

SHARK DRUM LINE PROGRAM

377. Hon LYNN MacLAREN to the Minister for Fisheries:

I refer to drum lining off the metropolitan area, which is being conducted as a shark hazard mitigation measure.

- (1) Is it correct that staff on board the Fisheries vessels have, at times, taken evasive action to avoid the undersized sharks that they have released being filmed or physically assisted by independent observers?
- (2) If yes to (1), is this being done at the minister's request?
- (3) What specific training have Fisheries officers who are involved in drum-lining operations received for the task?
- (4) Has a set of operating procedures for conducting drum lining been developed?
- (5) In order to reduce the number of undersized sharks that are dying while hooked on the drum lines or that are being released in a state of near death due to the long periods they have spent hooked on drum lines, will the minister consider instructing the operators to bait the hooks only in the morning rather than leaving them out overnight?
- (6) If no to (5), why not, given that the current Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act exemption requires that the Western Australian government tries to minimise environmental harm caused by drum lining?

Hon KEN BASTON replied:

I thank the member for some notice of this question.

- (1) No.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) All officers involved have received formal training and authorisation for the use of firearms used in the program. The officers involved are experienced mariners, having worked with various forms of fishing gear across a wide range of fisheries and are familiar and experienced in using the fishing gear being used as part of the program and in the handling of sharks and other marine fauna.
- (4) Yes.
- (5) No.
- (6) The government is complying with the exemption provided under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act.