

Jacobs calls for great white culling

■ Tim Slater



Great white sharks should be culled by professional fishermen to reduce the likelihood of further attacks, according to Eyre MLA Graham Jacobs.

Responding to a range of initiatives announced by the State Government last week to reduce the risk the sharks pose to swimmers, Dr Jacobs acknowledged it was an emotional issue but ultimately human life was more important than a shark.

"The best measures for us would be to reduce the population of sharks by allowing the catching of great whites by the most qualified

people to do so, the professional fishermen," he said.

"The ocean is now overpopulated with them since they were deemed a protected species."

He also called for quicker response times to shark attacks.

"Human life is more important than a shark," he said.

"If a dog mauled and seriously injured or killed a child or adult it would be destroyed.

"We must reduce numbers and act decisively when someone is attacked or killed."

The measures announced last week include setting baited drum lines to catch large sharks 1km from shore along the south west and metropolitan beach areas from January to April next year.

The lines would be monitored by vessels that would also be able to

respond faster to attacks.

Over the longer term, specific coastal shark management zones would be established that would be determined by geographical and environmental features and water use profiles such as swimming, surfing and diving.

Premier Colin Barnett said the new measures would improve public safety and build on the State Government's shark hazard management strategy.

"These new initiatives come on top of a raft of measures the State Government already has in place to protect beachgoers, like increased aerial surveillance, beach patrols, shark tagging and a trial of a shark enclosure in the South-West," Mr Barnett said.

"We are aware of the risks sharks pose to our beach users and

the Western Australian way of life and we are implementing strategies to reduce these risks.

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DR GRAHAM JACOBS

"But whatever the State Government does to try to minimise the risk there are still no guarantees.

"It is very important for ocean users to always be aware of the risks of entering the water and to take responsibility for them-

selves." Dr Jacobs said the placement of drum lines would not be practical along the south coast because of the isolation of the region and need to patrol the drum lines.

He suggested the local helicopter service could patrol the coastline on busy days over the Christmas and New Year period.

The consensus on a local Facebook page set up to discuss the issue seems to be that people must accept the risk of entering the sharks' domain when they go for a swim in the ocean and that sharks should not be culled.

Fisheries Minister Troy Buswell said the preservation of human life was the State Government's number one priority. "These measures are designed to do that, with minimum impact to the surrounding environment," Mr Buswell said.



Bridging gap: Workmen place the aluminium onto the tanker jetty last week.
Photo courtesy: SHIRE OF ESPERANCE

Tanker jetty gets connection

■ Tim Slater

The bridge connecting the tanker jetty was installed last week following repairs to six pylons.

But Shire of Esperance president Malcolm Heasman said the jetty would remain closed to the public until construction work on a nearby car park had finished. "We are working

towards reopening the tanker jetty as quickly as possible," Cr Heasman said.

The new car park at the southern end of the previous jetty car park will have an additional 20 parking spaces, drainage and an exit onto the Esplanade.

"Once the car park is complete limited access to the jetty will be

restored," Cr Heasman said.

"This access will be limited for the community's safety during the completion of the waterfront landscaping work while the headland remains a work site."

The bridge was built locally by Stewart's Engineering with aluminium to minimise the weight load on the jetty.

Rug shop closes doors earlier than expected

■ John Ely

The Boulder Rug Shop has shut its doors after nearly 18 years of service, with the last order of rugs picked up last week.

While initially planning to close on the ominous note of Friday the 13th, Jessica Bailey, who ran the shop, said they closed early, on December 7, because they ran out of stock.

Ms Bailey said it was a bittersweet

moment to close the business her grandparents opened in 1996.

"Obviously the fact it was a family business for the past 18 years is a sad thing, but it's also a relief because it was hard to close a business, to sell everything and pack the shop up and all that sort of stuff" she said.

Ms Bailey said she would now spend Christmas with her family in Perth and go travelling in the new year.

Soirée plans taking shape

The Gala Soirée to be held in Kambalda to raise money for breast cancer charity Love Your Sister is taking shape.

The \$150 per ticket function will have actor Sam Johnson, who has been riding around Australia on a unicycle to raise \$1 million, as a special guest.

The Soirée will be held on January 15 at the Kambalda Community Recreation Facility and feature

Darren Reid and the Soul City Groove as entertainment.

Organisers Karen Zietsch and Kris Johnstone are aiming to raise \$30,000 from the event.

The pair conceived the Soirée following Sam Johnson's last visit to Kambalda, when the community raised \$2000. All money raised by Love Your Sister will be donated to the Garvin Institute for breast cancer research.

Grim health report for men

A new report has offered a grim health assessment for men over the age of 40 who live and work in regional areas, finding them most at risk of not meeting recommended physical activity guidelines.

The study also found the group suffered from a higher prevalence of being overweight and obesity, they were

more prone to cardiovascular diseases and had a 20 per cent higher risk of not meeting physical activity guidelines than those in major cities. The study, titled "the characteristics of inactive men working in a regional area of Queensland, Australia," was published in the latest issue of the Journal of Science and Medicine in Sport.

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