



Niall Blair

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

MEDIA RELEASE

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NORTH COAST NETS TO GO BUT MINISTER TO HAVE POWERS TO CHANGE

The NSW Government has today announced it will remove nets from the NSW North Coast this summer following two net trials and community feedback.

However, while a third trial will not go ahead, it will be at the discretion of the Minister for Primary Industries to put the nets back in at any time if there is sufficient evidence of an increase in shark activity or a change in community sentiment.

Minister for Primary Industries, Niall Blair said he believed today's decision provides a good balance for the community.

"We have taken on board the concerns of local residents and the local beach going community who have said loud and clear – they do not support another trial of shark nets on the North Coast," Mr Blair said.

"The recent net trials have shown that SMART drumlines have significantly less impact on marine life than the nets and are more effective at catching target sharks.

"Up to 35 SMART drumlines will continue to be trialed daily between Lennox Head and Evans Head, weather permitting, until mid-2020.

"Aerial surveillance will continue every weekend and during the school holidays. We are also currently working with Surf Life Saving on extending the drone trials beyond just the North Coast."

"I want to thank the North Coast community for working with us over the past few years as we've tried to find the best solutions. I am pleased to see that since our measures have been in place local tourism and community sentiment has improved greatly. We will continue to work closely with the community as we move into the warmer months to make sure today's changes are working."

The NSW Government developed a \$16 million Shark Management Strategy that has trialed drones, aerial surveillance, VR4G listening stations, personal deterrents, clever-buoy, SMART drumlines and nets.

Shark scientists are currently tracking 289 White Sharks, 38 Tiger Sharks and 61 Bull Sharks via SMART drumlines. There are no plans to remove shark nets from beaches between Newcastle-Sydney and Wollongong.

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