




Speech By
Hon. Mark Furner

MEMBER FOR FERNY GROVE

Record of Proceedings, 18 September 2019

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Shark Control Program, Federal Court Decision

 **Hon. ML FURNER** (Ferny Grove—ALP) (Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries) (3.23 pm): This afternoon the Federal Court dismissed the Queensland government's appeal against an Administrative Appeals Tribunal decision affecting the operation of Queensland's Shark Control Program within the boundaries of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. The Queensland government has done everything to vigorously appeal the AAT decision and is disappointed by the Federal Court outcome. Our advice is that we do not have grounds to appeal this decision.

The Queensland government cannot immediately or safely comply with the conditions of the Administrative Appeals Tribunal and we will be working with the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority to discuss implementation of the decision. As a result of this decision we will remove Shark Control Program equipment from the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. I wrote to the previous federal minister for the environment about this on 3 April this year. I table that letter.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 3 April 2019, from the Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries, Hon. Mark Furner, to the federal Minister for Environment, Hon. Melissa Price, regarding the operation of the Queensland Shark Control Program within the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park area [\[1513\]](#).

Then minister Melissa Price responded on 5 April and in that response expressed concerns about the implications of the AAT decision and agreed 'that the safety of humans is a priority'. I table that response.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 5 April 2019, from the federal Minister for Environment, Hon. Melissa Price, to the Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries, Hon. Mark Furner, regarding the operation of the Queensland Shark Control Program within the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park area [\[1514\]](#).

Subsequently I met with the current federal Minister for the Environment, Sussan Ley, in Canberra on 31 July, along with the federal member for Leichhardt and Great Barrier Reef envoy, Warren Entsch, in relation to this matter. Today I am calling on the federal government to step in and protect human safety and our tourism industry by making changes to the federal legislation to allow Queensland's Shark Control Program to continue in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. I table that correspondence.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 18 September 2019, from the Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries, Hon. Mark Furner, to the federal Minister for Environment, Hon. Sussan Ley, regarding the operation of the Queensland Shark Control Program within the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park area [\[1515\]](#).

The AAT decision was about the permit issued to the Shark Control Program by the federal government's Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority which happened under current federal legislation. Outside of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, the Shark Control Program, with its combination of shark nets and drumlines, will continue at Queensland's most popular beaches. Our Shark Control Program has an exceptional record dating back to 1962 and our government stands by that record.

The government will also continue our swimmer safety SharkSmart education and awareness campaign. The Queensland government has always put the safety of human life first, and we will continue to do so. Additionally, I table the Federal Court's decision on this matter.

Tabled paper: Federal Court of Australia judgement, dated 18 September 2019, *Humane Society International (Australia) Inc and Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (Qld)* [2019] AATA 617 [[1516](#)].