

**ACTIVITY:** Surfing

**CASE:** [GSAF 2016.10.24](#)

**DATE:** Monday October 25, 2016

**LOCATION:** The incident took place between Broken Head and Suffolk Park. Just to the south of Cape Byron, New South Wales, Australia.

**NAME:** Jade Fitzpatrick,

**DESCRIPTION:** A 36-year-old male

### BACKGROUND

**SEA CONDITIONS:** The sea surface temperature was 74°F. Mean high tide at Ballina (11.43 km from Broken Head) occurred at 05h32 while mean low tide was at 11h04.

**ENVIRONMENT:** “There hadn’t been any waves for two weeks,” said surfer Robert French. “The internet says there’s surf, so we all went out there. It was packed.”

**DISTANCE FROM SHORE:** 200 metres

**TIME:** 07h30

**NARRATIVE:** Jade Fitzpatrick was sitting on his board with a group of about 15 other surfers, waiting for a wave, when a shark emerged from beneath. The man’s surfboard took the brunt of the impact with the man sustaining a minor injury. “I just felt something whack me at the back of my board and I saw the tail come out and it went straight down,” said Fitzpatrick. “I looked over my shoulder and I saw the water swirl and it was only five metres away and I thought he was turning to come back so I started paddling and I was so scared he was going to get me.” His mate, Joel, stayed by his side as he paddled to shore.

**INJURY:** Minor lacerations to left thigh.

**FIRST AID / TREATMENT:** Another surfer, Geoffrey Knapp, administered first aid at the scene. Fitzpatrick was driven to nearby Byron Central Hospital by a friend where the injury was treated and he was discharged from the hospital later in the day. Fitzpatrick said he opposed a plan to put in shark nets because the nets could trap other marine animals. “I don’t want animals dying just to make us feel safe,” he said.



Picture: Geoffrey John Knapp

*Damage to Jade Fitzpatrick's board and his left thigh*

**SOURCES:** Daily Mail, October 24, 2016

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/reuters/article-3866742/Shark-bites-leg-Australian-surfer.html>

7News, October 24, 2016

<https://au.news.yahoo.com/a/32984287/surfer-lucky-to-be-alive-after-third-shark-attack-near-byron-bay-in-a-month/>

The Australian, October 24, 2016

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/nation/surfer-attacked-by-shark-at-broken-head-beach-near-byron-bay/news-story/5339c56345755d209606b4554f04654b>

Swellnet.com, Australian Broadcasting Corporation. October 24, 2016

<http://www.swellnet.com/news/swellnet-dispatch/2016/10/24/shark-attacks-man-surf-byron-bay>

