

SERGEANT MOSTARD

Q1 - - - the statement from, a tape recorder statement by Bruce Douglas Gould at the Mallacoota Police Station on the 29th of December, 1998. The time is 11.39am. Present are Sergeant Richard Mostard from the Gippsland Water Police, Senior Constable Tony Beehan, also from the Gippsland Water Police and Mr Bruce Douglas Gould. Would you mind just stating your full name, address and occupation, please?

A Bruce Douglas Gould, address is 7 Warringah Road, Mosman, in New South Wales, my occupation is a merchant banker, and my age is 55.

Q2 Thank you. I mentioned to you before about this preamble to the interview, would you mind reading that out, please?

A This one?

Q3 Yes.

A 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 knowingly that if it is tendered in evidence I shall be liable for, sorry, liable to prosecution if I have wilfully stated anything which I know to be false or not, or do not believe to be true.

Q4 O.K. And your age again?

A Fifty five.

Q5 Fifty five. Thank you. Now, you were one of the crew

on the board the vessel Winston Churchill in the Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race?

A Yeah.

Q6 Could you just say in your own words, describe the event prior to, during and after, thank you?

A Yeah. We, we started gettin' into some heavy weather and we'd trimmed the boat down, we'd taken out mainsail off and we were flying a storm jib, so the boat was very trim. The breeze was from the west, so we were steering about 170, and the boat was pretty comfortable at that stage, we had her rigged down nicely, we weren't bashing into anything too, too heavy at that stage, and we're handling in the conditions to what we thought was satisfactory. I'd been helming the boat for half an hour and went below and Richard took over the helm, we were doing about half hour stints, because it was pretty hard to see. I just settled myself down below and on a sail, laying on a sail and then there was one almighty crash. I was thrown across the cabin and I dislocated my thumb. I grabbed the nearest crewman and told him to put my thumb back into shape, which I did, and then I went straight on deck, and having got on deck we could see that the leeward bulwarks were, were stoved in. Richard and John Dean were in a bit of a shemozzle round the backstay, 'cause they'd actually fallen overboard and got back on again, but there was bloody lifelines goin' everywhere and they were a bit confused. I took over the helm, and

then we settled down to see what, what, what the, you know, see what the damage was after we sort of hit that, that sea, 'cause obviously when you hit a sea like that you, you know, you hear an almighty roar, or bang below and so you start doing a bit of damage assessment. Becoming to me, pretty obvious that the, the boat had taken a lot of water and I was pretty worried about that, so I got John Stanley to check the boat below, and we couldn't see visibly where it was coming in, but I guess my feeling is that we probably created some, some leaks down in the bottom of the mast section, probably around where the, where the boat curves down to, to the keel. And it was pretty obvious we were taking a lot of water, we dropped the headsail, gradually as we become, apparent to me that the boat was getting lower and lower in the water and wasn't looking too good. I then got the boys to get the life rafts on deck, we got everyone into a life jacket, and set ourselves up to see what was going to happen, but I, I had a gut feeling that the thing wasn't lookin' too good, and I didn't think we were going to be there for too long. We stayed on board, I ran the boat away to leeward at stage because we'd stoved in three windows on the portside of the boat and she was leaking on the, on the portside badly and I don't know what was going on below, but obviously there was a lot of water coming in, and she was just gettin' lower and lower and lower. We got ..... by a wave which put more

