

SENIOR CONSTABLE UPSTON

Q1 This is an electronic record of interview between Senior Constable David Upston and Ruth May Plummer on Sunday, the 13th of February, the year 2000 at the Melbourne C.I.B. The time by my watch is now 9.10am. And also present, seated to my immediate left is Detective Senior Constable Stuart Gray from Bega Detectives. Ruth, for the purpose of transcription, could you please state your full name?

A Ruth May Plummer.

Q2 And your address?

A 100 Western Beach Road, Geelong.

Q3 Your date of birth?

A 16th of March, 1939.

Q4 And your occupation?

A Manufacturer.

Q5 O.K. Thank you, Ruth. Now, prior to conducting this interview we had a, a quick discussion in regards to why Senior Constable Gray are here. And as I explain now, that we are investigating the 1998 Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race and the subsequent deaths associated with the yacht race. And we are here today to talk to you about your company, or a previous company that you owned, Tuff Marine Accessories Pty Limited, which manufactured a harness and lanyard which was used by the crew of the Sword of Orion. And subsequently one of those sailors in the race was lost over the side and

his body's never been recovered. Do you agree that we had that conversation earlier?

A Yes I do.

Q6 And in fact we were here some months ago and we spoke to you about that at your place of manufacture. Is that correct?

A Yes.

Q7 All right. And you've supplied certain information for us and associated with your business, Tuff Marine Accessories. Now first of all, could you give us a, a history of the company, when you started the company and who were your associates and directors?

A Yes, Tuff Marine Accessories wasn't a company at that time. It was just a business name registered, and I actually started that business after deciding to give my sail making business away. So I, over a period of time, developed products through Tuff Marine Manufacturing, Tuff Marine Accessories, which were, buoyancy and the safety harness being developed for approval through Standards Australia, which did those for a number of years. And I can't remember the exact year, I think it was 1986, Fort Holdings people, Ken Mitchell and Michael Webb, came down to see me and suggested that, would I like to sell my business and become in a manager role, and that they believed that they could take the business forward to much bigger and better than what we were at the time. And I agreed to that. And I was, I became Managing Director of the

company and I believe that Ken Mitchell and Michael Webb were also directors. I sold 80 per cent of my business to them and retained 20 per cent. And I acted in the role of Managing Director, not directly involved in the factory, not the, in charge of the factory. And then from there, do you want me to go on to where, of what happened after that?

Q8 Well, we'll, we'll go onto that, but we, at this stage, we'll stay with the, with the business prior to sale.

A O.K.

Q9 O.K?

A Mmm.

Q10 And, and then we'll talk about the previous, the directors coming in and purchasing. Now, when the company was wholly yours, when did you start that company? What year?

A In 1984.

Q11 In 1984?

A Yes.

Q12 And who were the directors of that company?

A There wasn't a company. It was just a business name.

Q13 It was just a business name?

A Yeah, I was the proprietor.

Q14 All right. And you, you owned it wholly and solely?

A Yes.

Q15 O.K. What equipment were you manufacturing at that stage?

A You mean 1984?

Q16 Yes.

A I don't think we were actually producing a great deal, we were developing products.

Q17 Right.

A I can't remember when we actually fully went into it, I registered the name in 1984.

Q18 O.K. And once you registered the business and then started to manufacture products, what was the, the main line of product that you were, that you were manufacturing?

A Buoyancy - - -

Q19 Right.

A - - - and wet weather clothing - - -

Q20 All right.

A - - - fishing clothing. That was, fishing clothing probably was predominantly what we were making. And other wet weather clothing.

Q21 And then after that you, you moved into other safety products?

A Went to Australian Standards, then they were called life jackets, and the safety harness, which is also under the control of the Australian Standards.

Q22 O.K. In particular we're interested about the safety harness as I explained to you earlier.

A Mmm.

Q23 Where were they, where was your place of manufacture to start with?

A At 100 Western Beach Road.

Q24 And that has always remained the place of manufacture?

A Yes.

Q25 O.K. Did you have, in that company, a series of, of a hierarchy in regards to the manufacturing, obviously you were the, the, the head, and then did it follow down?

A Well I was virtually on my own initially.

Q26 Right.

A And I had some machinists, but they weren't responsible for, for the Australian Standards. I developed them in association with Australian Standards. They came down and visited my place to see, and they also all the testing. In those days all the testing was done through them except for the harness, which was done in Melbourne.

Q27 Mmm.

A I really can't remember - - -

Q28 O.K.

A - - - then.

Q29 Was there an, was there an Australian Standard at the time of, you started to manufacture the, the harness and lanyard?

A (NO AUDIBLE REPLY)

Q30 Was there a standard which you followed?

A Yes.

Q31 O.K. Do you recall the number of that standard?

A Yes, 2-2-2-7.

Q32 O.K. Now when you started to manufacture that, you obviously went through a process, or prior to manufacturing you went through a process?

A Yes.

Q33 What, what happened - - -

A Um - - -

Q33 - - - within that process?

A Well the process originally was for, for the materials, they had to be, the materials that I originally used were tested and if they were, the materials used, that past the test, they continued to be used.

Q34 O.K. Now did you design the harness yourself?

A I copied it actually - - -

Q35 Right.

A - - - to be honest. I copied Martin Burke's, Sydney.

Q36 Martin Burke's. Now, oh, that's, that's of the Burke brand harness?

A That's right.

Q37 O.K. So did you, you purchased a, or obtained a harness from Burke - - -

A No. I borrowed one from - - -

Q38 All right. And you used that design?

A Yes.

Q39 Was that Burke harness, or did that Burke harness comply with the Australian Standard - - -

A Yes.

Q39 - - - that you're aware of?

A It had a stamp on it that it did.

Q40 O.K. Now who started then, after you purchased the materials, who started to actually make them?

A I did.

Q41 You did yourself?

A Yes.

Q42 O.K. Now do you recall how many you made in that period of time?

A No, I really don't.

Q43 O.K.

A It, it certainly wasn't many.

Q44 Right. Did you make a number of runs of them, of the harnesses? Just, put it this way, did you make say 30 and then stop and, and then go back and make another 30 and then stop, and then a few months later make another 30 or - - -

A Well it would have been - - -

Q44 - - - something along those lines?

A It would have been in batches - - -

Q45 Right, in batches.

A - - - when they were made. And there mightn't have even been as many as 30.

Q46 Mmm.

A It might have only been 10 made.

Q47 All right.

A 'Cause with, over all, I don't believe we made a huge number of them anyway.

Q48 Mmm.

A They would have been done in batches, and those batches would have been recorded.

Q49 O.K. What happened to, can you recall what happened to all the, the, the documentation was recovered, in regards to them being manufactured?

A That, with, sorry, you're talking about Tuff Marine Australia now - - -

Q50 Yes.

A - - - aren't you?

