

FISHERIES — LICENCES

**219. Hon RICK MAZZA to the Minister for Fisheries:**

I refer to the new process by which recreational boat fishing licences are now paid online or at a Department of Fisheries office and no longer through Australia Post.

- (1) Can the minister advise of the number of recreational boat fishing licences that are issued annually?
- (2) Since the change from payments through Australia Post to online payments, has there been any delay in sending out licence renewal notices?
- (3) If yes to (2), will those fishers who have not been sent renewal notices be infringed in the event that they are found to be fishing on an expired licence?
- (4) When will the situation be rectified?

**Hon KEN BASTON replied:**

I thank the honourable member for some notice of this question.

- (1) As at 30 June 2013, the number of recreational boat fishing licences was 134 116.
- (2) The sending out of renewal notices was not linked to the Australia Post service. The Department of Fisheries recently experienced a delay of approximately two weeks in sending out notices for renewals due in the month of March.
- (3)–(4) In view of the issue in (2), approximately 26 000 fishers did not get their renewal notices on time. The situation has now been rectified and the affected fishers were recently invited to renew their licences. Although the department endeavours to notify fishers four weeks before the expiry of their licences, it is ultimately the responsibility of the licence holder to ensure that their licence is current. The department may infringe a fisher without a valid licence.