park plan for Moreton Bay. Previously in the House I have raised concerns about the way in which the government has conducted itself regarding fulfilling this commitment. In recent months three new issues have developed. First is the secrecy surrounding the program. The minister has been operating under a cone of silence when it comes to her plan. I recently asked the minister, in question on notice No. 1583, to make public the details of the plan for each of the six reefs, specifically the size of each reef and the material types to be used. Of the five reefs still to be built she said—

The member can be kept informed of the dimensions of these reefs when they are completed.

In other words, no-one can know anything about the plan until it is over. There will be no briefings, no public consultation, no scrutiny and no opportunity for suggestions of improvement. This is entirely inadequate from the minister. I call on the minister to release the full details of her plan, including the exact GPS locations, expected completion dates, the size of each reef and the materials to be used in each reef so that the proper scrutiny can be undertaken.

Secondly, the program is well behind schedule. The minister's recent announcement of the location of two reefs, at Peel and Coochiemudlo islands, masks the fact that only one of the six reefs has been built to date and we are already more than halfway through the parliamentary term. Clearly the project should be more advanced than it currently is. I call on the minister to treat this project with the urgency and the importance it deserves and to bring the program back on track.

Thirdly, as a question, is the government trying to back out of its full commitment? It appears that the minister has been considering the use of pylons from the Hornibrook Bridge in the construction of some of the reefs. I asked the minister a question on notice, No. 1663, about whether she planned to use these concrete pylons, but she refused to say whether they were part of the plan for the remaining five reefs. The absence of any clear answer to this question of the pylons leaves open the possibility that the government might be tempted to secretly substitute some of the more expensive, specifically-built high-quality reef structures, such as reef balls, with the cheaper and inferior bridge pylons for some of the reefs. The \$2 million artificial reef program was, for the government, a compensation package and it should be kept and upheld.

Further, if the Hornibrook Bridge pylons are deemed to be suitable materials of opportunity and the government does decide to use them, I would like to recommend that they use them to build an extra two artificial reefs—one near Redcliffe and another perhaps outside the bay. A composite approach that combines the specific reef structures and pylons could produce up to eight reefs in total. If the pylons are to be used, I call on the minister to consider the LNP proposal to create two additional reefs.