

SHARK DRUM LINE PROGRAM

85. Hon LYNN MacLAREN to the Minister for Fisheries:

I refer to the Department of Fisheries' risk assessment advice on the Environmental Protection Authority website that the current drum line program will be assessed throughout and after its operation by stakeholders, including technical experts from the Departments of Fisheries; and Parks and Wildlife.

- (1) Will the "technical experts" from the Department of Fisheries include the department's principal research scientist on sharks?
- (2) In what ways has the department's principal research scientist on sharks been involved in assessing the drum line program to date?
- (3) Has the department's principal research scientist on sharks provided a briefing to the minister on the issues of shark attacks in Western Australia?
- (4) If no to (3), why not?
- (5) Will the assessment of the drum line program made by the Departments of Fisheries; and Parks and Wildlife be made public?
- (6) If no to (5), why not?

Hon KEN BASTON replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question.

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Involvement to date by the principal research scientist from the shark section in assessing the operations of the drum line program includes contributing to departmental initiatives to develop data validation protocols, plus an examination of what additional research activities, such as tagging, are feasible.
- (3) I have had a number of discussions on issues associated with shark attacks with the director general and the executive director, research of the Department of Fisheries. These discussions have incorporated input from a variety of departmental staff with specialist knowledge and expertise in this area, including that provided by the principal research scientist in the shark section.
- (4) Not applicable.
- (5)–(6) Comprehensive catch data for drum lines in Perth and the south west will be made public on an ongoing basis. A review of the deployment of drum lines as part of the government's overall shark hazard mitigation strategy will be coordinated by the Department of the Premier and Cabinet and will be made public. It is important to note that the data released in 2014 will be for approximately three months only, with a full year's data available only at the end of the 2014–15 summer.