

Council Policy Name: Shark Hazard Response

Responsible Directorate: Planning and Development Services

Version: Proposed

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1. The purpose of this Policy is to guide the City's approach in response to shark attacks and shark sightings, as well as a broader approach for water safety warnings and information provided to the public.

2. SCOPE

- 2.1. This Policy is applicable to beach areas under the care, control and/or management of the City.

3. DEFINITIONS

Term	Meaning
The City	the City of Busselton
Operational Practice	developed for administrative purposes to set direction in relation to an organisational practice (City of Busselton Policy Framework)
Patrolled Beach	a beach that has a SLSWA beach safety and surveillance service in operation
Policy	this Council Policy titled "Shark Hazard Response"
Salmon Season	the period when schools of Salmon are running off the WA Coast (March to May)
SLSWA	Surf Life Saving Western Australia

4. STRATEGIC CONTEXT

- 4.1. This Policy links to Key Goal Area 1 – Community of the City's Strategic Community Plan 2017 and specifically the Community Objective 1.1: a friendly safe and inclusive community with a strong community spirit.

5. POLICY STATEMENT

- 5.1. The Chief Executive Officer will prepare more detailed internal Operational Practices to supplement this policy and to guide operational staff in the exercise of their functions. The City will seek to align its response protocols with those of the Shire of Augusta Margaret River.
- 5.2. The Chief Executive Officer will consult with Councillors as appropriate in the development of those Operational Practices.
- 5.3. The City will continue to advocate through the State Government the management of sharks including a consistent state wide approach to shark sightings and incidents regardless of land tenure.
- 5.4. Shark sighting reports received from the SLSWA helicopter surveillance service and Shark Monitoring Network generally provide details about the location of the shark, size, species and in some instances direction of travel, which are essential for making decisions about swimmer safety. The SLSWA

helicopter surveillance and Shark Monitoring Network service when available, will inform the City's response to a shark sighting.

- 5.5. In the event of a shark attack fatality, WA Police are the lead agency. The City will provide assistance with the management of the shark attack and implement beach safety measures as considered necessary and under the direction of the WA Police.
- 5.6. Where an order to capture a shark has been granted to the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (Fisheries) and a direction given to swimmers to leave the water following a shark attack, the decision to re-open a beach for swimming should be not less than 24 hours after the shark attack occurred and/or after Fisheries advise that the order to capture the shark has been lifted.
- 5.7. The decision to re-open beaches under the care and control of the City shall be made by the City in consultation with Fisheries.
- 5.8. At a Patrolled Beach, an SLSWA life guard is the authorised person for responding to a shark sighting and for implementing the SLSWA response procedure which may include sounding alarms to alert swimmers, clearing the water of swimmers and monitoring shark presence.
- 5.9. Community awareness of shark hazards will be promoted by:
 - a. providing information on the City website about how to access recent reports of shark activity from the WA Government information and communication platforms including Shark Smart website and SLSWA Twitter feed, the times and dates of SLSWA patrolled beaches to encourage swimmers to use SLSWA patrolled beaches and the beach enclosures at Dunsborough and Busselton;
 - b. temporary signage installed in accordance with the City's Shark Hazard Response Operational Practice to inform beach users and swimmers that a shark has been sighted in the vicinity and provide information on how to access the latest shark sighting report information from SLSWA and from the WA Government information and communication platforms; and
 - c. temporary signage to inform beach users and swimmers of increased shark activity during the annual salmon season.

6. RELATED DOCUMENTATION / LEGISLATION

- 6.1. The City's Operational Practice for: Shark Hazard Response

7. REVIEW DETAILS

Review Frequency		3 yearly		
Council Adoption	DATE		Resolution #	
Previous Adoption	DATE	14 October 2015	Resolution #	C1510/286