



Hon Leanne Donaldson MP
Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries

Reference: CTS 01674/16

16 FEB 2016

The Honourable Peter Wellington MP
Member for Nicklin
PO Box 265
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Dear Mr Wellington *Peter*

Thank you for your email of 19 January 2016 about the Queensland Shark Control Program (the Program) which was established in 1962 following a number of shark attacks.

I am advised officers from both the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DAF) and the Office of the former Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries and Minister for Sport and Racing, have previously met with Sea Shepherd representatives to discuss the Program. Sea Shepherd was advised of the following:

- The purpose of the Program is to reduce the risk of shark attack on bathers enjoying Queensland's more popular beaches.
- A small number of non-target shark species and other marine animals are accidentally captured, and DAF remains committed to investigating all options to minimise impacts on non-target species.
- Every attempt is made to release non-dangerous sharks and other non-target species alive.
- Significant resources are committed to researching ways to minimise impacts on non-target species, including the trialling and use of various types of acoustic alarms or pingers.
- The developments in alternative shark control methods, including shark detecting sonar systems and electromagnetic shark barriers are monitored. However, this technology is still developmental and, as a consequence, traditional control methods remain the most effective to reduce the risk of shark attack. DAF is monitoring the trials of this technology in New South Wales.
- Comprehensive marine animal release contingency plans are in place, including the operation of Marine Animal Release Teams.

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Other strategies used by the Program to assist in the successful release of non-target species include:

- volunteer whale observers on the Gold and Sunshine Coasts who identify and report possible entanglements from high-rise apartments
- surveillance cameras mounted on Gold Coast, Sunshine Coast and Rainbow Beach buildings which are used to monitor shark control apparatus for entangled marine animals
- a 24 hour shark control program hotline for people to report entangled animals (1800 806 891)
- engaging Council Life Guards and Surf Life Saving Queensland staff to report and confirm reported entanglements.

With respect to some of the concerns raised by Mr Clark about the Queensland Government's permit application to continue to operate the Program in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park (GBRMP), I can advise this application is currently being considered by the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority.

The current application includes a request to use additional drumlines in the GBRMP. This request was made to permit the future trialling of new technologies, such as the 'Smart Drumline' without having to amend the permit. The Queensland Government has no plans to increase the number of traditional drumlines currently used within the GBRMP.

The application also seeks to simplify arrangements by identifying the total number of apparatus to be located adjacent to a protected beach, within a clearly defined boundary, rather than conditioning individual drumlines to be deployed at specific sites which has led to the current confusion about the correct location of drumlines.

If your office requires any further information regarding this matter, please contact
in my office on telephone

Yours sincerely

The Honourable Leanne Donaldson MP
Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries
Member for Bundaberg