



**Dugald Saunders**  
Minister for Agriculture  
Minister for Western NSW

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **RECORD INVESTMENT IN NSW SHARK MITIGATION MEASURES**

Shark response capabilities will be enhanced in beaches across the state, with the NSW Government announcing today a boost of \$4.4 million for a suite of immediate additional mitigation methods, as well as ongoing funding of more than \$85 million to continue this strategy until 2026.

Minister for Agriculture Dugald Saunders said shark interactions are always possible, regardless of the technologies deployed, however it is critical for the NSW Government to do everything possible to reduce that risk to the millions of beachgoers who hit the water every year.

“The tragic event that happened at Little Bay earlier this year was a tough reminder that whilst we’ve been able to coexist for decades relatively safely, sharks do exist and they can pose a significant risk to humans,” Mr Saunders said.

“We are not only announcing immediate additional response capabilities, including more Shark Listening Stations, SMART Drumlines and Rapid Response Vehicles, but we’re also committing to ongoing funding for future mitigation to protect our beachgoers for years to come.

The immediate additional response package includes:

- 10 additional VR4G Listening Stations;
- 60 extra SMART drumlines;
- 500 more shark tags to trace sharks caught on expanded drumline roll out;
- Funding for four more Rapid Response Vessels;
- Long Range Drone Trials in partnership with Surf Life Saving NSW;
- Additional Surf Life Saving resources to increase their presence at beaches; and,
- Applied research into wetsuit materials to reduce the impact of shark attacks.

The \$85.6 million 2022-2026 Shark Mitigation Program will include:

- The extension of the 51 nets as part of the Shark Meshing Program deployed seasonally;
- The continuity and expansion of the SMART drumline program;
- The establishment of a First Responder Team based across NSW to coordinate the government’s response to shark incidents;
- Keeping the NSW Government’s 37 shark listening stations across the coast;

- More funding to Surf Life Saving NSW to continue and expand aerial surveillance using drones across the state's coastline;
- Funding to continue to enable Surfing NSW to provide shark mitigation supports and services such as trauma kits during riding competitions and surf schools;
- Research funding for new tools, technologies and further insights into shark behaviour; and,
- An annual survey of community confidence and sentiment in NSW Government shark mitigation efforts.

Mr Saunders said the investment builds on an already extensive suite of mitigation methods.

“This summer alone, the NSW Government committed \$21.4 million to implement a number of extra mitigation tools, including SMART drumlines, drone technology, 16 additional shark listening stations, 51 shark nets, the Shark Smart app and community awareness campaigns, so today's funding will be a welcome boost to further these initiatives,” Mr Saunders said.

“We know sharks can be extremely dangerous and aggressive, however, they're also part of what makes NSW's marine life so beautiful, so we need to make sure we continue to have state-of-the-art technology in place to allow them and beachgoers to coexist.

“There is no other jurisdiction in Australia or across the globe which has done as much testing and trialling of technology and approaches to mitigate shark interactions, and our shark program is now the largest and most comprehensive in the world.”

For more information, visit <https://www.sharksmart.nsw.gov.au/>

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