



**ACTIVITY:** Surfing

**CASE:** GSAF 2015.07.31

**DATE:** Friday July 31, 2015

**LOCATION:** Evans Head, 550 kilometers (340 miles) north of Sydney, New South Wales, Australia.

**NAME:** Craig Ison

**DESCRIPTION:** A 52-year-old male, a former boxer



*Craig Ison*

### **BACKGROUND**

At 06h00, YLIS the airport closest to Evans Head, reported an overcast sky and 0.4-mile visibility. The air temperature was 44.6°F, wind chill 40.7°F, dew point 44.6°F, humidity 100%, sea level pressure 30.15 inches (rising) and wind direction NNE at 6.9 mph

**MOON PHASE:** Full Moon, July 31, 2015

**SEA CONDITIONS:** The water was crystal clear.

**ENVIRONMENT:** The beach is unpatrolled during winter. Duty officer for Surf Life Saving Far North Coast Jimmy Keough said there had been multiple shark sightings in the region over the past four weeks. "It is the migration season for sharks, but there has been a bigger influx than usual," he said. Eighteen large sharks had been spotted between Hastings Point and Ballina in the preceding 14 days including six white sharks in the previous 48 hours. The sharks were spotted offshore and chasing fish and dolphin pods close to the beach.

**DISTANCE FROM SHORE:** 100 yards off Main Beach, in Evans Head.

**TIME:** Just after 06h00

**NARRATIVE:** Craig Ison and Geoff Hill were paddling out when Ison, who was 20 metres seaward of Hill, spotted the shark, called a warning. Seconds later, as Ison turned toward shore, the shark bit his board and left leg, knocking him into the water. As Ison punched the shark, it bit his left arm.

“The board went up in the air and I just saw a lot of thrashing and the tail of the shark, which was quite large. It looked pretty bad — there was a lot of blood.” said Hill. He said that before he could go to his friend's rescue, Ison managed to scramble back on his board and began paddling for shore. Ison was 50 yards from shore when Hill reached him and they paddled to shore. The beach was closed until further notice.

**INJURY:** Severe lacerations and puncture wounds to hip, left thigh, left arm and hand. There was a 40 centimeter (nearly 16 inches) bite mark across Ison's board and thigh.

**FIRST AID / TREATMENT:** Hill used a leg-rope as a tourniquet to stem the flow of blood. “I just tried to keep him calm and keep him talking. Craig used to be a boxer and he told me he got a couple of quick lefts (punches) into the shark,” he said. Ison was treated on the beach by surfers, then he was rushed by ambulance to Lismore Base Hospital, arriving there in serious but stable condition. At the hospital he underwent surgery, but later that night was in serious condition following complications during 10 hours of surgery.

**SPECIES:** A shark expert from the Department of Primary Industries confirmed the attack involved a white shark, and a tooth fragment was left in his thigh.



**SOURCES:** SBS, July 31, 2015

<http://www.sbs.com.au/news/article/2015/07/31/surfer-attacked-shark-evans-head>

The Daily Telegraph, July 31, 2015

<http://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/news/ballina-shark-attack-surfer-bitten-at-main-beach/story-fni0cx4q-1227464219561>

Nine News, July 31, 2015

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The Sydney Morning Herald, July 31, 2015

<http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/shark-attack-surfer-craig-ison-has-problems-in-surgery-friend-20150731-gioxqc.html>

Washington Post, July 31, 2015

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/news/morning-mix/wp/2015/07/31/australian-surfer-suffers-serious-injuries-battling-shark-during-attack/>

Daily Mail, August 5, 2015

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3186114/Shark-attack-survivor-Craig-Ison-wakes-coma-fighting-great-white-Evans-Head-says-ll-never-surf-again.html>  
*et al*



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