

Rural and Regional Adjustment Amendment Regulation 2022

Explanatory Notes for SL 2022 No. 91

made under the

Rural and Regional Adjustment Act 1994

General Outline

Short title

Rural and Regional Adjustment Amendment Regulation 2022

Authorising law

Sections 3, 10, 11 and 44 of the *Rural and Regional Adjustment Act 1994* (the Act)

Policy objectives and the reasons for them

Household Waste Payment Scheme

The Household Waste Payment Scheme (HWPS) was open for applications from 1 July 2019 to coincide with the implementation of the waste disposal levy. The HWPS provides financial assistance for eligible individuals, or proprietors, applying on behalf of eligible households which are directly affected by the waste disposal levy.

Waste disposed of in the waste levy zone, or waste that originates in the waste levy zone, is liable for the waste disposal levy unless it is exempt waste.

Upon announcing the levy, the Queensland Government made a commitment that the levy would have no direct impact on households.

The HWPS has been designed to provide financial assistance to eligible households which are directly affected by the waste levy incurred on domestic waste collection, and which are not covered by annual payments to councils made under the *Waste Reduction and Recycling Act 2011* or any associated supplementary payments made to councils for the same purpose. These eligible households are those serviced by private waste collectors or 'mixed-use' properties with a combination of residential and commercial premises.

The Queensland Government has reiterated the commitment that the introduction of the waste levy will have no direct impact on households and, as a result, the operational period of the HWPS has been extended until 30 June 2026. This extension will also allow for a

six year evaluation of the Scheme in 2025, granting sufficient time to make arrangements for the ongoing operation.

Vessel Tracking Rebate Scheme

Mandatory vessel tracking was introduced on net, line, and crab commercial fishing vessels on 1 January 2019. The commercial harvest fisheries and the remainder of the trawl fisheries were required to have vessel tracking from 1 January 2020 under the *Queensland Sustainable Fisheries Strategy 2017-2027* (the strategy). As a result, the Government made a 2017 commitment to work with the industry to help minimise costs associated with the implementation of compulsory vessel tracking.

The Queensland Government partnered with the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA) to make available \$3 million to assist in the implementation of vessel tracking through the vessel tracking rebate scheme (the rebate scheme). Under the rebate scheme, impacted fishers may be eligible for rebates for the installation and purchase of vessel tracking units during a 'prescribed period', depending on the licences and fishing symbols they hold.

The Rebate Scheme commenced on 30 August 2018 and the prescribed period initially ended on 31 December 2020. In late 2020, the Rebate Scheme was extended via amendments to the *Rural and Regional Adjustment Regulation 2011* to 30 June 2022.

As of 14 March 2022, approximately \$717,984 has been refunded to 730 clients to help subsidise the cost and installation of vessel tracking units.

Due to delays in finalising the implementation of vessel tracking under the strategy, continued access to the Rebate Scheme has been extended beyond the current end of the prescribed period on 30 June 2022 to 30 June 2024. This continues to deliver on the 2017 commitment to supporting the affected fishery industries while mandatory vessel tracking is implemented.

Achievement of policy objectives

Extending the operational period of the HWPS to 30 June 2026 will allow the scheme to provide ongoing financial support in accordance with Government commitment and allow sufficient time for the anticipated six year evaluation of the scheme.

Extending the VTRS will continue to deliver on the Government's 2017 commitment by continuing to provide rebates for the purchase and installation of vessel tracking units for eligible fishers by amending the end of the Rebate Scheme to 30 June 2024.

Consistency with policy objectives of authorising law

The subordinate legislation is consistent with the main objects of the Act.

Inconsistency with policy objectives of other legislation

The subordinate legislation is consistent with the policy objectives of other legislation.

Alternative ways of achieving policy objectives

The regulation is mechanical in nature and, therefore, there are no alternative means of achieving these policy objectives.

Benefits and costs of implementation

The extension of the operational period for the HWPS benefits eligible households which are not covered by annual council payments by continuing to provide financial assistance to offset the waste levy.

The cost of extending the operational period of the HWPS will be managed through the existing budget.

The extension of the existing VTRS benefits fishers by continuing to provide financial assistance to offset the purchase and installation costs of vessel tracking units. The subordinate legislation delivers on the Government's commitment to provide financial assistance.

The cost of extending the closing date of the VTRS will be funded from within the total budget (\$3 million) allocated towards the scheme.

Consistency with fundamental legislative principles

The subordinate legislation has been drafted with regard to, and is consistent with, the fundamental legislative principles as defined in section 4 of the *Legislative Standards Act 1992*.

Consultation

The extension of the HWPS provides continuing relief from the financial burden to eligible affected households from the waste levy, and consultation undertaken at the establishment of the scheme was considered sufficient in consideration of the support for the continuation of the HWPS.

Applicants who have accessed the HWPS have been consulted and are in favour of its continuation.

The extension of the VTRS provides a continuing reduction on the financial burden to commercial fishers who are affected by vessel tracking requirements. Consultation from 2018-19 was considered sufficient in consideration of their support for the continuation of the rebate scheme.

The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority was consulted on its continuing financial support of the VTRS. The Authority has indicated its continuing support, subject to provision of a report to be provided in due course by the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries on the disbursement of the funds.

The Department of Agriculture and Fisheries consulted the Office of Best Practice Regulation (OBPR) on whether the amendment is excluded from further analysis under the *Queensland Government Guide to Better Regulation* (the Guide). OBPR advised that, with regard to both the Household Waste Payment Scheme and the Vessel Tracking Rebate Scheme, the proposals do not add to the burden of regulation and were unlikely to result in significant adverse impact, therefore, no further regulatory impact analysis was required under the Guide.

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