

Submission  
No 38

**INQUIRY INTO CLOSURE OF THE CRONULLA  
FISHERIES RESEARCH CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE**

**Name:** Name suppressed

**Date received:** 30/07/2012

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Partially Confidential

Submission for the Inquiry into the Closure of Cronulla Fisheries

To the members of the inquiry,

I am writing to address in particular the terms of reference point 1 (g). – “The impacts of the decision on service delivery to stakeholders.” In this case the stakeholders referred to are the general public regarding matters of public safety on Sydney Harbour.

I wish to highlight to the impact that the closure of Cronulla Fisheries will have on the Sydney Harbour bull shark monitoring project, of which I have worked, and the subsequent consequences to the public. It has become more and more obvious that the closure of the Cronulla Fisheries Research Centre directly threatens the effective continuation of this research. This project is aimed at studying the movements of these potentially dangerous animals so we can provide information to the many thousands of users of Sydney Harbour so they can take action to minimise the risk of a potential shark attack. This includes information as to the areas the sharks occupy most frequently, what time of year they reside in the harbour, and at what times of day they are most active. This is a high profile research project which has featured in documentaries for ABC (“Shark Harbour”), National Geographic (“Shark Invasion”) and Discovery (“Summer of the Shark”), as well as in news features on the major television broadcast networks, newspapers and radio stations.

This project requires a lot of fieldwork and equipment including long line fishing gear, freezer storage for bait and burley, acoustic listening equipment, gear to construct moorings and diving equipment. A year into the relocation process and yet nothing has been signed off for a Sydney Metropolitan alternative. Currently, the proposed alternative at the Sydney Institute of Marine Science (SIMS) at Mosman fails to satisfy the storage requirements and boat access to the harbour. While being suitable for office space, it has no storage facilities, nowhere to keep boats, and although being located on the harbour itself, the nearest boat ramp is approximately an hour away. The community have a vested interest in this project as public safety is paramount. Closing Cronulla Fisheries, which has all the infrastructure, boats and necessary storage facilities will put this at risk, and for what gain?

It is illogical that NSW government places so little worth on the most historic marine research centre in the southern hemisphere. The facilities are state of the art and will have to be rebuilt at the taxpayer's expense. NSW should take pride and treasure such a facility as the Cronulla Fisheries Research Centre of Excellence. Any other state would boast about having such an institution in its portfolio, and we are tearing it down.

Please consider these arguments in your deliberation,