

Queensland Seafood Industry Association

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MEDIA RELEASE

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FISHERMEN SUPPORT GBRMPA CALL FOR INFORMATION

THE Queensland Seafood Industry Association (QSIA) - the peak body representing commercial fishermen in the State, has supported an appeal to the community for information about the death of two snub-fin dolphins near Townsville.

The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA) today asked for public assistance in discovering how the two dolphins came to be found tied by a rope to mangroves at Toolakea Beach, north of the city, urging anyone with information to come forward.

QSIA President Michael Gardner said that his organisation supported this call for information and wanted the issue of how the dolphins died to be resolved.

“When something like this occurs, it is inevitable that the finger of blame will be pointed at commercial fishermen, and it is in the industry's best interests to have the matter resolved as quickly as possible,” Mr Gardner said.

“There are a lot of unanswered questions about this matter. For example, the two dolphins seem to have been anchored in a location where they would be exposed on every low tide and inevitably would be found. This just seems like illogical behaviour.”

Mr Gardner said the QSIA was working to reduce the risk of marine mammals being caught in nets, and recently had joined with the GBRMPA, and the Queensland Department of Employment, Economic Development & Innovation and Department of Environment & Resource Management to form a task force to examine the issue.

“This task force involves government and industry working together. It means we can involve fishermen and fisheries, wildlife managers and researchers in jointly finding ways to further reduce the risk of interactions with species of conservation interest (SOCl) when net fishing. This is a very important issue to us.”

FURTHER INFORMATION: Mr Michael Gardner, QSIA President on 0409 991 150