

STATEMENT in the matter of:
Missing Persons

Place: Merimbula
Police Station

Date : 29 December 1998

Name: David William HUTCHINSON

Address: C/O HMAS Albatross

Tel. No.: 02 44 211465

Occupation: Observer

STATES:-

1. This statement made by me accurately sets out the evidence which I would be prepared, if necessary, to give in court as a witness. The statement is true to the best of my knowledge and belief and I make it knowing that, if it is tendered in evidence, I shall be liable to prosecution if I have wilfully stated anything which I know to be false or do not believe to be true.

2. I am 30 years of age.

3. I am currently an observer on Sea King Helicopters attached to HMAS Albatross. I have been in the Navy for the last 8 years. I hold the rank of Lieutenant. I am a fully qualified Sea King Observer.

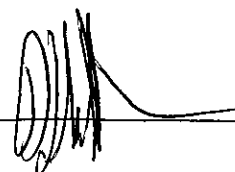
4. Around 5.00am on Tuesday the 29th December, 1998 my crew and I were called in relation to rescue which was to commence during daylight.

5. We launched around 6.15am. We flew to a position given to us to commence a parallel track search which was provided to us by AUSSAR. The start point was South 37.08 150.19 east. We commenced that at 6.35am. At 6.52am we were re-tasked by aircraft LYG he informed us he had spotted a person in the water. He provided a position for us to fly to. That position was 3723.07 south and 15127.23 east. We flew to that area. At

Witness: _____



Signature: _____



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that position we recovered the first deceased.

6. At the location of the first deceased a crewman was placed in double lift harness and he was then winched into the water. He was also in possession of a billy pugh, rescue net. He was sent down and he recovered that deceased. This deceased was in a more upright position, his head was above the water.

7. The deceased was brought back on board, upon our arrival he was under the water. A check of his vital signs revealed that there was no life.

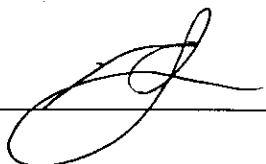
8. We decided we would base an expanding square search on that datum. We continued this type of search until 8.13am, we heard from another aircraft that a raft had been spotted. The fixed wing aircraft was unable to do a run around the raft. We flew to that position which was 3121.27 south 15143.47 east. We saw the raft. The raft was located at 8.19am.

9. A crewman was lowered to the raft. Attempts were made to puncture the raft. The reasons for trying to puncture the raft is to prevent other searchers from stumbling across an empty raft. The raft was left and one chamber was still inflated.

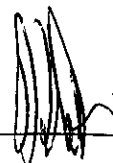
10. We left that position and flew back to recommence our expanding square where we had been earlier. That was about a 12 mile distance between the two. At 8.43am we came across some small debris in the water. At 8.48 we located the second deceased. He was on his back, however his head had slipped out through the collar of the life jacket.

The position of the second deceased was 3723.50 south 15124.45 east.

Witness: _____



Signature: _____



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11. Once again the crewman was dispatched and the body was returned to the aircraft. A check of vital signs were made and no sign of life was detected.

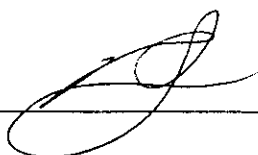
12. As we had another twenty minutes of fuel left. We made another search of the area. We located pieces of debris, plywood, and plastic bottles. We departed the area at 9.15am. We arrived back at Merimbula airport around 10.05am.

13. Detective STEVENSON spoke to me on the tarmac and I identified the bodies to him.

14. In relation to the first deceased, the crewman made a search of his clothing and observed a name on his clothing. The second deceased was in possession of a wallet. Details were obtained by the crewman and passed to flight service.

EXHIBIT: I PRODUCE A PHOTOCOPY OF MY SAR NOTES MADE
DURING THE FLIGHT:

Witness: _____



Signature: _____



ON TASK TIME 1935	OFF TASK TIME 2215	ENDURANCE 4.8
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DATUM	LAT / LON 1 \$ 37 23.07 E 151 27.23			252 203	RDR 9
SEARCH PARAMS	BRG / ITK 030	INC / VEL 0.3	LEN / RAD	TURN L/R R	TYPE BOX
SCH TIME START 2042	SCH TIME END 2218	GPS WPT START AQ	GPS WPT END BS	SURVIVOR POSN 37 23.07 151 27.28 37 23.50 151 24.45	

OTHER UNITS C/S	FREQ	TYPE	FLOOR	CEILING	AREA

1935 \$ 37 08.0 E 150 19.8 COMMENCE PARALLEL TR AS TASKED

1952 \$ 37 14.17 E 150 49.19 RE TASKED RECOVER 1X SURVIVOR

2019 \$ 37 23.07 E 151 27.23 RECOVERED 1X DECEASED

~~2025 \$ 37 23.45 E 151 25.26 RECOVERED DE-WHITE DISK TO ANTERIOR~~

2030 \$ 37 22.48 E 151 25.41 COMMENCE EXP SQ TO BOTTOM ABOVE SURVIVOR

2113 \$ 37 22.26 E 151 22.36 LEAVE EXP SQ TO INVESTIGATE LIFE RAFT

2119 \$ 37 21.27 E 151 43.47 RAFT - ATTEMPTED TO PUNCTURE 1X CHAMBER REMAINS

2135 \$ 37 17.17 E 151 34.65 RE-COMMENCE EXP SQ

2143 \$ 37 23.88 E 151 29.61 SMALL AMT OF DEBRIS IN WATER

2148 \$ 37 23.58 E 151 24.45 RECOVERED 1X DECEASED

2207 \$ 37 23.69 E 151 29.71 BOTTLE + OTHER DEBRIS

2219 \$ 37 22.69 E 151 26.74 PLY WOOD DEBRIS APPROX 1-2 M SQ

EXP SQ COVERED OUT TO 4NM FM DATUM

