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HONG KONG

## 'Sightings of sharks' prompt warning

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Police launches, a Government Flying Service helicopter and lifeguards were mobilised yesterday amid fears of sharks off Clear Water Bay's Silverstrand beach.

But swimmers' reports of several sharks the size of a car on Thursday night remained unconfirmed yesterday.

In 1995, three people were killed after being attacked by sharks off Clear Water Bay; in 1993 four people died after being bitten.

A Regional Services Department spokesman said lifeguards had posted signs warning of "big fish", but the shark flag had not been hoisted.

Chairman of the Regional Council Ad Hoc Committee on Shark Prevention, Wan Yuet-kau, visited the beach and said he was satisfied with the measures taken.

Marine East Division Inspector Johny Tong Ka-hung said a police launch patrolling the area on Thursday night and early yesterday morning saw nothing.

"We have alerted all units to be vigilant in case of any reports."

Hong Kong University Department of Ecology and Biodiversity Assistant Professor Yvonne Sadovy said the suspected sightings were no surprise since past experience indicated this was the period sharks passed through Hong Kong waters.

"It is about the time we would expect to see them when we have got this weather change," she said.