

BEGA VALLEY REGION

Proposed SMART drumline trial

November 2018

Since 2015, the Department of Primary Industries (DPI) has managed the NSW Government's five-year Shark Management Strategy which trials new and emerging technologies for shark detection and deterrents. Some of these technologies include SMART (Shark-Management-Alert-in-Real-Time) drumlines and tagging for catching and tracking sharks, and drones and helicopters for aerial monitoring.

In the Bega Valley region, a shark listening station is currently operating around 500m offshore at Merimbula beach. This big, yellow buoy, detects tagged sharks that swim within 500m of the unit and alerts DPI's SharkSmart app and Twitter [@NSWSharkSmart](https://twitter.com/NSWSharkSmart).

Proposed SMART drumline trial in the Bega Valley Region

DPI is proposing an eight week trial commencing in January 2019 using 10 SMART drumlines at each of Tathra and Pambula-Merimbula. The Far South Coast is one of many regions selected across the NSW coast to better understand how the technology works in different coastal areas and operating environments.

SMART drumlines are state-of-the-art technology that differs greatly from traditional drumlines as they allow sharks to be caught, tagged, relocated 1km offshore and released alive. In the current trial in Northern NSW, up to 35 SMART drumlines are deployed daily between Evans Head and Lennox Head, and trials have also taken place in Coffs Harbour, Forster, Kiama and Ulladulla. For more information, read the SMART drumline Frequently Asked Questions overleaf.

Have your say on trialling SMART drumlines in Bega Valley Region

DPI is seeking your views on the proposed SMART drumline trials in Tathra and Pambula-Merimbula. Have your say through our online community survey at dpi.nsw.gov.au/sharks

This survey is open from 26 November – 9 December 2018.

Come along to our community drop-in stands

- » Speak to NSW DPI staff and share your views
- » See a SMART drumline and understand how it works

Merimbula Main Beach

Saturday, 1st December 2018
9.30am – 2pm

Pambula Surf Club

Sunday, 2nd December 2018
9.30am – 11am

Tathra Surf Club

Sunday, 2nd December 2018
12pm – 2pm

We hope you can join us to learn more about shark management and have your say.

SMART DRUMLINE

Frequently Asked Questions

What is a SMART drumline?

'SMART' stands for Shark-Management-Alert-In-Real-Time. SMART drumlines consist of an anchor, two buoys and a satellite-linked GPS communications unit attached to a hook baited with one sea mullet.

A triggering magnet is attached to the communications unit. When a shark takes the bait and puts pressure on the line, the magnet is released alerting DPI scientists and contractors there is an animal on the line. Once alerted, the team responds immediately (within 30 minutes) to catch, tag and release the shark or other marine animal.

SMART drumlines are set every morning (weather permitting) approximately 500m offshore at a depth between 8-15m of water. They are collected at the end of each day and are not left overnight.

Where are sharks released if they are captured?

Once a shark is tagged, it is relocated about 1km offshore. Data collected from other trials show that sharks often head further offshore immediately after release and resume their natural migratory path before returning to nearshore waters.

How will I know if a shark has been captured?

An alert will be made publicly available through DPI's SharkSmart app and Twitter @NSWSharkSmart after the target shark is released. Alerts are also posted automatically when a tagged shark swims within 500m of one of the 21 VR4G listening stations across NSW.

Do SMART drumlines attract sharks?

SMART drumlines are set up just beyond the surf break to intercept sharks as they naturally migrate up and down the coast. Using a whole sea mullet as bait, SMART drumlines are designed to capture sharks within the immediate area. Burley or other attractants are not used.

DPI has undertaken over 22,000 sets of SMART drumlines, often resulting in no catch and bait still intact at the end of the day.

If the 'attractant' myth was true, then DPI would be catching sharks almost continuously, which is not the case.

What are the objectives of the trial?

Data collected from the Bega Valley Region trial would be used to fine tune this technology and gather movement data on 'target sharks' including White, Bull and Tiger sharks. These species are predominately involved in serious shark bites across NSW.

Tagged sharks would provide alerts to the shark listening station at Merimbula Beach to alert the community when a tagged shark is present within 500m of the listening station.

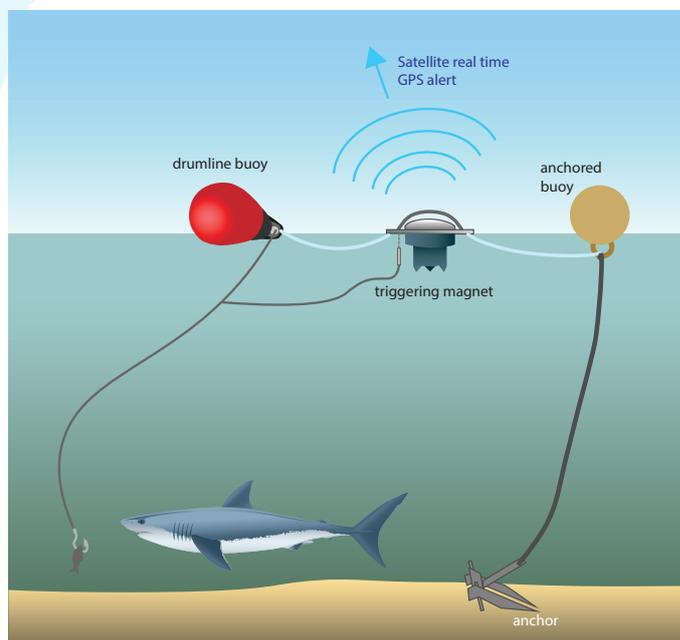
Following the proposed eight week trial, DPI scientists will assess the results of the trial and share these with the community.

Where else has DPI trialed SMART drumlines?

20 SMART drumlines are currently being trialed between Seven Mile Beach, Lennox Head and South Ballina, and 15 at Evans Head until June 2020.

Six-month trials using 10 SMART drumlines have also been conducted at each of Coffs Harbour, Forster, Kiama and Ulladulla.

To read more about other trials and what was caught visit dpi.nsw.gov.au/fishing/sharks/management/smart-drumlines



For further enquiries contact nsw.sharkstrategy@dpi.nsw.gov.au