water into the boat, at that stage I said, "Richard, it's time to get those life rafts launched, we should get out of this". So, we launched the life rafts, I think another wave came and it was pretty obvious that she was very heavy in the water. So, I said, "That's it fellows, we're off". So, we got everyone in the life rafts, we got four into the small raft and five into the six man raft, and at that stage we'd tied the two rafts together and we literally got in and the boat was, she was goin' under. I think the next time I looked we were up to about the, the second cross tree and she'd gone, and it all happened, I don't know in what time frame, but bloody quick. The boat had obviously sunk, we were rafted together for a little bit, but under the sea conditions we were getting tossed and turned and bumping into each other and finally the painter broke, holding the two craft together. And we separated, we, at that stage we settled ourselves down in, into, into, well, I can only talk for my raft now, 'cause obviously I wasn't in the other one. There was four of us in that raft and we had the EPIRB, which we'd put on board. So, we got ourselves sort of sorted out and the use of the, the craft and we gradually drifted on. Then later that afternoon, I think, I think we actually abandoned ship, I think, about 4 o'clock, from, from memory. And later in the afternoon we got turned turtled just in daylight so I don't know what time it was, I'd lost track of

time at that stage, where the life raft tipped upside down, that was a pretty bloody frightening experience, that was the worst part of the whole exercise, where you were actually, you know, suddenly instead of being in the bottom of the boat you're in the, in the canopy, and sort of water everywhere and, anyway we, we had to cut the, the strings holding the, the flap of the, of the, of the canopy to get one man out and Richard actually went out and got hold of the raft and actually turned us back over again so we were the right way up. And we got him back on board, I got to say to you I reckon that was a weakness of, of, of the, because we couldn't get those things done up again, because we'd cut 'em to get 'em undone, so I'd have a few ideas about what you should do with those. We got back on board, bailed the boat out and settled down and then, I think, I think at that stage it'd be sort of, it was really getting, it was dark. And I don't know what time because we'd lost track of time, but sometime during the night we rolled over yet again, upside down again, so we had to do the same exercise. We lost a bit of our gear this time because we couldn't tie these flaps down, and so we lost some, some of the gear that was in the boat, or in the raft. And we managed to get the thing upright again, and I don't know whether we were, we were dragging a gas bottle that was sort of attached to the boat that inflated the boat, I don't know whether that caused the, the damage or what but we

ended up with slit in the bottom of the raft, so we were actually leaking in, in the bottom, and also the, there's two, two sections of the raft, the top section and the bottom section, two round rings in the bottom section was obviously leaking. And that ..... caused a bit of consternation because, you know, the thing was bloody goin' down, we're fillin' up with water. So, we bailed the boat out, and then sort of got our wits together and we, we knew that there was some gear so we tried to find, we had the pump, we couldn't find the little fitting to fit in the nozzle, into the raft itself, and I got to tell you I reckon that's a bloody crazy idea in the middle of sea and being chucked around and you're tryin' find some piss fart little fitting to put into a, you know, into the raft, and then connect a pump to it. Well having realised we'd lost our yellow bag and whatever was in it and presumably the fitting, we sat there scratchin' heads for a while and there was a plastic piece in the end of a, of the pump, so we took that off, and then we managed to squeeze the, the hose into the bottom section of the raft so we could actually pump it up, so we pumped it up. We didn't turn over any more that night, in fact we didn't turn over any more. But it was, you know, we're in this sort of constant anticipation whether we were gunna do that again 'cause that was a bloody frightening experience.

Q7

M'mm.

A

So, from there on we managed to keep the raft, the bottom section of the raft pumped up and the trouble was when the, when the bottom caved in, you know, we sort of we've in a big V and so we're all sort of on top of each other, it's pretty uncomfortable with a boat full of water. Anyhow when we got the pump going we managed to pump that bottom section up and we cleared the, the, we couldn't find where we were leaking at that stage, but in the daylight the next morning we actually discovered a, a tear in the raft about an inch long and the water was coming in from there, so we ended up shoving a sponge in it and sitting, sitting Paul on top of that, he was, he had more meat than anyone else. And basically we just keep pumping and bailing the craft, you know, for the, the balance of the time that we were there, because she was leaking and we found that we were much more comfortable, and because every now and then a wave would break over you and you'd sort of fill up with two feet of water again, so you'd bail that out and the only thing we had to bail was a plastic bag and ..... not very adequate but it worked. And that kept the water level down because we found that if we were sitting in six inches of water it was a lot more comfortable than sitting, you know, up to your bloody waist in it. We kept our spirits up, I think we were of the view that we could survive and once we got control of the raft and pumping and we knew we could

