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# Bylaw on long line fishing faces challenge

Recreational fisher denies evidence of problems

John Cousins

**P**roposed restrictions on long-line fishing along Tauranga beaches have been challenged by recreational fisher Tony Kinzett, who argues there is no clear evidence of problems.

Kinzett was one of eight submitters who spoke to a council committee last week on the review of the Beaches Bylaw. Appearing with wife Rox, he said the only new rules he backed were policing a maximum speed limit for motor vehicles on the beach and excluding drones from the definition of aircraft.

But he opposed the introduction of controls on long-line kontiki-styled fishing, saying his research had revealed there was nothing to demonstrate fishing on a beach was dangerous and caused a nuisance.

Quoting the Local Government Act, he said there was no clear evidence of a "material reason or purpose" to amend or introduce a new bylaw. Kinzett's inquiries revealed that the primary issue for Pāpāmoa police had been vehicles being driven dangerously or at speed along the beach.

"I am led to believe that in general there are no real issues in regards to fishing."

St John Ambulance told him there was nothing it was aware of, but it was checking its register for incidents on the beach.

A committee member of the Pāpāmoa Surf Life Saving Club told Kinzett that in his 17 years with the club, he was not aware of any injuries caused by fishing.

"During patrols we have had a few long lines crossing into the flags or along the beach where we have had swimmers. Obviously this could be a potential danger with hooks but generally the owners of long lines have respected us when we have



Tony Kinzett

Peter Campbell

asked them to bring them in. "Common sense would tell you not to launch close to flags or populated areas of swimmers," the club member said in an email.

In an average season there were perhaps one or two incidents in which kontikis floated into flagged areas but life guards quickly sorted them out, the club member said.

The club's chairman confirmed to Kinzett that there were no real issues.

Kinzett concluded his inquiries by asking the council where and when fishing had risked public safety or caused a nuisance.

"In our opinion, minor issues do no warrant council imposing additional bylaws."

He said it was the right of every person to have equal access, use and enjoyment of the beach.

"There are existing dedicated swimming-only areas allocated during the peak season. These allow for safe areas for all swimmers and are controlled by lifeguards."

Kinzett said police had the power to manage public safety and the fishing bylaws were not in tune with local residents and holidaymakers.

Peter Campbell, chairman of the fisheries management subcommittee of the New Zealand Sport Fishing Council, partly supported the fishing additions to the bylaw.

However he drew attention to the section by which the council could, by resolu-

tion, prohibit or restrict fishing on all or part of the beach in order to ensure public safety and prevent nuisance.

Campbell said several government and local authorities could restrict fishing and gathering kai moana, so Sport Fishing was aware of the cumulative effect fishing restrictions had on members and the wider public.

"Clear evidence of a real problem is required before any new restriction is introduced. Closures to fishing on relatively remote parts of the beach are not warranted."

He asked the council to clarify the resolution process and whether prohibitions or restrictions would be publicly advertised.

On the bylaw to prohibit people using all-terrain vehicles at speed or in a dangerous manner, he asked the council to define the wording "which causes or might cause inconvenience to any person in the area".

Campbell supported not allowing kontikis within 300m of a flagged swimming area, but said fishing should be allowed after the flags had been removed, provided public safety was taken into account. Several submitters said operator inexperience was the main reason long lines drifted into areas where people were swimming. Problems were also caused by swimmers entering the water near where a kontiki had been launched.

And the fine for breaching vehicle safety rules on the beach had been reduced to \$150 because the \$750 fine in place had been a barrier to police enforcing the current bylaw. The committee reserved its decision.

**WHAT DO YOU THINK?**  
Email [editor@bayofplentytimes.co.nz](mailto:editor@bayofplentytimes.co.nz). Responses may be published.

### Suggested code of practice for long-line fishers

- Maintain 500m clearance from flagged swimming area.
- Minimum distance of 400m between long-line fishers.
- Respect other water users.
- Keep fishing gear near the water's edge.
- Maintain a watch on fishing gear to prevent line drift.

Source: New Zealand Sport Fishing