

6 March 2008 Paul Lunn

A letter to Dive and Surf Shops from SharkShield

Dear dive and surf shop owner

Recently a Coronial inquest was held regarding the 2005 shark attack death of a University diver whilst working for the University whereby SharkShields were left in the boat and not worn.

If one had been worn he may still be alive. However, it appears that a University employee in charge of OH&S issues relating to diving had previously questioned the products effectiveness and advised against their use.

It is interesting to note that the Adelaide University (AU) sent a delegation to our company following the incident to inform us that the person involved with this OH&S issue was no longer working in that capacity and AU has developed a SharkShield use policy.

Most unfortunately there have been many misleading and inaccurate reports on the Hearing in the world wide media in the last few days.

Over the next few weeks you may be asked to elaborate on the various statements included in these reports that will no doubt be copied on "chat" rooms or discussed by your customers. In order to help you and your customers understand the facts I have listed the most prominent issues below so that you can help us in setting the record straight.

1. "Run time only four hours" - NOT TRUE

This refers to an uninformed statement that our new generation product (FREEDOM 7) has only a run time of 4 hours and thus the figure 7 misrepresents the run time.

We have never had a run time of 4 hours with the FREEDOM 7 unit, the literature states 6 to 7 hours and this is what it is. Please understand that this product was released some 18 months after the shark attack incident and has no relevance to the incident and has only been used to discredit our company.

2. "Model that was eaten by shark in South Africa had malfunctioned" – NOT TRUE

Our products undergo stringent testing by the Natal Sharks Board of South Africa (NSB). No product can be released without the sanctioning of the NSB and it is common practice for us to test various innovations in order that we advance our products.

In trialling one having a different antenna, a number of tests were carried out, with the antenna attached to a floating tube on the surface in choppy wave conditions. In order for the waveform to be correctly discharged in the water the electrodes in the antenna must be submerged. Predictably in this particular test the shark was not repelled. It cannot be said that the unit malfunctioned. The model was not eaten by a shark. These tests were part of a controlled scientific trial and every scenario must be tested including worst case scenarios in order to get valid results. These results can then be taken into account in the final design and operating procedures. The unit performed very well against sharks when the antenna was in a vertical submerged position.

3. Stories that SharkShields attract sharks - NOT TRUE

This is a misconception that has absolutely no credibility. Evidence by independent “experts” is that there is no evidence to support this myth. This issue is answered in detail in the Frequently Asked Questions section of our website. <http://www.sharkshield.com>

4. “Testing regime on new products is not rigorous enough” – NOT TRUE

The media has reported a claim made during the hearing that our testing regime on new products was not rigorous enough. This is completely untrue. In fact, it would hardly be possible for them to be more rigorous. There is very heavy pre-launch testing of every newly designed product including tests against sharks. Our manufacturing quality control requires every single product to be fully bench tested for functionality, voltage and quality before despatch.

5. “Sharks in full attacking mode will stop for nothing” and by implication not for a Shark Shield

Company policy is to recommend the use of SharkShield against sharks only in their investigative mode. Nevertheless, we have a number of examples where SharkShield has stopped large sharks in full attack mode. The most spectacular was a diver off Perth who was the subject of a savage attack by a large Great White. He was in the shark’s mouth with his blood in the water, when his dive buddy who was wearing a SharkShield, swam to him and the shark immediately fled the area.

6. Many Institutions use SharkShield

Many institutions have made it mandatory for SharkShield to be worn on all dives. This includes the SA Water Police, the South Australian Research Development Institute (SARDI) and many other Australian Government Departments. SharkShield is made available to Police divers in most States of Australia. Virtually all abalone divers in Australia use SharkShield. These practices are now beginning to spread overseas.

7. Effectiveness of SharkShield

There is no doubt that all approved SharkShield models deter sharks very effectively. Since the first model, "DIVE01", became widely available in 2003, no one has ever been attacked by a shark whilst wearing a SharkShield. We have so far received over 300 contacts (written and phone) from grateful users, detailing dramatic instances of SharkShield's excellent performance.

8. Technical Input

Shark Shield Pty Ltd has the benefit of detailed technical input on shark behaviour and electronics from a number of excellent sources. These include component suppliers, a design consultant and a highly experienced electronic engineer. Of great significance we also have on-going access to the Natal Sharks Board (NSB), the world's pre-eminent authority on sharks.

Should any of your customers need answers as to the effectiveness of this technology or our product, please direct them to me.

Yours sincerely

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