get the water out of it, so we felt reasonably comfortable with our situation that, that providing we were going to be rescued, you know, we felt that we'd survive. We were a bit worried about our mates, because they were sort of, you know, by this stage we'd lost sight of them, but on the basis that they had the newer raft we, we were sort of felt confident that they were probably in as good as shape as, if not better shape than us, which didn't, that's from the bits we've heard subsequent to that, we've, you know, obviously realised that they weren't. Then we saw a plane fly over, we fired off a red flare and he kept flying so I know what it feels like when you read all those stories about a bloody plane flying away, I can tell you. That made our hearts sink a bit. Anyway the plane eventually came round again and this time we waited on it till it was bloody right in front of us and we let a flare off up his nostril, I think. And then we went round in a circle again and came round and, I think it was the second time he came round he actually put his lights on, so we had the sinking feeling, well, have you seen us, you know, give us a wing flap or something, but, anyway, he put his landing lights on eventually. So, we knew he'd seen us and obviously that made us feel pretty relaxed and then I guess about 20 or 20 or 30 minutes later we could hear that lovely roar of the helicopter arrive. And, so we felt, you know, felt like we were, we were sort of half way to



being saved. So, like, the guys arrived in, in the helicopter and, and then picked us up one at a time and winched us into the helicopter and, you know, I suppose that's it, and then we arrived back in Mallacoota. So, I guess that's probably a fairly short version of the story but I think that's probably covered most of it.

Q8 O.K. Bruce, just a few other questions there.

A Sure.

Q9 First of all, your position on the, on the vessel, on the Winston Churchill, what was your job?

A I was the watch captain.

Q10 Watch captain, and you said you took the helm for some time too?

A Yeah.

Q11 All right. O.K. And you were actually, you weren't helming at the time because you were downstairs, or down - - -

A I was downstairs, yeah.

Q12 All right. O.K. Can you just give me a brief description of the Winston Churchill?

A The Winston Churchill, she's built in 1942, 52 foot cutter rigged boat, yacht. She's had extensive refit work done to her over the last two years because Richard had put a new mast in and done a, you know, a hell of a lot of work on her. She seemed a stable craft to me, I was quite happy to go to Hobart on her, she'd been to Hobart the previous year, she's sailed round the world twice. I felt quite relaxed on the

boat, she was obviously an old timer but very comfortable sea boat, handled particularly well, and I was quite impressed with her under the, under the conditions that we were in that she, you know, she was very comfortably rigged and, you know, the boat was doing well.

Q13 O.K. And your qualifications as a sailor?

A It was my 32nd Hobart.

Q14 Your 32nd?

A Mm.

Q15 Right. A bit of experience - - -

A If I haven't learnt by then I think there's something wrong, but, yeah.

Q16 O.K. All right. Do you hold any tickets?

A No.

Q17 No tickets, no?

A I've done a couple of Admiral Cups and a couple of, an America's Cup and sailed 32 Hobarts', I think that's enough.

Q18 Fair enough. O.K. Do you, do you know the names of the crew on board?

A Yeah.

Q19 O.K. Could you, could you name them for me, please?

A Yeah. There was John, Richard Winning is the owner, John Stanley was the guy that actually invited me on board, I've sailed with Steven for quite a few years, and he was a very experienced yachtsman, who I hold in high esteem, there was myself, Jim Lalor, Jim's been

around a bit, he's got his own boat, Paul Lunden, Paul was navigating and a good hand, he was in the raft with me, Mike Bannister who was a forward hand and, you know, a very nice fellow, good fit, good, good yachtsman, John Dean, I'd, quite impressed with John, he was a big solid bear of a man that certainly carried his weight on the boat. John Gibson, so that, nine, it's nine, I thought there was nine of us, and Michael Ryan, who was the young fellow.

