

Question on Notice

No. 1720

Asked on 23 October 2019

MR A PERRETT ASKED MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT AND FISHERIES (HON M FURNER)—

QUESTION:

With reference to page 29 of Budget Measures (Budget Paper 4) in relation to the \$17.1m commitment over four years for shark mitigation measures— Will the Minister provide (a) the programs supported by this funding and funding for each program (reported by year and program across the forward estimates) and (b) the total amount of funding allocation towards the Shark Control Program (reported separately across the forward estimates)?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for the question.

As part of this year's Budget, the Palaszczuk Government announced it will provide the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries with an additional \$17.1 million over four years and \$4.4 million per annum ongoing toward shark mitigation measures.

The \$17.1 million provided over four years commences with \$4.2 million in 2019-20 and increases to \$4.4 million in 2022-23. The ongoing annual funding will cover:

- contractor costs within the program
- administration costs to fund increased bait, material and travel costs
- a research and innovation program to trial and assess new approaches, technologies and gear
- a swimmer safety education and awareness program to cover a range of swimmer safety issues
- funding for three additional staff to progress the programs around research, education and ongoing operational improvements.

\$1 million per year has been committed to research and trials of alternatives in the program, which will be informed by the Scientific Working Group and a review of suitable alternatives for Queensland undertaken by Cardno.

The SharkSmart swimmer safety education and awareness programs will be delivered as a whole-of-Government approach to educating all water users including beach goers, tourism businesses and visitors on how to swim safely in Queensland's coastal waters.

Additional Funding provided in 2019/20 Budget	2019-20 \$M	2020-21 \$M	2021-22 \$M	2022-23 \$M	Total Cost \$M
Increasing contractor costs	2.501	2.531	2.471	2.653	10.156
Additional administration and equipment costs	0.518	0.528	0.536	0.545	2.127
Research and trials of new approaches, technologies and gear	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	4.000

Swimmer safety education program (DAF allocated funding only)	0.200	0.200	0.200	0.200	0.800
Total funding	4.219	4.259	4.207	4.398	17.083
Total Funding for the Program over forward estimates	2019-20 \$M	2020-21 \$M	2021-22 \$M	2022-23 \$M	Total Cost \$M
Total Shark Control Program Funding	6.815	6.946	7.077	7.268	28.106

These figures include payments to contractors usually working within the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. Although drum lines have been removed from the Commonwealth marine park, existing contractual arrangements will continue in the short term until this matter is resolved.

It should be noted that the Queensland Program is a catch and remove program, while the LNP proposal of catch and release, using the more expensive SMART drumlines, ensures sharks are released alive.

It should also be noted that Cardno highlights that SMART drumlines will not work in the reef. The Palaszczuk Government will not promote programs for the Shark Control Program that place swimmers at risk.