



The Hon Mark Furner MP
Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries

Our ref: CTS 30994/18
Your ref:

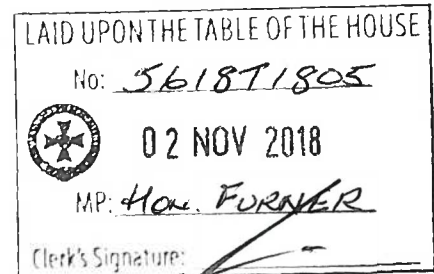
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31 OCT 2018

Mr Neil Laurie
The Clerk of the Parliament
Queensland Parliamentary Services
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Mr Laurie

Neil



Thank you for your letter of 17 October 2018 regarding a petition received by the Queensland Legislative Assembly No. 3024-18.

The aim of the Queensland Shark Control Program is to make beaches a safer place for people to swim.

The Queensland Government will not compromise human safety and continues to support the Shark Control Program with its combination of shark nets and drumlines at 86 of Queensland's most popular beaches.

The Queensland Shark Control Program started in 1962 following two fatal shark attacks in 1961 at Noosa and Mackay.

Since the Shark Control Program started in 1962, there has been one shark fatality at a shark control beach in Queensland.

Shark nets and drumlines are strategically placed, mostly near popular patrolled swimming beaches to reduce the possibility of shark attack for swimmers.

While shark control equipment does not provide an impenetrable barrier between swimmers and sharks, it is effective in reducing the overall number of sharks in the area, making it a safer place to swim.

Based on the evidence to date, traditional capture methods remain the most effective measures to reduce the risk of shark attack.

Drumlines are effective at catching species such as tiger sharks, which are more prevalent in north Queensland. Shark nets are a more effective measure for species such as the aggressive bull shark, which are more prevalent in south east Queensland.

The Queensland Shark Control Program uses a range of measures to reduce the capture of non-target species. This includes using drumlines wherever possible and bait that doesn't attract dolphins and turtles.

Improvements in the types of nets, hooks and bait have improved the ability to target key species, while reducing non-target catch. All shark nets and some drumlines are fitted with acoustic alarms and equipment is checked regularly to minimise the impact on non-target marine species.

Releasing entangled whales is a program priority. Fully-trained Marine Animal Release Teams located at Mackay, the Sunshine Coast and the Gold Coast are at the forefront in the safe release techniques of these animals.

More than 33 000 whales are estimated to pass along the Queensland coast every year. Since 2006, the Fisheries Queensland Marine Animal Release Teams have successfully released all but two whales.

A volunteer whale observer program is in place on the Gold and Sunshine Coasts to identify and report possible entanglements. Surveillance cameras provide real-time access to shark control equipment and have proven to be an effective monitoring tool for the early detection and release of entangled whales. Council lifeguards and Surf Life Saving Queensland staff are also engaged to report and confirm reported entanglements. The Queensland Shark Control Program has a 24 hour toll-free hotline number for reporting entangled animals which is 1800 806 891.

Fisheries Queensland continues to monitor the progress of alternative shark deterrent technology trials being conducted in New South Wales. If new technologies are shown to be effective in preventing marine life fatalities and are practical for use, they will be considered as part of the Program.

Yours sincerely



MARK FURNER MP

Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries