

Question on Notice

No. 801

Asked on 16 June 2021

MS S BOLTON ASKED MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT AND FISHERIES AND MINISTER FOR RURAL COMMUNITIES (HON M FURNER)—

QUESTION:

With reference to the Noosa Biosphere Reserve Foundation's Marine Species Protection Symposium recently held, showcasing alternative shark control methods and Dr Scott-Holland from the department advised of the Shark Smart education program and a smart drumlines trial in Central Queensland— Will the Minister provide further advice on the outcomes of both of these new measures and, if successful, when they will be extended to the Noosa Electorate?

ANSWER:

The SharkSmart education campaign commenced in September 2020 and provides useful tips for water users to follow whenever they are in or on the water. Following the success of this initial campaign, the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries will be looking at ways to target the messages to specific water users (for example, surfing, snorkelling or swimming) and to geographical areas during peak usage times.

The SharkSmart drone trial is being delivered in partnership with Surf Life Saving Queensland and began in September 2020 at five South East Queensland beaches. The trial will continue until 4 October 2021, being the end of school holidays. The SharkSmart drone trial was expanded into North Queensland in June 2021. A final evaluation will be undertaken at the completion of the trial to inform government decisions about whether drones may be an effective long-term tool for spotting sharks at Queensland beaches.

Advice from Surf Life Saving Queensland is that many constituents in the Noosa community are opposed to the use of drones on local beaches. Further, the Noosa Shire Council has not approved the operation of drones at Noosa to date. However, the department will continue to work with the council on this issue.

SMART drumlines are a type of catch alert drumline. A trial of catch alert drumlines in Central Queensland is expected to start in the third quarter of 2021, subject to approval by the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority. A comprehensive evaluation will be conducted at the end of this initial trial to inform government decisions about whether catch alert drumlines may be an effective option for other locations.