



Niall Blair
Minister for Primary Industries

Troy Grant
Minister for Emergency Services

MEDIA RELEASE

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DRONES TO EYE MORE BEACHES THIS SUMMER

Beachgoers in NSW will have extra protection in the sky this summer, with the Government's drone program expanded to more NSW beaches. In partnership with Surf Life Saving NSW (SLSNSW), 15 beaches will have drones assisting lifeguards and lifesavers to spot any potential risks in the water as they happen.

Minister for Primary Industries, Niall Blair said drones have been a terrific tool to help prevent attacks and any other serious water risks.

"This is life-saving technology, in a country like Australia, using drones as a beach safety tool makes complete sense," Mr Blair said.

"They allow our lifesavers to spot the risk and get straight to work to prevent a potential attack or drowning."

The trial began last year at beaches on the North Coast but we will now have drones also located at Kingscliff, Yamba, Coffs Coast, Tacking Point Port Macquarie, Birubi, Redhead, Avoca, Kiama, Mollymook, Pambula and Tathra.

Minister for Emergency Services Troy Grant said the NSW Government was investing in safety resources to support thousands of residents and visitors expected to hit the beach over the summer months.

"Our emergency services agencies work tirelessly to keep the community safe and any extra help we can provide to those on the frontline is a sound investment," Mr Grant said.

"We all recognise our lifesavers as heroes between the flags and this initiative will expand the lifesaving work they now provide well beyond the yellow and red flags.

"The NSW Liberals & Nationals Government is committed to improving water safety and reducing the number of preventable deaths in the water. We want everyone to enjoy our renowned coastline and return safely home."

SLSNSW CEO, Steven Pearce said this would not only benefit locals but also the thousands of tourists who flock to our state's beaches every year.

"We look forward to continuing our collaboration in a larger trial of this ground breaking technology this summer which will see SLSNSW now become the largest operator of drones for coastal surveillance and rescue response."

The trial will complement helicopter aerial surveillance for the upcoming school holidays from the Tweed to Wollongong. The drone trials will continue until the end of April 2019.

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