Q51 Yeah.

A Actually, I wasn't privy to any of the stocktakes or anything down there. I've no idea where everything went to. I wasn't even allowed to be in the room when the stock were taken, such as being done, so, no idea. I, all I do know, that everything was taken away, everything.

Q52 And that was in 1986?

A That was in 19, no, that was in 1990.

Q53 Oh, O.K. 1990, yeah. O.K. Now when, did you follow any process when you were manufacturing the harnesses and the lanyards?

A Yes, we had a manual which we followed.

Q54 Right. And what did that manual comprise of?

A Well it comprised of the material coming in the door, being inspected, to the testing, in those days we had to test the hardware, had a machine to test that.

Q55 Mmm.

A And virtually the manual was followed. Whoever was making them had the manual beside them.

Q56 Right. What sort of machines did you use for testing?

A Well we didn't use any machines for testing the harness itself. But it was a, to test the strength to - - -

Q57 Right.

A - - - I think it was 2,000 and 500 lbs or something and that of the hardware - - -

Q58 Yes.

A - - - which was a stainless, stainless steel buckles and things.

Q59 Right. so that was a, and did you also test the webbing?

A No.

Q60 Just the, just the, the metal components?

A Yes.

Q61 O.K. All right. Did you at all test the, the webbing?

A No, we didn't have any - - -

Q62 Right.

A - - - means of testing that.

Q63 O.K. Now when you approached Quality Assurance to have your harnesses approved. What procedure did you adopt for that?

A Well it was simply a, an application by letter asking for provision to make it, and we made up a, a number of samples. I can't remember how many samples, but we sent them up to Techni-search, and I think we failed a couple where the dummy, the harness was released from

the dummy. And then we finally passed one. I can't remember how many failed, to be honest. We passed the, the one, and we manufactured it according to that harness.

Q64 O.K. Now did you alter the design from the, from the harnesses that failed to the harness that, that did pass, finally pass?

A The harness that passed was the one that we used. And it was, we actually had two lines tested, we had the rope line tested and the webbing line, and both of them passed. And the, from that day on the, they were made exactly to what we did originally.

Q65 Was there a difference between the two harnesses and lanyards, between the one that failed and the one that passed?

A The, the lanyard was the one, the webbing failed, the rope lanyard didn't fail at all. The webbing one failed and it was the amount of stitching that we had on the lap over from the buckle to - - -

Q66 Right.

A - - - the

Q67 So that, that, that failed?

A The stitching broke.

Q68 The stitching broke?

A Yes.

Q69 O.K. Now then you continued to make, did you continue to make further webbing lanyards from that time?

A Only when it passed.

Q70 Yes.

A Yes, we did - - -

Q71 O.K.

A - - - yes.

Q72 I'll show you some photostat documents here which is headed Techni-search, and it mentions a date on these at the 28th of October, 1995. It's a letter to the Standards Association from Techni-search, and it is, appears to be an invoice for some drop tests from a rope line and also a webbing line. Do you agree with those, and what can you tell me about that?

A I can remember having them done. And there should be a test, drop test - - -

Q73 O.K.

A - - - there should be a result for that.

Q74 Right. And they were, that was the amount of money that was paid to, for Techni-search to conduct those. Is that right?

A No idea, no idea.

Q75 O.K.

A Because it's a hell of a lot more than that now.

Q76 Yes, but is, do you agree that that, that that would have been the amount that the, they would have charged for the drop tests?

A I don't - - -

Q77 You don't recall?

A - - -

Q78 O.K. All right. I also, that, that invoice by the way, was 4-3-9-4. I also show you now another document which is invoice 4-4-0-9 which is also an invoice for some drop tests conducted on Tuff yachtsmen's harnesses. What can you tell me about those?

A I don't know what that one is. It could be the same as the other one, is it?

Q79 Well, no they're different dates. The, that is actually dated the 28th of the 10th, of October, 1995. Obviously, would it appear that there's been a number of, of tests conducted?

A It's possible.

Q80 O.K.

A Before we actually got the, the one passed.

Q81 O.K. But you can't - - -

A I don't - - -

Q82 You can't put any more light on that?

A No, I don't

Q83 O.K. Well who would have, who would have requested these? Would this have been requested by yourself through Standards Association?

A I would have, I would have phoned Techni-search or written to them and and they would have come back and said - - -

Q84 O.K.

A - - - Yes, sent up so many harnesses. And I think we sent two harnesses at a time.

Q85 O.K. In fact you could see that there's the words, Q-A-C-1-1-6-6-7, which, in brackets after that's, for rope line. And then Q-A-C-1-1-6-3-9, in brackets, webbing line. They would have been the, the, the actual test requested by Standards Association, being quality assurance to Techni-search. Would you agree - - -

A Probably

Q85 - - - with that? I show you a document which is from Quality Assurance Services, Q.A.S. which is addressed to you and attached is also a licence from the Standards Association for yachting harness and harness and lines, 2-2-2-7. Was that the licence granted to you as a result of the harness and lanyard passing? Can you recall?

A I can't remember.

Q86 O.K. Well it would appear that that, this, the documentation here is addressed to you, issuing you with a licence to produce harnesses under the Australian Standard 2-2-2-7. Would you agree with that?

A Yes.

Q87 And you - - -

A Yes.

Q87 - - - in fact - - -

A

Q87 - - - is that your signature?

A Yes, it is.

Q88 And that is also dated the 25th of February, 1986?

A Yes.

Q89 O.K. I show you a document here which is an application for the, to use the Standards Australian mark, which is, your - - -

A

Q89 - - - signature appears on that?

A Yes.

Q90 O.K. And this, I show you another document which is a Standards Mark licence for Tuff Marine Accessories Pty Limited, which was your company, trading at 100 West, your business, trading at 100 Western Beach Road, your signature appears on that on the 8th of November, 1991.

A Yeah.

Q91 And that licence there is in fact to use the five ticks. Is that correct?

A Yes.

Q92 O.K. And I also show you other documents here that have been addressed to Tuff Marine Accessories, 100 Western Beach Road, Geelong, dated the 22nd of May, 1985 the 2nd of April, 1986, the 2nd of October, 1986, which relate to the certification marking of yachting harnesses, A-S-2-2-2-7 and others. Do you agree with those?

A Yes.

Q93 O.K. Now I also show you a test report from Tuff Marine Accessories, the client, this is from Techni-search, and it's headed, Tuff Marine Accessories,

yachtmen's harness received on the 7th of May, 1984. The method of testing was A-S-2-2-2-7, 1983. And it is a dynamic load test of a harness that was conducted by Techni-search, and the results of the harness, it indicates also the method of, of conducting the harness test. It also mentions the dummy weight which was used to conduct the test. It also mentions the drop height or 1.47 metres. And it also mentions that the harness and line were wet and also the result. And the results read, The dummy was retained by the harness, the stitching broke for a total of 80 millimetres length of webbing at the line attachment, but the remainder held. The webbing did not slip or slacken at the buckle or adjusting devices. And the conclusion is a pass. Do you agree with that?

