

FAMILY FIRST CALLS FOR SHARK-FREE SWIMMING ENCLOSURES FOR SEMAPHORE, GLENELG, CHRISTIES

Thursday, 22 January 2009

FAMILY FIRST MLC Robert Brokenshire has called for the installing of shark-free swimming enclosures at three popular Adelaide beaches, to ensure that families have somewhere safe to swim.

“These enclosures enable swimmers around the world, including on the Gold Coast, to swim with peace of mind and safety”, Mr Brokenshire said.

Mr Brokenshire noted that shark sightings since November, and fatalities in [2004](#) and [2005](#) had guided FAMILY FIRST to call for shark nets near the jetties at the popular suburban beaches of:

- **Semaphore** (7 sharks [sighted](#) just north from Outer Harbor to Largs Bay in late November 2008);
- **Glenelg** (after the 2004 fatality at nearby West Beach and 2005 fatality off of Glenelg);
- **Christies Beach** (after sightings Dec 2 at [Moana](#), Dec 10 at [Christies](#), Dec 11 at [Port Willunga](#), Dec 14 at [O'Sullivan Beach](#) and Dec 15 at [Hallett Cove](#))

“FAMILY FIRST is talking about safe swimming areas at those three beaches, but there should be no reduction in aerial patrols. Swimmers and surfers at and south of Christies Beach will continue to need protection”

During the Christmas break there were numerous further sightings all along the metropolitan Adelaide coastline, with swimmers regularly required to take refuge on the beach.

Mr Brokenshire proposed that the enclosures would be fitted with electronic warning devices to deter sharks from the nets, and regularly checked to minimise shark deaths. He dismissed conservation concerns, saying the enclosures he proposed would be relatively small in area (approximately 500 square metres in size) and the

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Robert Brokenshire – FAMILY FIRST PARTY

Hong Kong experience ([information](#) | [satellite photo](#)) was that there were no shark deaths or by-catch in similar enclosures, as well as no shark attacks in 13 years.

“I am not talking about shark nets in the usual sense they are discussed”, Mr Brokenshire said, “The Hong Kong style nets are visible on the waterline, cover smaller areas and are more ‘fixed’ than those we know in Australia and South Africa. We can use more rigid nets because in metropolitan Adelaide we don’t have to worry about wave damage.”

“I’m not suggesting at all that we kill sharks – Hong Kong has put these special swimming enclosures in place to protect swimmers and had remarkable public safety success without the environmental detriments.”

“FAMILY FIRST’s proposal in no way belittles the work of Surf Lifesaving in South Australia”, Mr Brokenshire added, “They do a great job in keeping our beaches safe, I think they would support our holistic approach to safety because they can’t be everywhere in the water all the time”

Information on Shark sightings/fatalities in recent years:



Sightings since Nov 08



Fatalities since 2004