Q20 Mm. O.K. Thanks for that. You'd sailed with them all before?

A No. Only John Stanley.

Q21 O.K. All right. Now, getting back to the start of the race, which obviously it was the Sydney to Hobart for 1998.

A Yeah.

Q22 So, that departed on Boxing Day.

A Yeah.

Q23 The conditions, the sea conditions at the time of the start?

A It was a north easter, 20 knots, just a nice, nice breeze.

Q24 All right. And then - - -

A Been down the harbour, out the heads, out past the first mark, out past the second mark and then we reached out to sea for quite some time, and then we eventually set her spinnaker and then ran for the rest of that, that day with the spinnaker on. In fact we

carried the spinnaker all that night I think.

Q25 O.K. And at what stage did the sea start to, to break up a bit?

A Trying to think when the, when the, when the breeze actually came in. Yeah. We dropped the spinnaker that night, I think I was helming actually, and it got up to 30 knots from the, from the north, so we were running pretty hard at that stage, and we held that for a while and then I decided we'd had enough of the spinnaker so we took it off.

Q26 O.K. Now - - -

A We poled out a headsail for a couple of hours, and I think it was the following morning it really started to, really started to come in, and by that stage we'd, we'd dropped the headsail and we put a couple of reefs in the main and went down to a cutter rig, and we were reaching and it was coming at us from the west, you know, which is very unusual. And just gradually strengthened and strengthened till we really got onto the, you know, that afternoon it was, it was really blowin'. It was in.

Q27 All right. Have you experienced worse conditions?

A Everyone keeps asking that, I don't know, it's hard to tell you, I mean, I've done some pretty hard Hobarts', 1970, 1984, 1993 are sort of a couple that spring to mind. 1963 I was on Silth, my first Hobart race and it blew 80 knots and we, took us eight days to get there, so, that should, that's a long time ago. So, I, you

know, I, I think the, the unusual part I felt with it, with it is that, that it was from west and it, you know, it was, it was blowing, I think we recorded 55 knots, maybe gusting to 60 once or twice, but basically sitting in that 45 to 55 range.

Q28 M'mm.

A The seas were, were pretty bad, but up until that one hit us, I mean, we were quite comfortable, we weren't bashing her too hard or I, I felt quite relaxed with it, the rig we had on the boat she was, she was going quite well. We were, you know, we weren't trying to, you know, we didn't break any race records, we had the boat rigged down for the, you know, we were very comfortable situation for the sea conditions.

Q29 All right. Was there any talk at all of abandoning the race from the boat's point of view?

A No.

Q30 No. Never got mentioned?

A No.

Q31 Yeah. The, your location when you, when you went down, have you got any idea where that would have been, approximately?

A I don't know, I haven't looked at the ..... for a while but I think we must have been about, I can remember goin', when I, I went off watch, we were off Gabo and we were sort of heading out to sea, steering about 170, and to be honest I didn't look at the ..... at the, at the GPS, I don't know what our

position actually was, and then when we went to, when we sent out our Mayday, there, we've actually, well, the GPS had, had gone off completely. So, I, I personally wasn't navigating, I hadn't looked at for it a while 'cause I just come on, on from being at watch. The last time I remember when I went off watch, we were about, you know, we were in sight of, of Green Cape, and we were heading off out to sea and I don't know what time that was actually, but, ..... I guess we were probably 30 miles, 20 or 30 miles off the coast.

Q32 Right, no worries. Did you actually give the Mayday call, or was it somebody else?

A No. Someone else.

Q33 O.K. Were you aware that it was done?

A Yes.

Q34 O.K. And on which type of radio?

A VHF, I think, no, well, to be honest, I don't know. I don't know which radio he was using.

Q35 No worries. Now injuries, you say you dislocated your thumb?

A Dislocated my thumb, a few blokes were thrown around the cabin, but John Gibson had a bit of a cut on his head, but nothing major, bit a blood, but, you know, a few blokes a bit bruised and battered as we got chucked around down below, but, you know, that's sort of pretty much for the norm, I suppose.

