

SENIOR CONSTABLE STEVENSON

Q1 This is an electronically recorded interview between Senior Constable Jason Stevenson and Shayne Hansen at the Eden Police Station on Monday, the 28th of December, 1998. Also present, sitting at my left, is Detective Senior Constable Stuart Gray. Mr Hansen, do you agree the time now according to my wristwatch is about 4.43pm?

A Yes, I do.

Q2 As I've already explained to you, we're making inquiries in relation to your involvement in the Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race, and the misadventure you had during that race. This interview I'll conduct with you now will be recorded on three cassette tapes as the interview takes place and at the end of it, you get a copy of one. Do you understand that?

A Yes.

Q3 O.K. What I'll do now is, I'll just get you to read out that paragraph I placed in front of you which is just a preamble-type thing we use for our statements.

A O.K. "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. I am 31 years of age."

Q4 O.K, Shayne. What's your full name?

A Shayne Hansen.

Q5 Can you spell Hansen for me, thanks?

A H-A-N-S-E-N.

Q6 And your first name?

A Shayne, S-H-A-Y-N-E.

Q7 And your home address?

A 16 Wattle Avenue, Emu Heights, Burnie, Tasmania.

Q8 And your date of birth?

A 19th of the 3rd, '67.

Q9 Are you employed?

A Yes. I'm a miner for ..... Mines .....  
Tasmania.

Q10 Right. Now, it's my understanding you were sailing on  
the boat, Business Post Naiad.

A Yeah.

Q11 What was your role on that boat?

A Forward hand.

Q12 Can you explain to me what that is?

A Well, basically, you're in the front of the boat  
putting the mast up, you know, setting spinnakers,  
headsails, ..... going up and down, whatever.  
Doing spinnaker trimming, main trimming, gib trimming,  
bit of everything, you know, bit of everything.

Q13 O.K. Just, could you go over your experience in  
sailing for me? How long you've been doing it, what  
you've been involved in?

A Geez. I started sailing when I was about 8 years old.

Bribie Island with my grandfather. Sailed dinghies all my life till I was about 17. My father had a 30 foot boat in Launceston. I sailed on that for years, still do sail on it. And then he shifted to Hobart and I went on ..... in Somerset and started with him. I sailed with him for about four years, and then I just moved on. Steve Walker, you've probably interviewed him.

Q14        Yeah.

A            Sailed with Steven for probably 10 years, and Peter Keats and I've done about five or six west coasters, that's Melbourne to Hobart.

Q15        Yeah.

A            This is my second Sydney to Hobart. I've done all the Melbourne to Burnie races bar one. I've done a Melbourne to Devonport, I have done that .....

Q16        You've done quite a bit?

A            Yeah.

Q17        Have you sailed with Bruce Guy before?

A            Yeah, yeah. On that period of probably three years.

Q18        Have you sailed on that boat before?

A            Yeah, yeah, heaps. Heaps.

Q19        Do you know the dimensions and specifics of that boat?

A            Yeah, it's a 511.9 which is a 40-footer, about six and a half ton, mast head rig, ..... the rest of it.

Q20        All the technical terms?

A            Yeah, 1, 2, 3, 4, and a storm gib on it. Kevlar Main.

Q21        What's the boat made of, do you know?

A Kevlar. It's a Kevlar hull and deck.

Q22 Now, there was yourself on the yacht. Can you name the other eight member?

A Yeah. Bruce Guy, Phil Skeggs, Roger Matthews, Peter Keats, Jim Rogers, me, who else have I forgotten? How many is that?

Q23 .....

A Yeah, Tony, yeah, Tony Guy. .... us, I reckon. Matthew.

Q24 ..... Have you sailed with that, the same group of guys, have you sailed as a group before?

A Yeah, yeah, heaps, yeah.

Q25 So you've got a fair bit of experience together, as a team, sort of thing?

A Yeah. Yeah, yeah, mate, like I said.

Q26 When sailing - - -

A It's just one of those things, when something happens, everyone knows what to do.

Q27 Yeah.

A We've all got our jobs, and that's what you do.

Q28 When sailing in a group like this, what sort of teams do you work in?

A Like, when, I don't understand.

Q29 Around - - -

A Yeah, well, when you go offshore, like, on a long race, you, you'll probably have four on deck all the time.

Q30 Yeah.

