



Speech By
Hon. Mark Furner

MEMBER FOR FERNY GROVE

Record of Proceedings, 3 April 2019

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

 **Hon. ML FURNER** (Ferny Grove—ALP) (Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries) (4.27 pm): I rise to make a ministerial statement. I advise the House of the outcome of an Administrative Appeals Tribunal decision that has implications for the operation of the Shark Control Program within the boundaries of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. The Humane Society International, supported by the New South Wales Environmental Defenders Office, applied to the AAT to have the permit issued by the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority which allows my department to conduct the Shark Control Program in the marine park area refused or varied.

The AAT handed down a decision yesterday which imposes new permit conditions, commencing immediately, which necessitate that significant changes be made to the Shark Control Program operations within the marine park. At this time our contractors do not have the appropriate capabilities to immediately comply with these new conditions. As a result, the decision has been taken to temporarily suspend the Shark Control Program within the boundaries of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park.

I can advise the House that we are intending to appeal this decision. Shark control activities will continue as normal outside the marine park. This includes 37 drum lines and two nets at beaches at Townsville, Mackay, Yeppoon and Tannum Sands.

We will always put human life first. Our Shark Control Program has an outstanding record over almost six decades, with only one death in a Shark Control Program area since it was established in 1962. I have today written to the federal environment minister, who is responsible for the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority. This decision imposes conditions on the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, which is a federally administered authority. My letter to the federal minister seeks her urgent support, and I table a copy of that correspondence. The community expects that their beaches are kept as safe as possible.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 3 April 2019, from the Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries, Hon. Mark Furner, to the federal Minister for the Environment, Hon. Melissa Price, regarding the operation of the Shark Control Program within the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park area [526](#).