A Yes, copy

Q94 That's correct. And would you agree that as a result of this test report you manufactured the harnesses in compliance with that?

A Yes.

Q95 O.K. Now when you were manufacturing the harnesses and the lanyards, what did you have in place to maintain any type of quality assurance?

A At that, that time, I did the quality control. I did, I cut the webbing and, at that stage also I did a lot of the sewing.

Q96 O.K.

A And the only part that any staff would have had involved, was to actually sew the webbing, but it was under strict supervision.

Q97 Did you at all conduct any further tests as a result of, for the purpose of quality assurance?

A Yes.

Q98 How many tests did you conduct after you manufactured them?

A After we didn't manufacture them?

Q99 Yes.

A Two, I think, and they both failed.

Q100 O.K.

A Because the standard had been increased at that stage.

Q101 After the initial batch of, of harnesses were made - - -

A Yes.

Q101 - - - as a result of the, of this passing - - -

A Passing, yeah.

Q101 - - - how many were released for sale?

A I've no idea.

Q102 O.K. When the second batches were made and you had further tests - - -

A No, we didn't have further tests.

Q103 Oh, you didn't have further tests?

A No, the only further tests that I had done was in, probably 2 years ago, but it was to a newer standard, and I decided to have a look at it, but the, the actual harness failed and so we didn't proceed any further.

Q104 O.K.

A The, there were no harnesses made at, at any stage that, that anything failed. That was the only certificate we had.

Q105 Right.

A And they do, they did bring in, but we weren't making the harnesses at the time, and you had to have a certain number in the 200 sent to be tested. But we didn't have to do that at that time.

Q106 O.K. But when the first lot were made after this, after you got approval - - -

A Yes.

Q106 - - - you didn't have any of those further tested?

A No.

Q107 O.K. So it wasn't only just until recently, 2 years ago, that you made some further harnesses - - -

A I made one.

Q107 - - - made one harness - - -

A Yes.

Q107 - - - and you sent that away for testing?

A For testing.

Q108 And that failed?

A Yes.

Q109 O.K. Did you use the same method of manufacturing when you made the second one, the, 2 years ago?

A Um - - -

Q110 Did you follow the same procedures?

A Followed the same procedure, but I'm not sure if we had the same hardware at the time.

Q111 All right. You used the same - - -

A The same webbing - - -

Q111 - - - webbing thickness?

A Yes.

Q112 The same stitch pattern?

A Yes.

Q113 O.K. And for the best, to the best of your recollection, the stitch pattern was constant in the first lot that were made? Everything was as you would make it?

A Yes, that's

Q113 - - - for, for the one that passed?

A Yes.

Q114 I show you a harness and lanyard which has, which is an orange harness and it has, at the ring, number 5. It has also written on it, C-Y-C-A-2-0-0-0 and 6 with a number of other letters scribbled out. And also the words, Sword of Orion. And on that harness is a stitched docket or, or manufacturing slip, and it's got Tuff Marine Australia on it. And it also mentions that it's a safety harness line instructions. Ruth, can you tell me if that is one of the harnesses that, that you manufactured?

A No, I don't think it is, because they, that would have been bigger and we use levitator buckles.

Q115 You use what, could you just explain that again? What are the, the types of buckles?

A It was a, a and it had levitator embedded in it. It certainly didn't, and these appear to be thinner, to me. And this appears to be smaller.

Q116 All right. Well just, just on, on, are you talking about, the ring appears to be smaller?

A I mean in diameter.

Q117 At the, you're talking - - -

A It should be

Q117 - - - the thickness of the metal?

A Yes.

Q118 O.K. I show you a, I also show you, which is a, a lanyard which was attached to that harness. It has the words, Sword of Orion, number 3. It has a silver hook at one end and it has the webbing, the stitching has, has parted from the other. Can you, and it also has a, the label attached to it, which is Tuff Marine Australia.

A I'm sorry, that's definitely not made by us. Nothing like the stitching that we used to do. Nothing like it at all. Actually that wouldn't pass in a fit.

Q119 So you think that this wouldn't pass at all?

A Oh, no. Not at all. We had it, we had it, you know, zig zagged and then went back zig zagged this way.

Q120 I'll give you a piece of paper, and to the best of your recollection, would you be able to draw the, the stitch, the stitch pattern that you manufactured? And

anything else on that harness that you believe may be different to this one here.

A It was zig zagged to, zig zagged, sail making machine, so it was zig zagged down that way, it was zigged down that way, and at the same time it was down round each edge there, like that, down there, down there. See?

Q121 Yeah.

A And then it, it, it was very closely zig zagged, like that. And then back through there. - - -

Q122 No you're right.

A - - - to join it? But down that way.

Q123 Was there any other stitching apart from what you've drawn there?

A No.

Q124 Did you have any bar tacks, what these, this, the yellow stitching? You can see here there's two lots of, of stitching here. One red and the other yellow. Do you agree with that?

A Yes, they are.

Q125 Did you have any yellow bar tacking across here?

A Not to my knowledge.

Q126 O.K. Would you just sign what you've just drawn here for us, just underneath and write your name under that and then date it, please?

A What day is it?

Q127 It's the 13th - - -

A

Q127 - - - today. 13th of February. O.K. Ruth, we might just take a short break for the moment. The, the time on my watch is now 9.42, 43, 9.43am. This interview is temporarily suspended.

INTERVIEW SUSPENDED

INTERVIEW RESUMED

SENIOR CONSTABLE UPSTON

Q128 The, the time by my watch is now 2 minutes past 10.00. The interview between Plummer and Upston resumes. Ruth, do you agree we've just had a, a, a short break and, to have a cup of coffee and we discussed a few things?

A Yes.

Q129 O.K. I'll, I'll now pass you on to Senior Constable Gray.

DETECTIVE SENIOR CONSTABLE GRAY

Q130 O.K. Ruth, if you could just tell me the sequence of events of change of company name, just so I can write them down? Approximate dates. So 1984 you - - -

A Tuff Marine Accessories.

Q131 Right. Tuff Marine Accessories. And, and your position there was Managing Director?

A I was the proprietor.

Q132 Proprietor, O.K. In 1986, thereabouts, December, '86.

A Yeah, December.

Q133

A I sold 80 per cent of my business to Fort Holdings - -

-

Q134 Yes.

A - - - which was a public company at the time.

Q135 Yes. And in particular it was Mr Webb?

A Michael Webb, yes.

Q136 And Mr - - -

A Ken Mitchell.

Q137 Now were they the two main people that you know were involved in Fort Holdings?

