

SHARK DRUM LINE PROGRAM — WYLIE BAY, ESPERANCE

1105. Hon LYNN MacLAREN to the Minister for Fisheries:

I refer to events following the serious shark incident at Wylie Bay near Esperance on 2 October 2014.

- (1) On what basis was an exemption sought from the federal government to allow temporary drum lines to be deployed following the incident?
- (2) Is it correct that by the time the temporary drum lines were deployed, beaches in the area had already been closed and warnings to the public had been issued?
- (3) What is the reason that gear used on the temporary drum lines was available at such short notice in Esperance and what was the hook design and size used?

Hon KEN BASTON replied:

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

- (1) An exemption is required under the Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999, while the commonwealth is assessing the Western Australian government's shark hazard mitigation drum line program.

Hon Lynn MacLaren: What was the basis?

Hon KEN BASTON: Because of that. If that was cleared, then we would be able to do it under the three kilometre rules. I continue —

- (2) Wylie Bay beach is approximately 15 kilometres long. Beaches were closed in the immediate vicinity of the incident, and the wider Wylie Bay area was in the process of being closed at the time shark capture gear was deployed. People use the area for camping, surfing and swimming, and this incident occurred during the school holidays. The area is also remote and it was not possible to be sure that everyone in the area had been advised of the closure.
- (3) Shark capture gear is available in all relevant district offices. The hooks are “J” hook design and range from 14/0 to 16/0, so a whisker smaller.