



## Shark Specialist Group Position Statement on Shark Attacks

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**SSG acknowledges the ISAF as the only official and reliable source of information on shark attacks worldwide.**

The International Shark Attack File (ISAF), the longest running database on shark attacks, has a long-term scientifically documented database containing information on all known shark attacks, and is the only globally comprehensive, scientific shark attack database in the world. The ISAF website is the only net based source of accurate, regularly updated information and advice on shark attacks worldwide. Initiated in 1958, there are now more than 3,400 individual investigations housed in the File, covering the period from the mid 1500s to the present. The ISAF, owned by the Smithsonian Institution, is housed at the Florida Museum of Natural History, and has been under the trustee and management of the American Elasmobranch Society (AES) since 1988. AES is the largest, most respected society of shark biologists in the world, and the AES Shark Attack File Committee is responsible for the management of the ISAF under guidelines established by the AES Board of directors. The ISAF is the only such operation that benefits from a globally distributed team of regional scientific cooperators who investigate attacks in their region and forward reports to the ISAF.

ISAF coordinators provide regular advice on shark attack issues to the governmental agencies, coastal managers, beach safety professionals, the medical community, and the media. Information requests exceed 1000 annually. Although detailed information on individual shark attack incidents is held by the ISAF, these records are only made available to qualified research biologists and physician for reasons of confidentiality and to protect the privacy of those affected by such incidents.