

ACTIVITY: Kayaking

CASE: GSAF 2002.02.07

DATE: Thursday February 7, 2002

LOCATION: The incident took place in Sydney Harbor about six miles [10 km] west of the Sydney Harbour Bridge and just a few kilometers west of downtown Sydney, New South Wales, Australia.

NAME: Paul McNamara

DESCRIPTION: The kayaker is a 35-year-old male from Ermington.

BACKGROUND

WEATHER: At 19h00, Sydney recorded scattered clouds and 10 km [6.2 mile] visibility. The air temperature was 73.4°F [23°C], dew point 64.4°F [18°C], humidity 73%, sea level pressure 29.68 inches [1005 hPa], and wind direction was NNE at 17.3mph [27.8 km/h].

MOON PHASE: Last Quarter, February 5, 2002. New Moon, February 12, 2002

ENVIRONMENT: Recent torrential rains have brought more fish out of the creeks and into the river, and they attract sharks, according to John West of the Taronga Zoo. He thought the shark probably felt the splashing caused by McNamara's oar and investigated to see if it was a fish.

DISTANCE FROM NAVIGATIONAL BUOY: 20 metres

TIME: 19h15

NARRATIVE: Paul McNamara was kayaking near the Cabarita Marina in the Parramatta River. "I was headed back when the shark just grabbed the kayak and flipped it over," McNamara said. "It came around and nudged me in the chest and then I felt the movement of the water as it went under me." He swam to a nearby navigation buoy and scrambled onto it and yelled for help. A passing fishing boat rescued the kayaker.

INJURY: The kayaker's chest was bruised and he sustained minor scratches from barnacles as he climbed out on the buoy.

EQUIPMENT DAMAGE: There was a large bite mark on the kayak. When Water Police examined the kayak they found a tooth fragment from the shark embedded in the stern.

SPECIES INVOLVED: Mr. West identified the tooth fragment as that of a bull shark, *Carcharhinus leucas*.



REPORTED BY: Grant Holloway; CNN; Alfred Xuereb; and Stephanie Peatling, Sydney Morning Herald, February 9, 2002, page 3

CASE INVESTIGATOR: Terry Peake, Australasian Shark Attack File