

MANAGEMENT OF SHARKS IN NEW SOUTH WALES WATERS

Organisation: Manly Council
Name: Mr Ed McPeake
Date Received: 23/10/2015



Reference: CF/14/345

The Committee Manager,
Committee on Investment, Industry and Regional Development
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
Sydney NSW 2000

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Inquiry into Management of Sharks in NSW Waters

Manly Council is pleased to provide the following submission for the inquiry into management of sharks in NSW waters. The management of sharks throughout NSW is multifaceted and accompanied by passionate opinions from within the community. Current and historic traumatic although statistically rare events, the perception of risk associated with such events, the emergence of new non-lethal technologies, the need to conserve threatened and vulnerable species and community safety expectations highlight the relevance of the current inquiry.

Our submission includes comments to the terms of reference, particularly:

- a) The impact of shark attacks on tourism and related industries;
- c) Adequacy of management strategies; and
- e) Any other related matters – Specifically Manly Council's current resolution in relation to the reduction in shark meshing program netting days

Submission

- a) *The impact of shark attacks on tourism and related industries*

Manly is a major tourist destination with more than eight million visitors per year. Tourists from all over Australia and the world are drawn by the restaurants, shops, cultural events as well as the many natural attractions. Manly Ocean Beach is a particularly popular destination for tourists with activities such as but not limited to swimming, surfing, sightseeing, snorkeling and diving being enjoyed.

Manly is committed to providing bather protection so that tourists and locals alike can enjoy the beach, however Manly is duly concerned that this consideration is balanced effectively towards maintaining a sustainable and healthy marine ecosystem, given the diversity of marine life is such a large part of what appeals to visitors to the area.

To this end, Manly Council provides 6 protected tidal swimming enclosures for families and visitors to enjoy the beach and water in our harbour beaches, in addition to 2 tidal rock pools on the ocean side.

c) *Adequacy of management strategies*

Manly is committed to conservation and enhancement of aquatic habitats and biodiversity. To this end Manly Council supports the current review and assessment of non-lethal methods to protect swimmers from the potential of shark attacks. It is hoped that these technologies will be able to eventually replace the existing shark meshing (Bather Protection) program that is currently operated in accordance with joint management arrangements and associated management plan authorized by the Fisheries Management Act 1994 and the Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995.

Surf life-savers that patrol Manly beach currently maintain an active shark spotting & management program. When a shark is detected the public is immediately alerted to the shark's presence via a public broadcasting system and the situation is continuously monitored. Enhancing the methods to visually detect and communicate the presence of sharks including the consideration of shark spotting programs should be further considered and investigated.

e) *Any other related matters – Specifically Manly Council's current resolution in relation to the reduction in shark meshing program netting days*

In July 2014, Manly Council resolved in an ordinary meeting that:

- Council supports the Review of the NSW Shark Meshing Program at the end of the 2014 meshing season;
- Council requests the Shark Meshing Program Review considers non-lethal alternatives to shark meshing and a reduction in beach meshing days on meshed NSW beaches; and
- Council requests the Shark Meshing Program Review considers measures to reduce perception of risk to the community by any reduction in beach meshing days.

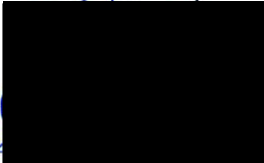
In reference to the attached DPI Catch Data obtained from their Annual Performance Reports 2012-2015 for the NSW Shark Meshing (Bather Protection) Program the only target species catches at Manly Ocean Beach over the entire three-year reporting period were recorded in late Oct – Nov 2014 (1 White) and in Feb – March 2015 (2 Bull, 1 White), and in Feb – March 2013 (1 'target' Dusky Whaler). Conversely 17 non target species (by-catch) were recorded during the reporting period including numerous rays and harmless sharks.

Manly Council would like to also enquire as to the listing of Dusky Whaler sharks as a 'target' species. They are a regular visitor to Cabbage Tree Bay Aquatic Reserve at various times during the year. Council has concerns that they are considered a 'target' species in the NSW Shark Meshing (Bather Protection) Program due to their passive nature and given that they use Cabbage Tree Bay as a nursery. Council goes some way to protecting the Dusky Whaler sharks through its award winning Friends of Cabbage Tree Bay Volunteer Program.

The Dusky Whaler Shark amongst other passive sharks including the Wobbegong & Port Jackson sharks inhabiting Cabbage Tree Bay are in fact a major draw card for divers & snorkelers alike to the area.

Manly Council maintains the current resolution and looks forward to the results of the review of the Shark Meshing Program and welcomes the opportunity to facilitate where possible the enhancement of shark protection measures that maintain community values and expectations.

Yours Faithfully



Ed McPeake

23/10/15

Manager Environmental Programs
Landuse & Sustainability
Manly Council