A We work a loose roster system, like I pair up with

Matthew 'cause he's the other fore deck on the other watch.

Q31 Yeah.

A If I want to go to bed for three hours, I go to bed for three hours and get up and then he'll go to bed for three hours, or if he wants to go to bed for four hours, he'll go to bed for four hours, whatever, whatever. And you do that and that ..... the reason you do it that way, so that you haven't got four guys changing on the boat every three or four hours and upsetting the motion of the boat.

Q32 Yeah.

A 'Cause over a period of three or four days you lose quite a bit of time out of it.

Q33 Yeah.

A And so we just do it, you just got one or two people moving around.

Q34 Right. Now, if you can, I'd like you, just in your own time, take as much time as you need in your own words, and just tell us what happened from the time you left Sydney till the time you were rescued this morning, in as much detail as you can remember.

Q35 All right. We left Sydney at 1 o'clock.

A Yeah.

Q36 And had a good start. Started a bit late. Picked some nice holes, went up the east side of the river, or harbour as you call it. Went out to sea. Popped the spinnaker just after the ..... mark just waited

till we got round the mark, probably went half a mile, let things settle down a bit, and put a kite up. Carried that for God knows how long, it'd be the best kite ride I've had in a long time.

Q37           Yeah.

A           Got some nice speed out of the boat. We were right up amongst the fleet, sailing along. Boat we wanted to pace was behind us, so that's good. And, I don't know, later on in the afternoon, I couldn't tell you what time it was, we took one kite down at three-quarter ..... 'cause the wind was coming up a bit, it was still out of the north-east then, and put a one-and-a-half-ounce up. Kept going along with that and the wind started to swing, so we jibed over ..... changed the ..... everything ..... And the wind gradually swung round. Kept swinging, we'd been, I think we had a number ..... there for a while. We went from the number 1, to the number 4. And I think it's just when the, starting to get rougher.

Q38           Mm.

A           Towards late afternoon. And, what's happening? Went to a number 4, pulled the number 4 off and threw that down below decks, 'cause it just was getting too windy and we had three ..... and the main by then. And we went under that for a while and it was just getting too strong for that as well.

Q39           Yeah.

A           So we pulled that down, went bare poles for about five

minutes, and put the stormy up and we travelled under that. I went to bed. After the storm got up, and I was in bed and the next minute we done a 360.

Q40 O.K.

A ..... I just landed in me bed, I guess I stayed in me bed.

Q41 Yeah.

A Peter come tearing down from the deck, said, "The mast is down". He was on the radio. Matthew, he yelled something out to me, I don't know what that was. I heard screaming up on deck. And all the guys bar one were over the side, right, so I pulled them back on.

Q42 Yeah.

A Got the carnage cleaned up. Peter got the radio going again, the spare aerial, and we retired. Said he ..... I think he was trying to make Gabo Island, which was course of 300 at the time.

Q43 Yeah.

A The winds were, well, they'd be up around the 60 knots then, I'd say.

Q44 How far out were you at that stage?

A Would have been, I think it was 40, or 40 to 46 mile from Gabo, I think we were. And I think that's what Peter said when we turned around and had to come back, and tried to make a course of 300. We were setting sideways fairly ..... so I don't really know what was going on. I don't anyway. It was mainly that ..... had a lot of water down below, heaps of

water, so I was down there cleaning that up, and all the rest of it. You could hardly see anything because of the wind. It was just like ..... just like needles hitting you in the eyes. And ..... was just taking turns out on deck. We had two on deck and everyone else down below, we was motoring back, 'cause you don't want too many people on deck. And everyone was ..... of course, and ..... on deck. We was going along, must have been 11 o'clock at night. We were about 20 miles off Gabo or something. And we got the second roll and it took us over and we stayed over and we didn't come back up.

Q45 M'mm.

A And we was probably over, it's hard to say, I'd only be guessing, but it was a fair, I think five minutes, I reckon, or towards five minutes. It felt like that, whether it was, I don't know. We got time to, there was seven of us down below, we had enough time, we couldn't get the hatch open, so we kicked a board out, and had time to push one of the life rafts out underneath. Then while we was doing all this, felt another wave come, hit the boat and the boat started to go.

Q46 Yeah.

