

DETECTIVE SENIOR CONSTABLE GRAY

Q1 This is an electronically recorded interview between Detective Senior Constable Stuart Gray and Mr Neil Galletly at the Hobart Police Station on Monday, the 4th of January, 1999. Also present and seated to my left is Senior Constable Dave Upston from New South Wales Water Police. The time by my watch is now 9.13am. As I've explained to you, Neil, we're making inquiries in relation to the recent Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race in which six sailors have died. Basically I want to ask you some questions about your role in the Sydney to Hobart. And any questions that I ask you will be recorded on these three tapes. Do you understand?

A Yeah.

Q2 O.K. Just to start with, I wonder if you could give us your full name?

A Neil Ronald Galletly.

Q3 And your date of birth?

A 7th of the 6th, '60.

Q4 And your current address?

A 63 Harslett Crescent, Beverly Park, New South Wales.

Q5 O.K. Can you give me some indication as to your position in the Royal Australian Navy?

A My rank is Lieutenant Commander and I'm the, the captain, or Master of Civilians in respect of Young Endeavour.

Q6 Now, can you give me your sea qualifications?

A M'mm. Well, in the, in the navy I'm a, a ticketed bridgeward keeping officer and I've, I've done the intermediate navigation course, which mean I'm eligible for command and, and I'm command qualified in the Royal Australian Navy. And I actually have some civilian qualifications, I'm a Master Class 4 as well.

Q7 O.K. And educational qualifications?

A Grade 12, basically.

Q8 O.K.

A And various military things over 20 years of service.

Q9 Right. Now, if you could in your own words, could you just give us an outline basically of your job, or your role in the Sydney to Hobart with the Young Endeavour?

A Sure. The Young Endeavour is, is chartered by the two yacht clubs involved in the race to, to be the radio relay vessel, we carry three people from the CYC, Cruising Yacht Club of Australia to, to act as the radio relay officers. They do all the radio relay for civilians, we are just the floating platform that carried them down from, from Sydney to Hobart with the fleet. We have no specific delegated search and rescue role in the race, though of course being a, a seagoing vessel at sea we'd have obligations standard to any ship in any search and rescue operation.

Q10 O.K. Can you tell me how many were on board in the recent, during the recent Sydney to Hobart?

A Thirty seven.

Q11 O.K. And that included young people?

A Yes.

Q12 As well as navy personnel?

A Yes.

Q13 Can you tell me how many navy personnel there were?

A There were 9 staff crew and one navy reserve person, there was another, another one, another sailor who was a photographer on board, but he's in the Royal Australian Navy and that's it.

Q14 O.K. Can you give me the sort of range of ages of the young persons on board?

A At a, I have to guess.

Q15 Yeah.

A The minimum age we take for this, this voyage is 18.

Q16 All right.

A And they can be upwards, so I would guess the high 20s.

Q17 Right. O.K. Now, I wonder if you could just explain to me the communications set up on the Young Endeavour, which is sort of designated for the race?

A Yes. The, the CYC radio relay team is, has the call sign Telstra control. They set up down in what is normally, what is the staff mess.

Q18 Yeah.

A And they use a HF VHF radio.

Q19 Yeah. And whereabouts is the staff mess situated on the boat?

A It's on the deck below the bridge.

Q20 That's O.K.

A So our voice communications between the bridge and, and

Telstra control is just hop down a couple of stairs and, and you're there.

Q21 Right. O.K. Now, so far as a person in charge of communications is there someone allocated to that position?

A In Telstra control I don't think they've formally done it, but Lou Carter seems to be the most senior of the three. Audrey Brown is sort of back-up, I suppose in a way say secretarial, she doesn't speak very much and she keeps lots of records of what's being said and changes the tapes of what's being said, and Michael Brown who's her husband, reads the weather, but Lou Carter does the, the skeds.

Q22 Right.

A Mm.

Q23 Now, do you have much to do with the communications room, you know, during the race?

A Only from a, trying to be, have close liaison - - -

Q24 Right.

A - - - but that's all I do, just make sure they're comfortable and talk to them, make them feel at home.

