

**Question on Notice
No. 1232
Asked on Tuesday, 15 September 2009**

DR ROBINSON ASKED THE MINISTER FOR CLIMATE CHANGE AND SUSTAINABILITY (MS JONES)—

QUESTION:

With reference to the deaths of dugongs, dolphins and turtles in Moreton Bay over the last two months—

Will the Minister outline what new funding has been committed since the recent marine deaths outbreak to prevent further loss of marine life?

ANSWER:

There is no evidence of an outbreak in the number of dolphin, dugong and turtle deaths in Moreton Bay, with the number of strandings so far this year similar to previous years.

While several deaths have recently been reported in a small time frame, this is consistent with historical trends of a peak in strandings from August to October each year.

This is believed to be related to animals in poor condition not surviving the winter.

Moreton Bay supports large populations of dolphins, dugong and turtles, and any such population will have deaths from natural causes such as old age, congenital problems or predation, and human-related factors such as entanglement in nets or boat strike.

The Government has this year committed \$930,000 in additional ongoing funding to assist in the implementation of Moreton Bay Marine Park's new Zoning Plan.

The funds are being used to employ eight new rangers and support their operational activities on the Marine Park, which include responding to marine animal strandings.

Other current initiatives underway, with State Government support, include: waterway restoration projects in high-risk catchments; assistance for landowners to adopt sustainable land use practices to minimise pollution, reducing sediment and nutrient loads from land-clearing new urban developments, better management and prevention of coastal algal bloom hazard, and investments in the science needed to monitor achievement of healthy waterways.