A And that just, all went that way with it to make sure it did go and she rolled back over. Then, the life raft was sitting on the top. I was down below, I'm not sure, I think I was cleaning up a bit. Matthew went up



on deck to the life raft. He yelled out to me, 'cause I know CPR ..... he said, "Phil needs reviving", so I tore up on to the deck. Phil was hanging half off the boat, whatsaname, Rob Matthews, he was on the tiller, trying to keep the boat under some sort of control.

Q47        Yeah.

A           Skeggsy, he was dead, basically.

Q48        Yeah.

A           You know, had ropes wrapped around his legs where he'd been caught, his life harness was still attached, so I cut that off, and ripped his clothes apart and started CPR and everything. That went on, I don't know how long it was, it was a fair while. All I could get out of him was water, ..... spray and getting sprayed back in there and I was spewing and carrying on. And after a while, we decided there was nothing we could do for him, so that was the end of that, and in the process, while, while I was on deck doing that, Roger was trying to, Rob sorry, was trying to keep hold of the boat and Matty was poking around with the life raft and something happened. I didn't know anything had happened to Bruce down below.

Q49        Yeah.

A           And what we thought was a heart attack, we don't really know.

Q50        Yeah.

A           I was talking to a doctor this morning and he said it

could have been something else. Oxygen to the brain or something. And he died too. So, after that, we had no motor, electrics or anything. .... was still going from the, from when we rolled the first time.

Q51 Mm.

A So, we basically sat there for a while, baled a bit of water out of the boat. We had one life raft over the side of the boat, ready to go, tied next to it. We had another one sitting on the deck. I went up and threw the stormy over the bow to create a sea anchor. It wasn't enough, so I got the one-and-a-half-ounce kite and threw that over, and that done the job. We got some water out of the boat and we left a bit in it to weigh the boat down so it wouldn't roll. And basically we sat the night out, I guess, until we got rescued, that would have been about 11 o'clock that night, that happened the second roll. That's about it, really. During the process of the night, we ..... the second life raft down into the boat. That decided it was going to inflate itself, so we had to push that out real quick before it did. We got that out and we tied that one beside the boat, and that was just sitting there with the other one, and we put hatch, hatch boards in, locked her all up, went down below, lashed the tiller down, and went down below and got out of it. I suppose we had knee-deep in water in the boat all the way through it, but it just seemed to be enough when big ones hit us, it wouldn't roll over, there was

enough weight in the boat. I'm saying, if there was no water in it, she would have rolled again.

Q52 Yeah.

A And we sat on that all night. Just on first daybreak, Steve got up, said, "The life rafts have gone". That's when I thought, oh, great, here we go. And just about 10 to 8.00 a plane went over and so we lit a parachute flare, lit a red flare and he kept coming over, and I guess it would have been about 10 past 8.00 he sent a helicopter and that, that came and so I grabbed my wallet and whatever, a few others grabbed their wallet, just so we had a wallet or something, so. And from there, we proceeded to get rescued. Tied Phillip, or Steve tied Phillip into the boat, but he was in the cockpit still, tied him in with a safety harness, or Steve did. And Bruce was laying in the port bottom bunk next to the ..... table, we left him there. Apart from that the boat was full of crap and sails and water.

Q53 You said Phil was hanging, like, half off the boat, sort of thing.

A Yeah. His legs were over the side.

Q54 Where were the ropes that were - - -

A Wrapped around the mast. Around the mast.

Q55 So they were mainly mast rope or something?

A Yeah, yeah, that's how he was ..... runners, yeah, they were blue ones. They were wrapped around his feet.

Q56 And his safety harness he was wearing, was that full secured?

A He was still attached to the boat.

Q57 Are you aware of a Mayday call by your navigator, Peter Keats?

A Yeah, yeah, I am.

Q58 Do you know when that was?

A The first roll.

Q59 Was it after the first roll?

A The first roll, yeah.

Q60 O.K. And do you know if he got any response to that?

A I couldn't tell you 'cause I was sort of out and going.

Q61 Yeah.

A Out on deck, pulling, I think he was in communication with other boats during the night, whether that was then or later on in the night, I couldn't tell you, but I know he was in communication with other boats, 'cause he couldn't get hold of CYC - - -

Q62 Yeah.

A - - - or ..... Some boats were in contact. I think they were relaying and he asked for assistance.

Q63 O.K.

A And actually the plane flew over us, just on dark. I think we put a flare up then, just off memory. .... That was the last we heard of anybody until the next day.