Q25 O.K.

A That's all, I don't get on, on their radio circuits.

Q26 Right.

A I could, they'd let me if, if I needed. In fact I did once during, when things got busy and save me repeating it to Lou and Lou saying it, I just spoke.

Q27 All right.

A But really nothing formal.

Q28 O.K. Are you aware of how many radio staff there are for the boat, or for this -?

A For Telstra control there are three.

Q29 O.K.

A For the ship it's any qualified officer of the watch.

Q30 Right. Now, are you able to give me the shifts that the communication operators worked?

A No.

Q31 O.K.

A They, they do have a watch build system but I don't know why they bother because they stay watch on ..... the whole time. They did it last year, they love it so much and this year was so busy, they sit and work as a team. It's like, they do have a roster system but this was so busy they were like at action stations, all three of them were there the whole time.

Q32 O.K. Now, if a, you might explain this to me as well, if a situation arises through the radio room of some, of some problem, what would be the normal procedure for the operator so far as you're concerned?

A For Telstra control, do you mean?

Q33 Yeah.

A O.K. The, their normal procedure, if what happened?

Q34 O.K. Suppose there was an incident during the race  
- - -

A Yeah.

Q34 - - - there's a distress signal or something, what

would be the role of the operator so far as you're concerned, would he inform you or what action would be taken?

A Yeah. If there was a one off - - -

Q35 Yeah.

A - - - he, he would be foolhardy to not tell me, it would be common sense to tell the master of the ship.

Q36 Right.

A And whilst that isn't laid down, for me Lou Carter would not hesitate to call me - - -

Q37 Yeah.

A - - - if something like that happened. And, in what happened with this race, we were awake any, I was awake when things started going to custard and there was no need to call me because it was continuous. And I was telling him what we were hearing on our radios and he was telling us what he was hearing on his. So far as we humanly could because they just didn't stop.

Q38 O.K. Whereabouts were you supposed to be positioned in the race, the boat itself?

A Nowhere in particular but Telstra control and myself over the past few years have tried to be in the middle of the fleet.

Q39 All right.

A Whatever that is.

Q40 Yeah.

A But in the middle of the fleet, so that we can HF to the extreme ends.

Q41 O.K. Was that the situation around the 26th, 27th?  
A Mm, yeah.  
Q42 O.K. Now - - -  
A In fact we were back a little bit because we knew the blow was coming and, because we went into Wollongong to pick up a radio we didn't bother trying to scream ahead so much because they knew the blow was coming and, and we knew we'd be back with the tailenders for the blow, the smaller ones, if you like - - -  
Q43 Yeah.  
A - - - as opposed to the maxis.  
Q44 O.K. You say that you knew the blow was coming, did you get some indication that there was a, there was going to be some howling winds - - -  
A Yeah, I mean - - -  
Q44 - - - down the coast? Could you - - -  
A Yeah, that would be - - -  
Q45 Can you tell us that?  
A Yeah, sure. On Christmas Day and probably even on Christmas Eve I knew we were gunna have a tough Sydney, Hobart.  
Q46 Right.  
A Not, I couldn't say I knew we were gunna have 65 knots obviously but, I knew it was going to be a roughy.  
Q47 Yeah.  
A And when we sailed on Boxing Day all the newspapers, you know, we all knew there were two fronts coming and then on, later on Boxing Day the, we knew there was a,

we expected a front that night so on the evening of the 26th it passed through, as predicted, a little bit weaker than predicted, but the next morning, in fact but I knew the, at that stage I knew the 27th blow was coming, I knew it would be big, I think they were saying 45 to 55 knots. That afternoon, that morning we ..... our storm sails in, in what eventuated to be four or five hours earlier than actually needed.

Q48 Right.

A Because, and they came through at 65 knots, so, yeah, I think the weather forecasting was fantastic.

Q49 O.K. Whereabouts, are you able to tell me whereabouts Young Endeavour was positioned, sort of at the beginning of the storm, so to speak, or the high winds?

A Yes, we were making our way more in shore and we were just north of Eden - - -

Q50 Right.