Q36 O.K.

A No, no broken bones that I know of.

Q37 All right. O.K. Now, as far as the race is concerned, not the organisation, were you happy with the race continuing as it did?

A Yeah.

Q38 It wasn't, at that particular point of time?

A Yeah. I mean, you know, I think, the way I've always understood it, you know, as far as the CYC is concerned and the club's concerned is that, you know, it's up to the skipper to decide whether he wants to keep racing or withdraw. I mean the race is there for, for the challenge and, and as far as I'm concerned if you, if you're unhappy with the, with the sea conditions or your boat or your gear or, or whatever there's nothing stopping you pulling out. We were very comfortable where we were, the boat was handling it well, in fact I felt quite relaxed, I mean, we were, obviously it was blowin' forty bags full, and we got her snug down and she was, she was going along quite comfortably.

Q39 O.K. All right. Now, you say there was two rafts, a four to six man and a four man?

A Yeah.

Q40 And only one EPIRB was carried?

A Yes. Only one EPIRB.

Q41 That EPIRB was actually, was it off the boat or stayed in one of the life rafts?

A No. We took it off, took it off the Winston Churchill and put it in one of the life rafts, in fact it went into our life raft.

Q42 O.K. And I understand that there was a bit of a problem with the EPIRB?

A Well, we, well, we got pitch poled, you know - - -

Q43 Mm.

A - - - and we're in a bloody life raft and we ended up breaking the aerial in half so we weren't quite sure how good it was gunna work with the half the aerial, but talking to the helicopter pilots later they said they had no trouble pickin' us up, so it was obviously working.

Q44 M'mm.

A We just weren't quite sure because it was, you know, half an aerial - - -

Q45 .....

A - - - we were sort of thinking is it still working, but it obviously did.

Q46 Right. Well, speaking of the life raft, have you got any recommendations or safety issues, you've mentioned a few already about the pump and everything.

A Yeah.

Q47 I understand you had a problem with, with lines snapping and your sea anchor collapsing or breaking .....

A Yeah. The sea anchor parted, we lost that for the, fairly early in the piece, it just disappeared. My suggestion would be, they use this bloody nylon line, which is I can tell you it was an absolute pain in the arse and it bloody tangles and it's not worth a



crumpet, so, you know, it seems to me if you're gonna spend that much money on a life raft you ought to be bloody buyin' some, you know, line that you would use for your sea, for the attaching the sea anchor to the boat, I would have thought would have been much better to be, you know, the cord that we use on our leech lines for instance, which is extremely strong - - -

Q48 M'mm.

A - - - and you know it's not gonna break, and it's also very manageable. I think as far as the flaps are concerned in the life, well, you've got this cover and what they have are these bloody piss fartin' little ties that you tie up. Well to get 'em to tie up you had to sort of almost tie 'em in a knot, we ended up cutting them 'cause we couldn't get 'em undone and we're all stuck in the thing upside down, and we had to, we ended up cutting them because we couldn't get out to turn the, the raft over. So, my suggestion on those would be, on the question mark wether a zipper right or wrong, but, but, you know, with the way zippers are these days it's probably a good suggestion, but, but alternatively if it's not a zipper they ought to use, you know, a toggle, you know, like on those old reefer jackets and you put 'em through and, and at least then when you're in a panic and you're upside down and you're tryin' to get it undone, you're not tryin' to undo a knot, you can just undo the, the, the, the toggle and, and, and then you can do it back up

again, that's, that's the other part.

Q49 M'mm.

A We were, our floor in our life raft was a single floor, I think you need a double floor in a life raft, and the pump connection for pumping up the raft, they have another little bloody gadget that's gotta go into it as well, it seems to me that you'd have the whole damn lot on the hit and you plug it in and you've got one piece of equipment, so I definitely say that, particularly when it's dark and wet and - - -

Q50 Yeah.