A (NO AUDIBLE REPLY)

Q138 You didn't have anyone, you didn't deal with anyone else in Fort Holdings?

A No, I didn't.

Q139 O.K. And at that point, they offered you the position of the Managing Director?

A Yes.

Q140 Of the new - - -

A Tuff Marine Australia.

Q140 - - - Tuff Marine Australia?

A Yes.

Q141 Then in, around 1990 - - -

A Yes.

Q141 - - - Tuff Marine Australia was - - -

A Closed - - -

Q141 - - - no longer?

A Closed the, they closed Tuff Marine Australia down.

Q142 O.K. And then in 1991 or thereabouts, you started Tuff Marine Manufacturing?

A That's right.

Q143 O.K. Now in '86, December, '86, or just before when you sold your 20 per cent share in the company, 80 per cent shares in the, in the company, what was the circumstances surrounding that sale so far as what profit you made from that sale, if any profit, or how was it orchestrated?

A Do you mean when I was, I believe it was sold in March.

Q144 Yes.

A Well it was for some weeks that they tried to sell Tuff Marine, all of the big, all of the companies within Fort Holdings were in trouble. Puma was one of them, and I believe they were sold back to Germany or someone. Piping Hot down in Geelong were closed down 'cause they couldn't, no, I think they were sold to somebody in Melbourne. Tuff Marine was needed because they said that we were a profitable business and they tried to sell us. They said they couldn't find a buyer, and in March of 1990 Michael Webb came down to Geelong and said, told me that they couldn't find a buyer, that the business would have to close down. I sold my shareholding for \$1.00 and I was asked to resign as a director.

Q145 Right.

A And subsequently the stocktake was done by people appointed by Fort Holdings. And all stock and, which I was not privy to any of that. And all stock and equipment was shipped back to Melbourne.

Q146 All right. Specifically Melbourne, are you aware?

A I've no idea where it was.

Q147 O.K. So your premises at 100 - - -

A Western Beach.

Q147 - - - Western Beach were completely cleaned out, so to speak?

A Yes.

Q148 Of all stock?

A Yes.

Q149 O.K.

A And equipment.

Q150 Your 20 per cent was, was sold for \$1.00?

A Yes.

Q151 Right. O.K. Now some of the equipment in the, the shop at, where you were, was in fact this - - -

A Yes - - -

Q151 - - - orange - - -

A - - - they were - - -

Q151 - - - seat belt material?

A Yes.

Q152 Are you able to identify for us, whether this is in fact the material that was in rolls, or however it was - - -

A I believe it is.

Q153 All right. O.K. And you, that was all removed?

A Yes everything - - -

Q154 And taken away?

A - - - was taken away.

Q155 O.K. Now so far as your licence is concerned, the 8-4-9, I believe it was, was, the licence for the production of harnesses. No, here it is here. The licence which was issued to you as - - -

A Tuff Marine Accessories.

Q155 - - - Tuff Marine, yeah.

A Accessories, yes.

Q156 Tuff Marine Accessories, is in fact licence number 7-8-4. Do you, do you agree with that?

A Yes.

Q157 O.K. And that refers to the licensing authority to produce yachtsmen's safety harnesses and lines?

A Yes.

Q158 O.K. Now that is a licence which covered the company?

A Yes.

Q159 The company of Tuff Marine Accessories?

A Yes.

Q160 And then to Tuff Marine Australia?

A That's right.

Q161 So that licence is good for those businesses?

A Yes.

Q162 O.K. Is it the case that when a premises is moved, then there is requirements, under the Standards Association, for re-assessment of all production?

A That's correct.

Q163 O.K. So it is the case that all equipment moved, so your location was no longer the place of business?

A That's right.

Q164 And all equipment moved to somewhere in Melbourne?

A That's correct.

Q165 So as far as you were aware, from your experience, there would be a need to re-assess the standards - - -

A All of them.

Q165 - - - for the harness lines?

A And the buoyancy.

Q166 And the buoyancy vests?

A Yes.

Q167 'Cause of the move?

A Mmm. That's correct.

Q168 And that would require, once again, for the harnesses, drop testing - - -

A Yes.

Q168 - - - of a sample?

A Yes.

Q169 To ensure that everything was O.K?

A Yes.

Q170 And that is in fact why they actually conduct, Standards Association, actually conduct - - -

A Inspections.

Q170 - - - a number of inspections to which we have a number of copies here. Yeah, and there's an example of one before you, just a factory visit report?

A Yes, that's correct - - -

Q171 O.K.

A - - - yeah.

Q172 O.K. Are you aware, I mean you may not be, not having much to do with the business after it moved. Are you aware whether they applied for a new licence?

A No idea.

Q173 O.K. Now as a director - (Tape Beeping) - were you there, we might just, the time on this tape is, the time by my watch is now 10.09am. We'll just suspend this interview for a tape change.

INTERVIEW SUSPENDED

INTERVIEW RESUMED

DETECTIVE SENIOR CONSTABLE GRAY

Q174 Interview between Detective Gray and Miss Plummer is recommenced at 10.13am. Now, Ruth, we were just discussing, I was about to discuss the responsibilities of, of managers, or directors. In, in your capacity as the owner/director/manager or proprietor of Tuff Marine Accessories in 1984, what did you see as your responsibility so far as production was concerned?

A Well, well I was, I consider I was the responsible person and in the case of anything under supervision, the quality control, like, Australian Standards, I believe I was the responsible to them.

Q175 All right. So even if you were, even if you played a sort of a non-involvement role, and somebody else was producing the harnesses within your business, did you feel it was your responsibility to ensure that everything was done correctly - - -

A Yes, I did.

Q175 - - - and that the, the item made the standard - - -
A Yes.
Q175 - - - required?
A Yes.
Q176 O.K. Are you aware of what sort of role Mr Webb and Mr Mitchell played so far as that was concerned - - -
A Um - - -
Q176 - - - when you were in business with them?
A Neither of them played any role in the actual physical running of the business in Geelong.
Q177 O.K.
A They virtually, they came down once a month or thereabouts. The, they had no involvement.
Q178 So then in fact they placed all responsibility as far as manufacturing was concerned, in your hands?
A Yes.
Q179 O.K. Were there any situations where annual general meetings were held between the three of you or other members - - -
A Um
Q179 - - - whilst with them?
A I can't recall that.
Q180 O.K.
A I remember seeing financials on a monthly basis, or thereabouts.
Q181 Did you have need at any stage, whilst in business with those two people, to discuss problems or issues so far as production was concerned, or - - -

A I can't remember.

Q182 O.K. Well, so they were really in a situation of a silent type partnership, so to speak?

A Well they acted as silent partners - - -

Q183 Right.

A - - - I suppose, but I don't believe they were.

Q184 They acted as silent, but should in fact been - - -

A I believe so.

Q184 - - - should in fact be more involved?

A I think so.