Q64 Do you know how many flares were put up last night?

A Last night?

Q65            Yeah.

A             Probably four.

Q66            And who was responsible for that?

A             That's a good question.    Probably, what's his name,  
Roger.    He put some up.

Q67            Robert Matthews?

A             Robert, sorry.    ..... Yeah, Rob, yeah, he fired one  
or two, yeah, and a few, I think Peter might have  
thrown one, too.    I think a couple of times we might  
have seen lights and they were actually stars, I don't  
know, yeah.    It's, it's pretty near ..... those  
sort of situations. ....

Q68            Do you know much about the history of the boat, where  
it was made and where it came from and that sort of  
thing?

A             Yeah, she's an Admirals Cupper out of New Zealand.    I  
think, don't quote me, it's the only fully Kevlar Farr  
40 that was built, which means it was Kevlar deck and  
coach-house and everything 'cause the other Farr 40s in  
Australia, at that time there were only Kevlar hulls  
and fibreglass roofs, so it's a strong boat, yeah.  
Very strong boat.    With all the internal bulkheads  
cracked, bar the chain flaps, which is where the mast  
attaches and that was still intact, but the ones  
towards the back of the boat were all cracked and tore  
apart in places.    We had a crack in the deck, that was  
in the first roll.    The roof in the coach-house, that  
was broken, and that was from the first roll.    We stuck

a pillow in there to keep the water out. Apart from that, we lost all our electrics, lost the lot, everything, battery acids and all that sort of stuff went through the bunks, chlorine gas and, yeah, the whole works.

Q69        Yeah.

A        All the food out the freezer was everywhere, it was just tea bags up the bloody walls.

Q70        Yeah.

A        The whole works.

Q71        Just one last thing I want to know. Did you get any response from, I can't remember, Phil, when you started the CPR - - -

A        No.

Q71        - - - other than just getting foam and water - - -

A        Another thing, his eyes were rolled back and everything, there's no pulse, no nothing, so I just give him CPR and tried to get the water out and you'd get a bit out and, you know, put him in the sort of coma position, ..... into at the time ..... trying to clean him out, but it was just, yeah, it wasn't going to happen. It's one of those things, you've just got to keep going .....

DETECTIVE SENIOR CONSTABLE GRAY

Q72        Were there any ropes around Phil's abdomen or neck that you can recall?

A        Yeah, I think there were a few laying around, yeah.

Q73        Right.

A           Yeah.  There's a lot of .....

Q74          Yeah.  Yeah, that's fine.

A           You know, I just ripped everything off.

Q75          Now, the ..... sorry.

A           His, his shirt's still intact because I just pulled his  
shirt up, couldn't get that apart, so I just pulled his  
shirt up so .....

Q76          Yeah, O.K.  Now, can you tell me who activated the  
EPIRB?

A           Peter.

Q77          Peter.

A           Yeah.

Q78          And how's that done?  How's the EPIRB actually  
activated?

A           The EPIRB, you turn a switch on.

Q79          Right.

A           So you turn the switch on, you set .....

Q80          Right.

A           Out on the, out on the deck.

Q81          Right.

A           ..... we didn't throw it in the water.

Q82          Right.

A           Just in case it broke off or something, then you  
haven't got one.

Q83          Yeah.

A           So, we, we turned it on and put it in a sail  
bag.....

Q84          .....

A            Yeah. It stayed there and then after the first roll, 'cause we, the aerial was on the back ..... we didn't have an aerial, so we ..... another aerial, second aerial on the boat for emergencies.

Q85        Yeah.

A            So that was all ..... up, 'cause we actually had radio on ..... until the second roll-over.

Q86        Right.

A            And the second roll-over is when we lost everything 'cause the motor was going at the time, so that went upside down, probably filled up with water and whatever.

Q87        Yeah.

A            Killed itself.

SENIOR CONSTABLE STEVENSON

Q88        O.K. Shayne, is there anything else you want to say?

A            No, I don't think so. I can't think of anything else offhand. Probably will when the interview's finished.

Q89        I think we've covered pretty much everything. That, that's it?

A            Yeah.

Q90        All right. We'll stop it now. The time according to my wristwatch is about 5.03, do you agree with that?

A            Yeah.

Q91        The interview's now stopped.

INTERVIEW CONCLUDED