

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
Question on notice

Tuesday, 18 February 2014

715. Hon Robin Chappie to the Minister for Fisheries.

Regarding the government's catch and kill shark program, or shark cull, being carried out in Western Australia, I ask:

- (a) when will the catch and kill shark program be reviewed;
- (b) what criteria will be used to evaluate the program:
 - (i) which of these are scientific criteria;
 - (ii) what are the scientific references or other sources of these criteria; and
 - (iii) which other criteria, apart from scientific criteria, will be used to evaluate the program; and
- (c) will the program be suspended if too many sharks are being caught and killed:
 - (i) if yes to (c), how many sharks would be too many; and
 - (ii) on what basis and, by whom, will such a decision be made?

Answer

The Department of the Premier and Cabinet advises

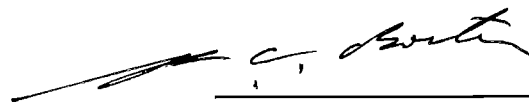
(a) – (c)

The Government's shark hazard mitigation strategy is not a cull. The recent deployment of drum lines does not seek to cull a significant portion of a shark species, it is about providing extra protection at popular Perth beaches and South West surfing spots, by placing drum lines 1km from the shore, targeting large sharks that are in the area.

The current deployment of up to 72 baited drum lines along approximately 40 kilometres of coast of a total coast line of 12,500 kilometres, is part of an overall shark hazard mitigation strategy that includes aerial patrols, applied research, equipment for Surf Life Saving WA, a trial beach enclosure, tagging program, and information for the community.

The drum lines will be removed from their current locations on 30 April 2014, following which there will be a review of the catch data and operational aspects of deploying drum lines. This review will be provided to Government for consideration, however it has already been noted that the Government will be seeking to implement the deployment of drum lines next summer.

Note: The Federal exemption under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 does not stipulate a number of sharks to be caught. The policy is part of a broader public safety initiative around shark hazard mitigation.



MINISTER FOR FISHERIES