



Shark cull's effectiveness called into question

THE producer of a documentary about great white sharks has called for rationality in the debate about Western Australia's controversial cull.

Julia Redwood of Prospero Productions, the company behind *Outback Truckers* and *Shipwreck Detectives*, said the finishing touches were being put on *The Real Jaws*, which will be broadcast in June on the Nine Network and the PBS science channel, NOVA.

The crew interviewed shark attack survivors and joined researchers from the University of WA's Oceans Institute on expeditions, watching the reactions of sharks to experimental deterrents from the safety of the boat, thanks to underwater cameras.

Ms Redwood said shark attacks had become a complicated social issue in WA following a spate of fatal maulings, with both the general public and scientists responding emotively.

"Loved ones get taken and it's completely understandable ... the desire to rid ourselves of a threat," she said.

"It is a deep, innate fear that is understandable, but also irrational.

"Logic doesn't come into it but it has to. This isn't a massacre (of humans) going on."

She said the WA Government's cull was politically driven and questioned whether it would make any difference to swimmer and surfer safety.

"How effective it is going to be is not proven, given no great whites have been caught and they are the greatest threat."

Ms Redwood said the best safety measures included tagging and tracking so authorities could warn beachgoers, and wetsuits that cloaked the wearer from the view of sharks or warned them off.

She said wetsuits patterned with the bold sea stripes of a toxic sea snake seemed promising.



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