Q185 Now attached to this harness here, first of all we'll look at the lanyard itself. If we start with the, the clip on the lanyard, if you can cast your mind back to when you produced your own lanyards, harnesses, harness lines, is this the type of clip that you in fact used?

A I believe we used a clip which was an RF something - - -

-

Q186 An RF something?

A But it was a different shape all together to them.

SENIOR CONSTABLE UPSTON

Q187 In what way was it a different shape? Can you recall, Ruth?

A Yes, the, the, can I just show you something?

Q188 Certainly.

A This particular buckle, if it's, it can get itself off the, the actual lifelines. Whereas the one, the R-F-7-8-7 can't do that.

Q189 Can you just describe briefly the, the locking mechanism of the one that you were using?

A It had a safety clip on it as well.

DETECTIVE SENIOR CONSTABLE GRAY

Q190 Was that a screw type - - -

A No, it was, like, a, like a shovel, basically like that, attached to there.

Q191 Could you draw that, please?

A if I can. It was very much, it had like a, a shovel type pin that actually locked down on it.

Q192 So there was another arm in there? Is that what you're saying? There was an - - -

A There was more to it than that. The - - -

Q193 Right.

A - - - the actual safety pin seemed to be back in here as well.

Q194 Right.

A I can't describe it very well.

SENIOR CONSTABLE UPSTON

Q195 No, that's fine.

DETECTIVE SENIOR CONSTABLE GRAY

Q196 But it's definitely not that?

A No.

SENIOR CONSTABLE UPSTON

Q197 So, but you're aware that, that, you wouldn't use this one - - -

A No.

Q197 - - - because it is, it can open without human invention?

A Yes.

Q198 Yeah - - -

A Yes, it can slide itself off the lifelines - - -

DETECTIVE SENIOR CONSTABLE GRAY

Q199 O.K.

A - - - twisted the right way.

Q200 O.K. Then we move, we moved directly from the, the hook on this one to the stitching, the first set of stitching on one end. Now you've already drawn us a, a map of your, your stitching formation, what can you tell us about that particular stitching you see right now?

A Well that stitching is nowhere near the amount of stitching that we had on ours. It didn't have the bar tacking on it, but it had continual stitching up and down the, the, so that it was almost all stitching. And I believe that this may have even been a bit longer here, but I can't guarantee that.

Q201 The stitching length?

A It may have been - - -

Q202 O.K.

A - - - I'm not too sure.

Q203 So from your experience, when you look at that stitching, what does that tell you?

A It's not strong enough.

Q204 O.K.

SENIOR CONSTABLE UPSTON

Q205 How would you have gained that knowledge or knowing that?

A Only by, you know, the experimental, developing the product.

Q206 Right. So you in fact, you in fact did a number of tests yourself - - -

A Yes.

Q206 - - - prior to sending the harness away?

A No, we, we had, we did send a number of harnesses away to be tested, and failed. And then we realised it had to have more stitching on it.

Q207 Oh, O.K. So through, through your development - - -

DETECTIVE SENIOR CONSTABLE GRAY

Q208 Testing and failing and - - -

A Development, yes it was development.

SENIOR CONSTABLE UPSTON

Q209 Through experimentation - - -

A Yes.

Q209 - - - you finally came up with the right product?

A Yes.

Q210 O.K. Did you produce at all any types of stitch patterns similar to this?

A No.

Q211 Not, did you send any product away for testing which has similar stitch pattern to this?

A No.

Q212 And you based your stitching on Burke? Would that be -
- -

A No, I - - -

Q212 - - - fair to say that? No?

A No, I, only the sizing of it - - -

Q213 Oh, O.K.

A - - - that's all I did.

Q214 All right.

A Just to get the measurements for an adult.

Q215 So what did you base your stitching on?

A Just the size of the webbing. Just the legs of the
webbing, that's all.

Q216 Oh, O.K.

A And I suppose that turned out to be the style, but
nothing else.

Q217 Right.

A Because Oh, I shouldn't say that.

Q218 No, you say what you want to say.

A Well I inspected a Burke harness - - -

Q219 Yes.

A - - - and I didn't believe that was strong enough
either.

DETECTIVE SENIOR CONSTABLE GRAY

Q220 Right.

A But it had the standards labels and that in it, so - -
-

SENIOR CONSTABLE UPSTON

Q221 Yeah, O.K. But that's your personal opinion, is it?

A It was only a personal opinion, yeah.

Q222 So, did you recall approximately how many harnesses you might have experimented with before you got the final product?

A (NO AUDIBLE REPLY)

Q223 Approximately?

A We would have, how many?

Q224 Yeah.

A Oh, I can't remember. There could have been several.

Q225 Yes, O.K.

A Mmm.

DETECTIVE SENIOR CONSTABLE GRAY

Q226 All right. Then we move along to a label which is attached to the harness. Can you tell me just in relation to your harnesses, where did you attached your label?

A I'd attach it in the same place as this one was, but it had - - -

Q227 Yes.

A - - - an additional label to it - - -

Q228 Yes.

A - - - and that label did. These are - - -

Q229 It's not your label?

A No - - -

Q230 O.K.

A - - - not Tuff Marine Australia.

Q231 So in fact when you were producing harnesses, your label would have been titled, Tuff Marine Accessories?

A That's right.

Q232 And in fact this label says, Tuff Marine Australia.

A Yes.

Q233 And that would indicate to you that that is as a result of a new company being formed at some time in 1990?

A No. I'm sorry, no, that's not right. That label, Tuff Marine Australia would have been produced during the time of Tuff Marine Australia.

Q234 Would be 1986 onwards?

A To 1990.

Q235 To 1990?

A That's correct.

Q236 O.K. So whilst you were in Tuff Marine Accessories you did not have any labels Tuff Marine Australia?

A No.

Q237 O.K. Now on your harness there was a further label, which was the Australian Safety Standards?

A Australian Standards batch numbers.

Q238 O.K.

A Yes.

Q239 And when you say, batch numbers, can you describe that label to us?

A O.K. Yes, it was approximately, maybe 55 millimetres square - - -

Q240 Yes.

A - - - and it had the standards mark on it.

Q241 yeah.

A And their logo.

Q242 Yes.

A And it had a, a number, it was in, in red right, no black, right across the label, and it was that label that the register agreed with. That - - -

Q243 Oh, right - - -

A - - - in a batch - - -

Q244 Right. So the batch is - - -

A - - - in a particular batch.

Q244 - - - relative to the label?

A To that label, yes.

Q245 Right. O.K. Now, and that was sewn separately to this label, or were they - - -

A Yes.

Q245 - - - together?

A It was sewn along with it, right alongside it.

Q246 Right. Alongside it?

A Yes.

Q247 But they were two separate labels?

A Yes, they were.

Q248 O.K.

