

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
Question On Notice

Tuesday, 17 May 2016

4137. Hon Robin Chappie to the Attorney General representing the Minister for Fisheries

I refer to question without notice No. 434, asked in the Legislative Council on 12 May 2016, regarding the shearwater bycatch reduction program in zone 1 of the South Coast Purse Seine Fishery, and ask:

- (a) will the Minister please answer the first part of the question about non-compliance with 'public' reporting in 2014 and 2015;
- (b) if no to (a), why not;
- (c) the weighted line in the net experiment was conducted on four shots (out of 100s) from one boat (out of about 12), will the Minister provide information about how many birds were present around these shots;
- (d) what are the mortality figures for last season, and is this data complete;
- (e) if the weighted line method works, does the Minister intend to institute this method on every boat in zone 1 of the South Coast Purse Seine Fishery;
- (f) if no to (e), why not;
- (g) if yes to (e), what is the timeframe;
- (h) given that nearly a decade of 'experimental' latitude has passed and that the fleshy-footed shearwater is now in serious decline, all bycatch protection methods need to be mandated, so does the Minister intend on ending the voluntary code of conduct approach;
- (i) if yes to (h), what is the timeframe for implementation;
- (j) if no to (h), why;
- (k) given nearly a decade of ineffective action, the target bycatch mortality should now be zero, will the Minister implement this target;
- (l) if yes to (k), what is the timeframe for implementation; and
- (m) if no to (k), why not?

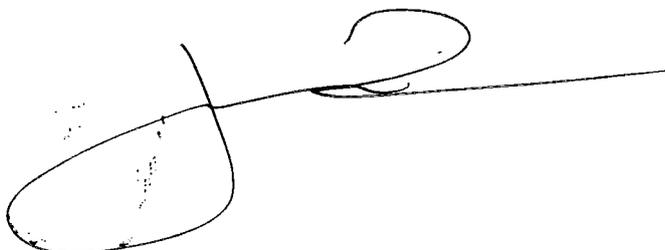
The Department of Fisheries advises:

- (a) The Department of Fisheries (the Department) is currently determining the most effective mechanism for public reporting of protected species interactions for all of the State's fisheries, including the South Coast Purse Seine Fishery (the Fishery).

Work is underway to validate the 2015 shearwater interactions in the Fishery and the most recent shearwater bycatch report. The South Coast Purse Seine Shearwater Mitigation Working Group is due to meet in late June to review the current and newly validated interaction data and historical interaction data.

When an updated bycatch report has been received, the Department will be in a position to publish shearwater interaction information.

- (b) Not applicable



- (c) The weighted line trial is an industry led and funded initiative to reduce shearwater entanglements. The trial is ongoing. At its next meeting, the Working Group will be considering the outcomes of the trial and the merits of expanding it for the commencement of the 2017 peak shearwater interaction period.
- (d) From February to April 2016 there were 46 shearwater mortalities reported by vessels in the Fishery and 59 reported on Middleton and Goode beaches combined. There have also been separate public reports. Validated interaction data will be published when it is available.
- (e)-(g) Please see answer (c).
- (h)-(m) The Fishery has implemented voluntary mitigation measures over the past decade with notable success. The Working Group will continue to improve practices through the voluntary Code of Conduct and the implementation of improved governance arrangements around reporting.