A - - - and your bloody hands are cold and you're tryin' to, you know - - -

Q51 All right. The make of the raft, do you know what that wa?

A RFD.

Q52 RFD. O.K. Were you happy with the safety gear on the raft?

A I think ours was a 1985, I suppose in retrospect when you look at it today I'd sort of probably be that, you know, you might have felt a bit happier if it was a later model but apart from the tear that we got in the floor and the puncturing of that bottom rung of the, of the raft, I mean it was, I mean, and we were, survived it, so I suppose I'm happy with it, but, you know, probably I'd say you, I'd be going for a later raft I think.

Q53 O.K.

A Although when you look at the latest raft the other one wasn't worth a bloody crumpet, so I'm not sure that's a good statement either, so -

Q54 All right. I understand life jackets were worn by everybody?

A Yeah.

Q55 For the whole time?

A In the raft?

Q56 And while you abandoned the ship?

A Yes.

Q57 From the time you abandoned ship to the - - -

A Yeah.

Q57 - - - time you were rescued?

A Yeah. As soon as I knew the boat was sinking I told everyone to put their life jackets on.

Q58 Any comment about the quality of those?

A No.

Q59 You're happy with them?

A Yeah. They were all right, yeah.

Q60 O.K. Thanks. The morale onboard the life raft?

A We had, well, we had obviously the skipper, myself, Paul and, and the young fellow, ..... I think when the lot, when the, when the raft got a hole in it and, and, and the, you know, the bottom, the part of the raft was leaking, I think he sort of scratched his head a bit and thought shit, 'cause, you know, can it get any worse. And so, I think he was a bit, a little bit distressed at that stage but we, we cheered him up

and said, "Come on, mate, we can fix this", which we did and, you know, he was, he was fine. The, the morale in the raft was, was excellent.

Q61 O.K. As far as the rescue was done, have you got any comments on that?

A No. I, I thought, I thought the rescue was, was good actually. I just wish they'd acknowledge you the first time the run over you, 'cause you feel a lot more relieved too, I think it took him two, two bouts before he actually turned his lights on, so, and you keep thinking, shit has he seen us, and we, by this stage we had no more flares left, so I think if they can dip their wings or turn their landing lights or do something to sort of, you know, confirm you're there and the quicker they do that the better frankly. .... I mean, maybe he didn't see us the first time, but I'm, I'm pretty sure he did, but, you know, that's my only comment, is it a comforting feeling knowing that, yeah, he's actually seen you, you know.

Q62 Right.

A And the helicopter blokes were just fantastic, they were just superb.

Q63 Thanks, mate. O.K. You might not be able to answer this, but, you would answer this one, the, your direction of your drift, do you know what direction you would have drifted in?

A Yeah. We were drifting east.

Q64 Right. And - - -

A Well, we went east and then, then the breeze changed, probably about, I can't remember exactly, but I'd say roughly midday the following day, and then the breeze had gone around to the south, so we drifted east for the first part of the, you know, 'cause it was still blowing from the west so we, we were running dead before it and running east and then, then the, then the breeze moved back round to the, to the south and then late that day we were, it had gone to the south.

Q65 Right.

A So, we were presumably going north at that stage.

Q66 Right. Did you have any idea of your location whilst in the raft?

A .....

Q67 Excuse me.

A Roughly, I mean I had a vague idea - - -

Q68 Yeah.

A - - - where we were I mean, you know, I don't know. I mean the thing you can't tell is how fast you're drifting.

Q69 M'mm.

A I mean I think we were ended up being 90 miles off the coast.

Q70 O.K.

A So, I'm not sure whether I would have picked, you know, I probably would have picked 60 miles off the coast, but, you know, you don't know.

Q71 M'mm. O.K. Sufficient rations in the, the raft?

A           Yeah. Yeah. The rations were right, till we, or until we lost our bag. Just, one, one, one thought I'd have, is, is that they're got a plastic bag in the, in, in, in the raft with, with all your gear in it, or when you have it, there's emergency supplies like water and thing, I think they want to work out some method of, of attaching that to the raft easily.