Q249 O.K. So, O.K. Now in relation to the, the harness which I now show you, do you recall without looking at the, the ring or the buckle, was it, was your harness in a similar shape - - -

A Similar shape - - -

Q249 - - - to start with?

A - - - yes.

Q250 Similar shape to start with?

A Yes.

Q251 If you look at the stitching on the harness, was that similar to your stitching?

A No.

Q252 No. O.K. What can you tell me about - - -

A Our stitching would have - - -

Q252 - - - the stitching on this harness?

A - - - would have taken up a bigger area.

Q253 Right.

A It would have been similar to that. It would have taken up a bigger area - - -

Q254 Yes.

A - - - on it.

Q255 O.K. And that would apply to all of the stitching on this particular harness - - -

A Yes.

Q255 - - - would it?

A There would have been more stitching then there is.

Q256 O.K. Now I take you to the ring which is on, the metal ring which is on there, which is more oval than round.

A Yes.

Q257 And what can you tell me about that particular metal ring?

A Well I believe that we had 5/16 stainless steel rings and I don't think that's 5/16. It doesn't feel like it.

Q258 O.K. O.K. Now when you say 5/16, that's the width?

A Yeah.

SENIOR CONSTABLE UPSTON

Q259 5/16ths.

A Yes.

DETECTIVE SENIOR CONSTABLE GRAY

Q260 16ths of an inch?

A Of an inch, yeah.

Q261 Yeah. Mmm. Now it take you to the buckles. There's two metal buckles attached to this harness. Do you agree with that?

A Yes, there are.

Q262 Did you use similar buckles?

A We used similar buckles, but - - -

Q263 Yes.

A - - - ours were slightly smaller, a bit thicker, and had - - -

Q264 In width and length?

A Oh, yes, slightly smaller.

Q265 Right.

A But thicker.

Q266 But thicker - - -

A Stainless steel - - -

Q267 Yeah.

A - - - and they had the word, levitator embedded in them.

Q268 Leather taker?

A Levitator.

Q269 Levitator.

A Yes.

Q270 O.K. And I show you these buckles more closely. And do you see the word, levitator inscribed on those buckles?

A No.

Q271 O.K. I then take you once again to the Tuff Marine Australia label which exists on the safety line, on this harness. And it's, it's exactly the same as what's on the lanyard. That is not your label?

A No.

Q272 And do you agree there does not exist an Australian Standards - - -

A Label - - -

Q272 - - - label either?

A No, it doesn't.

Q273 O.K. So categorically you can say this is not your harness?

A Yes.

Q274 And that that is not your lifeline?

A No.

Q275 O.K.

SENIOR CONSTABLE UPSTON

Q276 Ruth, I'll now show you another lanyard which is not with harness. And it is what appears to be similar to the one we've already shown you. First of all I'll start off again with the clip at one end, the stitch pattern, it has the words, number 9, Sword of Orion, R-B-Y-C-B-2-0-0-0, then number 9. And on the other side

it has a sewn patch. What can you tell me about this lanyard?

A Firstly it doesn't seem to be finished.

Q277 Right.

A And it's not, it's, it's the same as the other not ours. Too, it hasn't got the standards label on it. I believe the webbing's correct, but that's all.

Q278 So you believe that this is similar to the - - -

A To the - - -

Q278 - - - webbing that, that is on the previous harness and lanyard - - -

A Yes.

Q278 - - - which would be the same webbing that you would have had in your, in, when you were manufacturing the, the - - -

A Yes.

Q278 - - - harnesses - - -

A Yes.

Q278 - - - and lanyards? And it says also Tuff Marine Australia on that?

A Yes.

Q279 On that patch. And that is not your, this is not, to the best of your knowledge, this is not your lanyard either?

A I don't believe it is.

Q280 Ruth, so it's fair to say, on looking at these lanyards and harnesses today, that these could have only have been produced some time after the 12th month, 1986?

A Yes.

Q281 O.K. O.K. Now you mentioned to me that when the business closed, your business closed and some time within '86 and then in 1990 everything was removed from your premises at - - -

A Yes.

Q281 - - - your business premises. Who removed all the stock? Who

A I don't know who the people were who did the actual stocktake - - -

Q282 Right.

A - - - I don't know even know who the carriers were.

Q283 Right. O.K. That's fine. Now we've established who the directors were at, in 1990 of Fort - - -

A Fort Holdings.

Q284 Fort Holdings, and your, your hold in the company was 20 per cent at that stage?

A That's correct, yes.

Q285 Now this webbing that you were involved in with your harnesses, had that, did that come with any certification to say that, what it was, an the strength of it and, that it was a - - -

A Yes, it did. It came - - -

Q285 - - - recognised?

A - - - Yes, there was a, a certificate, if I remember rightly from - - -

Q286 Right.

A - - - Webco.

Q287 Right.

A Um - - -

Q288 And that would be similar Australian Standard too, would it not?

A It would be Yeah, that's right,

Q289 I believe that may be indicated on a document we have here which talks about seat belt material.

A That's correct.

Q290 Would you have a look at that one. Does that, does that refer to the material you were using?

A Yes, that's correct, yeah.

Q291 O.K. So you purchased that material and it's a legitimate material - - -

A Yes.

Q291 - - - which has been accepted by the Australian Standards?

A Yes.

Q292 O.K. And that's a document that reported test results and relates to the orange material which you purchased - - -

A Yes.

Q292 - - - to make harnesses? The date received was the 18th of the 11th, '82?

A That was from a Power Drive Marine - - -

Q293 Yeah.

A - - - who got that for me.

Q294 And in fact this particular material was tested on the 18th of November, 1982, and complied?

A Yes.

Q295 O.K. Now in relation to records, so far as the production of equipment and that sort of thing, how long, how long are you required as a, as an owner of a business to retain those documents?

A 7 years, I believe.

Q296 O.K. So information surrounding the number of harnesses which were made by you during your ownership of the business, should in fact have been retained when the company was overtaken, or taken over?

A Yes.

Q297 Is that correct?

A (NO AUDIBLE REPLY)

Q298 Now in one of the issues of your licenses, there is a mention that there, some conditions apply to the issue of a licence. I'll just show you that.

A The same conditions apply - - -

Q299 Right.

A - - - to the previous licence - - -

Q300 O.K.

A - - - yes.

Q301 Did those conditions also mention the retesting of items or random selection of items to be retested?

A Yes, what date was that licence?

Q302 That would be 1991.

A That's correct. That's when they were, they changed the - - -

Q303 Changed the standard.

A - - - standard, and you had to test one, I think, or two, in 200.

Q304 Oh, O.K. O.K.

A Something like that.

Q305 Two in 200. And that would apply for the company that commenced, Tuff Marine Australia?

A No, that's after that.

Q306 That's after that, yeah - - -

A Yes - - -

Q306 - - - '99.

A - - - they, they revised - - -

Q307 Yeah.

