

# Mayor Tom Tate reveals new \$110k jetski to save Gold Coast beaches and keep staff safe from sharks

WORKERS won't have to fear being taken by a shark while mapping the sea floor of Gold Coast beaches thanks to the city council's new \$110,000 piece of hardware.

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The Gold Coast City Council now has a jet ski equipped with GPS and sonar equipment that will be used to monitor the movement of sand off Gold Coast beaches. Mayor Tom Tate takes the craft for a spin. Pic: Richard Gosling.

WORKERS won't have to fear being taken by a shark while mapping the sea floor of Gold Coast beaches thanks to the Gold Coast City Council's new \$110,000 piece of hardware.

The new Sand Activity Monitoring jetski is being billed as an "extra weapon" in a multi-million dollar arsenal protecting the coastline from being swallowed by the sea.



"The cream on the cake the sharks can't get around and hurt our staff," Cr Tate. Pic by Richard Gosling

The ski, with one operator, does the work of three surveyors, according to Mayor Tom Tate.

"For the last project they went out on, it was eight people and six days," Cr Tate said after taking the jetski for a spin yesterday.

"Equivalently when you take (the ski) out it was done in two days with one person.

"And the cream on the cake — the sharks can't get around and hurt our staff."

The watercraft uses sonar and GPS technology to map the condition of sandbanks off the city's beaches.

This is used to map where sand pumping is needed to safeguard homes and the coastline from beach erosion caused by storms.

It is part of the council's \$32 million commitment to looking after the coast.



Council hydrographic surveyor Shannon Cameron, who might have one of the best jobs on the Coast, said cruising about on the ski was a lot easier than swimming in murky river mouths at 5am to survey the sea floor. Pic by Richard Gosling.

Council hydrographic surveyor Shannon Cameron, who might have one of the best jobs on the Coast, said cruising about on the ski was a lot easier than swimming in murky river mouths at 5am to survey the sea floor.

“(Sharks) are a legitimate threat,” Mr Cameron said.

“We like to get out on the water early and we’re usually near creeks or river mouths.”

He said it took the guesswork out of judging weather conditions.



Council Hydrographic surveyor Shannon Cameron taking the new equipment for a spin. Pic: Richard Gosling

“Say if we have a three-day weather window we can get on the ski and, bang, we know where we need to get going to get things done,” he said.

“Usually when you’re depending on swimming and more manual labour, it’s a bit more of a gamble.”

Surveyors work from Jumpinpin in the north to Tweed Heads in the south.