Hi Gordon, you might not have received this email trail. Another point to note is that the live-export ships are actually leaving Australia, so a non-scientist might argue that they are doing a service in attracting sharks away from the coast!

i don't think we should play the game publicly of suggesting such correlations will explain anything.

Using the list they provided all of the mortalities on the vessels that we have looked at occurred after the incident/attack. In one of them the vessel was almost 4000 km from the site of the attack. We are about ½ way through the list.

Not sure that will be useful as it depends on when the mortalities occurred in the voyage. And you would need to compare it with mortalities on all other vessels as well when shark attacks didn't occur. I think whatever it shows would be difficult to interpret and possibly dangerous to draw conclusions from.

Paul
We are doing a quick and dirty analysis of the voyages they have indicted and matching mortalities.

For info, I think the line that it is “simplistic to make the linkage and there are many factors likely to influence shark attacks” is the preferred one. May be worth mentioning other factors of relevance — such as protection of the species over the last decade or more, other food sources — such as whale pods and seals, other shipping movements that may discharge waste, possible changes in human activities, and possible changes in shark behaviour.

Hi Paul, this is an intriguing theory. Great whites ‘traditionally’ follow whale pods and hang around seal colonies, preying on the young, sick and injured. There are reports of great whites associating with whaling stations and whaling boats off Western Australia in the past. Habitual behaviour is reported from South Australia where dive-cage operators used chum to attract great whites. Therefore I wouldn’t be surprised if great whites followed live-export ships.

One question is whether live-export ships discharge carcasses or offal in the vicinity of ports. MARPOL specifies minimum distances from the ‘nearest land’ before a discharge at sea can be undertaken. I’m not sure what this distance is off Western Australia, but it’s likely to be at least 100 km from the coast. Nevertheless, it could be argued that great whites might continue to follow ships into port even when they are not discharging. This might be verified by contacting quarantine inspectors and crewmembers.

Would you like me to make contact with some CSIRO shark exports? A larger undertaking would be to collate all port and live-export shipping data. This would place the HSI data in context, i.e. there is likely to be a large amount of shipping activity in areas and at times when there are no reports of shark sightings or attacks.

We’d need to carefully consider the value of going further in undertaking analyses in that attacks and sightings are highly variable and influenced by a variety of factors that might affect surfer/swimmer vs. shark activity, e.g. number of surfers, season, time of day, location, type of activity, shark abundance and alternative food sources.
Subject: FW: Shark attacks and live export vessels [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Any thoughts on this?

Paul

From: Glyde, Phillip
Sent: Wednesday, 18 July 2012 7:41 AM
To: Schneider, Karen; Thompson, Ian G - SRM; PakPoy, Paul
Cc: Morris, Paul; Neil, Gordon; Calc, Lee; Tucker, Mark; Ritman, Kim; Stobutzki, Ilona
Subject: Re: Shark attacks and live export vessels [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Karen/Ian
Might be worthwhile involving ABARES as well. They might be able to help on both the fish side but also on the probabilities side with the inference that there is a causal link.

Phillip

On 17/07/2012, at 7:31 PM, [s. 47F(1)] wrote:

Evening Gordon, Karen and Lee

I forwarded this on to Karen and Lee a little earlier to get some TPs from media, but the more I look at it the more questions I think we may need to answer tomorrow.

Gordon – would you be able to liaise with AFMA (and possibly FRDC) about what research on the correlation between the presence of live export vessels and shark attacks has been done, and whether any research has been done on whether sharks can identify live export vessels.

Is it possible at all to get rough data on the average number of days per year there are shark sightings in WA and the number of days per year a live export vessel is docked in those ports. If possible, it would be good to get comparative data from another jurisdiction that exports live animals (perhaps SA) as I understand it is only WA who doesn’t use nets.

Info on any other analysis of the issue would be appreciated.

On 17/07/2012, at 4:58 PM, [s. 22(1)(a)(ii)] wrote:

fyi

From: [s. 22(1)(a)(ii)]
Sent: Tuesday, July 17, 2012 4:54 PM
To: [s. 22(1)(a)(ii)]
Cc: 
Subject: FW: Shark attacks and live export vessels [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Fyi – we are sending out a release regarding this issue shortly, embargoed until tomorrow.
From: s.47F(1)
Sent: Tuesday, 17 July 2012 4:48 PM
To: 'Minister.Moore@dpc.wa.gov.au'
Cc: Tony Burke MP (Tony.Burke.MP@aph.gov.au); 'wa-government@dpc.wa.gov.au'
Subject: Shark attacks and live export vessels

Dear Minister,

Please see the attached letter from Humane Society International regarding the recent shark attacks in WA.

Kind regards

Humane Society International
PO Box 439
Avalon NSW 2107
Australia
Phone: +61 (0)2 9973 1728
Fax: +61 (0)2 9973 1729

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<Documented list of shark attacks and presence of live export vessels.docx>

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