A - - - the - - -

Q308 That's right.

A - - - standard.

Q309 O.K. O.K. So you severed your, your involvement with Webb and Mitchell around the 14/3/1990?

A Yes.

Q310 Would that be correct?

A Yes.

Q311 Have you been involved with those two persons ever since?

A No.

Q312 Now in relation to your actual quality control as a director - - -

A Yes.

Q312 - - - in fact you were responsible for doing some of the sewing yourself. In times when you were not doing the sewing and that sort of thing, what instructions did you give your staff so far as, say was an individual picked to do that thing, or a group of people picked to do that job?

A No, it was usually one or two people - - -

Q313 O.K.

A - - - trained to do the job.

Q314 Right. And the machines that they stitched with had a pre-program for the stitching, or - - -

A Um - - -

Q314 - - - did they go by naked eye - - -

A They did a test, stitch test every day. Every time they went to the machine they did stitch test, which was held in boxes, and recorded for Australian Standards when they came down, and it had to be a certain, so many numbers to, say an inch.

Q315 So it's so many stitches to an inch?

A Yeah, yeah.

Q316 So they were, they produced the sewing in exactly the same format as you did - - -

A Yes.

Q316 - - - for those lanyards?

A Exactly.

Q317 Right. So just to rehash, we can say that you started producing harnesses about what date?

A About 1985 and '6, I suppose it'd be.

Q318 Yeah.

A Somewhere round there.

Q319 And completed in 1986?

A Me personally, you mean?

Q320 Yeah.

A That's when the business was sold - - -

Q321 O.K.

A - - - yes.

Q322 And did, when the business was sold it became - - -

DETECTIVE SENIOR CONSTABLE GRAY

Q323 Fort Holdings.

SENIOR CONSTABLE UPSTON

Q324 - - - Fort Holdings.

A Tuff Marine Australia, yeah.

Q325 Or Tuff Marine Australia. And while you were Managing
Director harnesses were still produced?

A Yes.

Q326 O.K. So when you produced harnesses as Tuff Marine
Australia, as the Managing Director, what labels were
attached to those harnesses?

A The, the Tuff Marine Australia label and the Australian
Standards label.

Q327 Right. So in fact these harnesses here with the Tuff
Marine label, Tuff Marine Australia label, you were
still involved - - -

A Yes.

Q327 - - - with that company?

A With it, yes.

Q328 O.K.

A But they would have had the other label on them.

DETECTIVE SENIOR CONSTABLE GRAY

Q329 The standards mark?

A Yes - - -

SENIOR CONSTABLE UPSTON

Q330 Yes the standards mark?

A Yes.

Q331 It wouldn't have had - - -

A It wouldn't have been a number.

Q332 It wasn't a Tuff Marine Accessory?

A No.

Q333 Or Tuff Marine Manufacture?

A No, it was Tuff Marine Australia.

Q334 O.K. So these labels here which I'm showing you, Tuff Marine Australia, there's a report here which indicates an order of labels. I'll just show you it. Now I'm unable to determine whether that's a quote, a request, or just a price per, you know, 1,000 labels.

A It wouldn't, it wouldn't be an order.

Q335 Right. It wouldn't be an order, would it - - -

A

Q335 - - - it be a quote?

A Yeah, possibly.

Q336 O.K.

A Yeah.

Q337 So do you recall whether in fact, you know, whether in fact 1,000 labels were ordered?

A I don't know.

Q338 O.K. And that would be in, in, in business letters and
- - -

A Yes, that's right.

Q338 - - - somewhere?

A And in the order book.

Q339 O.K. So - - -

A Has that got a date on it? 2000, oh - - -

Q340 There is - - -

A It's got a date on it - - -

DETECTIVE SENIOR CONSTABLE GRAY

Q341 No, that's a, that'd be 10th of the 2nd, '86.

A I'd say it'd be an inquiry.

SENIOR CONSTABLE UPSTON

Q342 O.K. But in any event a number of labels did turn up
at - - -

A Yes, in that time.

Q342 - - - your place of business?

A Yes. That's right.

Q343 O.K. And those are the labels?

A No, that's not from standards, these are the little
one. They were printed - - -

Q344 Oh, O.K. so - - -

A - - - and - - -

Q345 So this is standards - - -

A Yeah, standards card.

Q346 Standards labels - - -

A Yeah.

Q346 - - - O.K. But this is the - - -
A They weren't - - -
Q346 - - - the local - - -
A - - - printed locally.
Q347 Right. But that is the label that you used - - -
A Yes.
Q347 - - - in those days?
A Yes.
Q348 O.K. Now when you were producing the lanyards, how did
you determine what types of cottons to use?
A There was a specification to thread.
Q349 Right. As a standard?
A There was the one that we used that was approved.
Q350 What, by the Australian Standards?
A Yes.
Q351 Right. O.K. And there was no problems in purchasing
that material?
A No.
Q352 O.K. Having a look at this cotton, or this sewing
material, does that look, from your experience, does
that look similar to what you in fact used?
A It does look similar.
Q353 O.K. And in fact when you were producing harnesses and
lanyards, what colour thread did you use?
A Orange.
Q354 Orange.
A Some time I used white at one stage too.

Q355 White. Would you consider that to be orange, or is it red?

A Well some people call red, orange, believe it - - -

Q356 Do you - - -

A - - - or not.

Q357 Well what do you call that?

A Well I would say it could be either - - -

Q358 O.K.

A - - - red or orange.

Q359 Are you able to tell me whether this is the same cotton that you used?

A I can't, I don't know.

Q360 But you would have had similar colours - - -

A Yes.

Q360 - - - in your production? Now when everything was moved in 1990, I'll just get it right here, all the equipment was moved?

A Yes.

Q361 The labels went as well?

A Everything went that was there.

Q362 Everything?

A Yeah, it was cleaned out.

Q363 O.K. So, just to summarise one thing here. We know that, yes, that was a current label used in - - -

A Tuff Marine Australia.

Q363 - - - Tuff Marine Accessories.

A Yeah, not that label.

Q364 Sorry, it was used in Tuff Marine Australia?

A Tuff Marine Australia, yes.

Q365 But that was completed in 1990?

A Correct.

Q366 That is not the harness that you designed - - -

A No.

Q366 - - - or sewed or manufactured? So it could only have been built after 19 - - -

A '90.

Q366 - - - 1990?

A Mmm.

Q367 O.K. Would you be able to recreate a stitch pattern on webbing for us?

A I probably could.

Q368 O.K.

A Yeah.

Q369 I just thought I'd ask you, that's all. In relation to any harnesses that you produced, do you have any in your possession?

A No.

Q370 Do you have any photos that you recall?

A I, I might have a photo - - -

Q371 Right. Did you in fact submit any photos for, for a catalogue for the sale of these items?

A No, I don't think so.

