



# Boat seized after alleged duck breach

THE seizure of a power boat allegedly used by duck shooters to push prey into the sky on the last day of duck season has shocked authorities.

Victoria's Game Management Authority has taken possession of an airboat which is alleged to have been used on the final weekend of the duck season in June at Cundar Pool, near Lake Corangamite, west of Geelong.

The GMA released a statement on its Facebook page confirming it had taken action.

"The boat was allegedly used in contravention of the Wildlife Act 1975," the statement said. "One person was interviewed on the night and others are expected to be interviewed in the coming weeks."

Footage taken by the Coa-

lition Against Duck Shooting appears to show a group of hunters using a craft to push ducks into the sky.

Laws state shooters can "hunt ducks from a boat under power up to a speed of five knots on waterways such as rivers, creeks and streams. Hunting duck "from a motor boat with the boat running (whether it is in gear or not) on open water such as lakes, dams or swamps is specifically prohibited."

Agriculture Minister Jaala Pulford said she was shaking her head at the alleged breach but was confident in GMA's ability to prosecute as required.

"We changed the rules for this season in a lot of different ways and we also sent a very clear message to hunters that those doing the wrong thing will be caught," Ms Pulford

said. She said she was "feeling quite positive about new measures put in place this season having worked".

"The GMA was set up by the former government in 2014, it is quite a small regulator and the failing of its first test in 2017 led to the commissioning of the report by Pegasus, they did not hold back, it's pretty uncomfortable reading for me as the minister and as it is for the board.

"It certainly put the GMA on notice and I think they have improved their performance significantly in a relatively short period of months.

"The very fact there were these allegations from the closing weekend of duck season and the gear has since been confiscated is a sign of growing confidence in the regulator."