Q72        Mm.

A           'Cause when we did the second roll we lost it.

Q73        Yeah.

A           So, if you can find some way, I just thing, you know, they use all this nylon stuff and that's how we lost our EPIRB because of that bloody nylon shit, we tied it on and put it outside the raft and, and we discovered that it had, you know, the nylon had come undone. So, my only comment is that they ought to be using some different sort of rope than this really slippery shit nylon, it's, I mean you never use it in a boat anywhere else - - -

Q74        Mm.

A           - - - why use it on safety gear.

Q75        M'mm.

A           And that's how we actually lost our EPIRB off the raft, we had it sitting outside - - -

Q76        So, that's that 2 mil orange nylon rope you're talking about?

A           Yeah. That' real little fine stuff, yeah.

Q77        .....

A And you, you know, you can't tie 'them, I tried tying the, because we'd lost our bag, I actually cut some of this yellow line that was on the, on the sea anchor, and actually tied up our, our flares to the inside hanging rails on, you know, the rope, the hanging rails. But I mean bloody five minutes later they're floating around the raft again. So, you know, if they gunna, all I say is that, you know, for Christ's sake use some line in the boat that, that when you tie it up it's gunna stay there, 'cause that stuff just comes undone.

Q78 All right. M'mm.

A It's not worth a crumpet.

Q79 Mm.

A And, you know, I'd be suggesting that they use something strong like, you know, the venetian blind cord, but not the stuff you buy in the hardware store  
- - -

Q80 Yeah.

A - - - but the next grade up - - -

Q81 Yeah.

A - - - the stuff that we use on our, on our leech lines for our sails, if you had something like that you can tie it up, it stays done up, it's strong and we wouldn't have lost our sea anchor if, if we'd have used that rope for instance.

Q82 All right.

A So, I reckon they want to piss all this bloody nylon

stuff off it, use that other stuff 'cause it, you know, you can, you can actually do something with it.

Q83        Yeah. All right. No problems, all right. Is there anything, any other comments you want to make, any recommendations re the, the race, for instance, not just not the life raft but the race itself, were you happy with, with the race?

A            Yeah. That was fine.

Q84        Fine?

A            Yeah. I, you know, I hold pretty strong views that, you know, the race is held regardless of the weather and, and, you know, it's up to you as, as in your own seaman like manner to decide whether you want to continue or, or, or not.

Q85        M'mm.

A            But I don't think the race organisers can sort of make a decision on whether the race should be cancelled or not, and my view is that, you know, it's up to each individual skipper. And, you know, that's where your seamanship comes in and if you're a good seaman, you know, you should be able to survive in most of the circumstances. I've got through most but occasionally things happen and, I mean, I can always ..... there's always one rogue wave out there and I think as far as the Winston Churchill was concerned, you know, we got that rogue, rogue wave and did all the damage and, you know, it was the difference between surviving or not surviving.



Q86 Mm.

A But you're gunna strike that anyway. You look at the new boats they had as much trouble as the old boats.

Q87 Mm.

A So, it don't think the age of the boat really counts that much, if, if you, you know, if you're satisfied the boats been, been maintained.

Q88 All right. Bruce, just a couple of formal questions I have to ask you - - -

A Yeah.

Q88 - - - just in conclusion. Is there anything further you wish to say about the matter at all?

A No, I don't think so.

Q89 No. Do you wish to make a written, or handwritten statement in relation to the matter?

A No, I'm happy with the tape.

Q90 O.K. Have you answered the questions in the interview in your own free will?

A Yes.

Q91 O.K. Has any threat, promise or inducement been held out to you to give the answers as recorded in this statement?

A No.

Q92 All right. That's the end of it, Bruce. The time now is 12.08pm, on the 29th of the 12th, 1998. And we'll turn it off now.

A Good man.

INTERVIEW CONCLUDED