Q372 How were they sold?

A Through distributors.

Q373 Righteo. Do you remember who the distributors were?

A At the

Q374 Yeah.

A I could remember some of them probably.

Q375 Could you just tell me the ones you remember.

A Mmm. AMI in Western Australia.

Q376 Right.

A Um - - -

Q377 Yeah.

A AMI, we have in Sydney, we have, I'm not too sure whether Sam Allen was on the scene at that time or not.

Q378 Who, who's that?

A Sam Allen, wholesalers.

Q379 Where are they, in Sydney?

A He's in, he's in Sydney or Queensland.

Q380 Yeah.

A He's in Queensland, Morningside.

Q381 Do you remember any other ones from Sydney? Any popular - - -

A Um - - -

Q381 - - - yachting shops or - - -

A No, we didn't sell to the shops.

Q382 O.K.

A Sydney, I really can't remember.

Q383 That's all right. But certainly there appears to be information and business records?

A Yes.

Q384 O.K. Do you remember the price that, that the lanyard was sold for?

A (NO AUDIBLE REPLY)

Q385 Approximately?

A (NO AUDIBLE REPLY)

Q386 No?

A No.

Q387 O.K. The harness?

A I can't recall that either.

Q388 You can't. Do you recall if any of these items that you produced, not these items, here but the ones you produced were in fact sold overseas?

A No.

Q389 You're not aware, or they weren't?

A I'm not aware of if they were.

Q390 O.K.

Q391 Were the harnesses and lanyard ever sold as a separate unit?

A Yes. Well yes they were. Sometimes they were.

Q392 So somebody could come and buy a separate harness or a separate lanyard?

A Yes, because what happened when they changed the standard, it was just before we got the first approval, the tenor line was always connected to the ring prior to that. And then you had to have it so that it was detachable. So people then had to buy a detachable line.

Q393 All right.

Q394 Why, Ruth, from your experience, why do you think that the, the standards label was not attached to any of these items?

A I don't know.

Q395 From your experience?

A I don't know. I can only assume that somebody made them for their own benefit without the Australian Standards approval.

Q396 Yes. Now when the business moved and all the items were taken, the standard, the standard badges, would they have been taken as well?

A Yes, they were, everything was taken.

Q397 And it's a requirement that when you manufacture these items, that that label be attached?

A Absolutely.

Q398 It's a legal requirement?

A Yes.

Q399 Is it a legal requirement that the manufacture's label be attached as well?

A Yes, you have to, well it does have to be. But when I say it's a legal requirement, only if they were selling them, for the purpose of what we were selling them for, is a requirement for Australian Standards but I, I don't think there's any law that someone couldn't make their own harness.

Q400 Oh, certainly, yeah, I could make my own - - -

A Yeah.

Q400 - - - wear it myself.

A Mmm.

Q401 O.K.

DETECTIVE SENIOR CONSTABLE GRAY

Q402 I'll just bring you, I'll just draw your attention to the, the patch shown on the harness that we've been showing you, and the last two lines that reads, This safety harness, or, correction, This safety harness/line, safety line, has been manufactured and tested to meet the approved Australian Standards Association number 2-2-7, 2-2-2-7 - - -

A Yeah.

Q403 What, what's your understanding of that statement?

A That the harness - - -

Q404 Would you like to just read that aloud now and then the last two lines?

A Yeah.

Q405 It's very small print.

A The safety harness/safety line, has been manufactured and tested to meet the approved Australian Standards Association number 2-2-2-7.

Q406 Well what's your understanding of that statement?

A I'm not, I, I don't believe it's an understanding that it's one, if that's what you mean. I believe they're two separate things.

Q407 Right.

A And both of them were tested separately.

Q408 Does it also mean to you that, that it's', it's manufactured and tested to meet the approved Australian Safety Standards, which means it's not manufactured to the Australian Standards?

A (NO AUDIBLE REPLY)

Q409 Does that, is there any sort of ambiguity there or - -
-

A I don't think so.

Q410 All right. You believe it's the same thing, if it's
been manufactured to meet - - -

A To meet.

Q410 - - - or manufactured to, it means the same thing?

A I think so, yes.

SENIOR CONSTABLE UPSTON

Q411 So in fact, does that label comply on its own without
the standards badge?

A That label was approved by standards - - -

Q412 Right.

A - - - to be put on the harness.

Q413 O.K. So in actual fact you do have to have the
standard logo?

A Yes.

Q414 Logo?

A Yes.

Q415 As well as that - - -

A Yes.

Q415 - - - company logo?

A I can't understand why somebody would just put that on
its own.

Q416 Right. It doesn't, yes, it doesn't indicate that
there's ticks or anything else, does it? O.K.

DETECTIVE SENIOR CONSTABLE GRAY

Q417 So just, just one, just another quick thing, as far as you're concerned, at no stage you had anything to do with the manufacture of this harness and lanyard?

A I don't believe we did.

Q418 I'll just show you one quick, another harness, correction, another lanyard and there's also two buckles, or two clips. It's in that, it's in two halves. It has the words, Number 4, Sword of Orion, R-B-Y-C-B-2-0-0-0, the line has been parted. It also has the, the, a marking T-S-1-8-3-9-6 and also the same label.

A Mmm.

Q419 Do you agree with that?

A So this is all one - - -

Q420 This is all, was originally one. Where we have had it tested and it shows - - -

A

Q420 - - - that the testing is, as part of the actual webbing - - -

Q421 Yeah.

A - - - and also the stitching as being part of it. Would you agree that this is the same material that you used for your manufacturing?

A Yes.

Q422 It also has the label Tuff Marine Australia, with the same label?

A Yes.

Q423 And would you agree, in this state, as it was, perhaps in its perfect condition, that had nothing to do with the manufacture of this particular harness - - -

A Yes.

Q423 - - - lanyard?

A Yes.

Q424 You had nothing to do with it?

A Nothing to do with it

Q425 Would you, would you agree that this would be out of a similar batch as to the previous two harnesses, or the previous harness and two lanyards that we've shown you?

A Yes, I would.

SENIOR CONSTABLE UPSTON

Q426 Ruth, are you aware at any stage, was there any thefts at your business in which a number of labels were stolen?

A Not to my knowledge.

Q427 O.K. That's fine.

DETECTIVE SENIOR CONSTABLE GRAY

SENIOR CONSTABLE UPSTON

Q428 Is there anything you'd like to say? We've got no more questions for you - - -

A

Q428 - - - at this stage.

A No.

Q429 Is there anything you'd like to say about what we've just discussed?

A Oh, except that it's very disturbing - - -

Q430 Yes.

A - - - I'm very concerned and, that garments could be made inside somebody's licence and they shouldn't be.

Q431 Yeah. O.K. The time by my watch is now 10.46am. This interview is concluded.

INTERVIEW CONCLUDED