



Niall Blair
Minister for Primary Industries
Minister for Regional Water
Minister for Trade and Industry

MEDIA RELEASE

Monday, 21st January 2019

BEAT OF THE DRUMLINES HEADS TO NEWCASTLE

Editor's note: Please see [link to vision here](#) and [animation here](#)

The NSW Government has today announced it will trial up to 10 SMART drumlines at Newcastle beaches from 1 February to 30 April 2019, in an effort to increase protection for beachgoers and minimise harm to sharks or other marine life.

SMART drumlines will be introduced across Stockton, Nobbys, Newcastle, Bar, Dixon Park and Merewether beaches nearby existing shark nets.

Minister for Primary Industries, Niall Blair said SMART drumlines are state-of the art technology, which are set every morning (weather permitting) and collected at the end of each day.

“This is the first time SMART drumlines will be trialed in Newcastle and will add an extra layer of protection to the NSW Government’s shark net program,” Mr Blair said.

“There are no plans to remove nets from Newcastle beaches, however we want to continue to find ways to reduce the risk to beachgoers right across NSW.”

SMART drumlines will be set 500 metres offshore and consist of two buoys and a satellite-linked communications unit, which is attached to a hook baited with a single mullet. If a shark or other animal is captured, an alert is sent to a boat crew who respond to the animal within 30 minutes. If it is a target shark (White, Bull or Tiger shark), the shark is tagged and then released one kilometre offshore. All other marine animals caught are released immediately.

Mr Blair said trials on the North Coast and other parts of NSW have shown that SMART drumlines are a highly effective measure at intercepting sharks with minimal impact on the marine environment.

“We’ve been at the forefront with new technologies such as SMART drumlines and have seen some great results, which is why it’s time to trial these in some new locations.”

A shark VR4G listening station at Redhead Beach is one of 21 shark listening stations across NSW that automatically send alerts to the SharkSmart app and Twitter account, when a tagged shark swims within 500m of the unit.

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