A - - - heading in shore to shelter ourselves.

Q51 O.K.

A We weren't going into Eden, we were going, I was hoping that by the time, we're rather slow, by the time we got to Gabo that the thing was blown through and then we would have nice westerlies to scream across the strait.

Q52 Now, if you had gone into Eden would the communications protocol still continue with the race?

A Yes, but we have to be careful, part of the decision to go into Eden means that we could upset our HF columns.

Q53 Right.



A That's part of the reason I didn't want to go into Eden, the other part was I just didn't want to go in and waste time, I wanted to try and time it so we got to Gabo and got south - - -

Q54 All right.

A - - - ..... As it turned out, lots of boats were then coming back in to Eden after the blow, so - - -

Q55 Yes.

A - - - we stayed around there as well.

Q56 Can you just describe to me what the blow was like, what the conditions were like out there?

A In the thick of it, it was 65 knots maximum, 6 metre waves. So that's a sea state 6, force 11.

Q57 Did, did you guys get any hard datum so far as wind speed at all?

A Yeah, in the ship's log we, we should have.

Q58 O.K.

A There should be, every three hours we're meant to record it - - -

Q59 Right.

A - - - do you want me to have a look now and see if it is?

Q60 Yeah.

A I mean sometimes in those situations we might forget to record it 'cause we're bloody busy so the administration, so, 23.00 on the 27th, it was, wasn't it. O.K. Here we go. At 03.00 on the 28th of December, is that when we're talking about, or is that

24 hours later? Going back, sorry, if this is getting boring for the tape.

Q61 You're right, that's fine.

A 27th of December, 23.00, wind 260 56 knots.

Q62 Right.

A Visibility 5, sea state 6, 6 metre waves, 6 metre swells, 15 degrees celsius, barometer 996 falling.

Q63 O.K. Now, are we able to photocopy some pages from that?

A Yeah.

Q64 Yeah, O.K.

A Visibility 5 is poor visibility. Yeah, that, and that's our pretty, that's what it was. Yeah. Yeah, you can photocopy that.

Q65 O.K.

A Actually I'd like you to 'cause I wanna take the log away.

Q66 Right, that's fine.

A Yeah, we need it .....

Q67 Now, did you suffer the same sort of weather conditions as the, as the other vessels so far as you're concerned?

A Yeah, of course.

Q68 O.K.

A What, in the same area?

Q69 Yeah.

A Yeah.

Q70 Are you aware were conditions worse in other places?

A I heard yachts, in fact, part of before we got hit I heard yachts saying, telling the sked to Lou Carter that they were getting 70 knots.

Q71 Yeah.

A And I sort of discounted that a little bit as yachty bravado or yachty, like, shit, if you're in a small boat and, and the wind's blowing hard you might well think it's 70 knots - - -

Q72 Yeah.

A - - - on a, or what, I suppose they all have good weather, wind odometers, not odometer, anyway, wind gauges.

Q73 Adonometer.

A Adonometer, thank you. But, yeah, we were the same, the same weather.

Q74 Now, so far as the ship's log is concerned, can you explain to us the, the basic principle of that book, the ship's book?

A The ship's log is a record of, of every, of significant things that are meant to, to, as a record, you should be able to retrace what a ship did years later by looking in the ship's log.

Q75 Right.

A So positions are recorded, weather's recorded every three hours - - -

Q76 Right.

A - - - alterations of course and speed, starting up of engines and things like that. And, and search and

rescue operations would be recorded as well, Maydays, things like that.

Q77 Right. Now, is it the responsibility of the captain to  
- - -

A Yeah, ultimately everything's my responsibility but log writing is delegated to the watch officer on that watch.

Q78 Right, O.K. So it's a book that basically stays in the, in the bridge?

A Yeah.

Q79 O.K. Now, another thing is, can you tell me why the log is written in pencil?

A It, traditionally it's written in pencil, you're not meant to rub it out, why is it written in pencil, I don't know.

Q80 It just seems a little strange - - -

A I don't know.

Q80 - - - that things are written in pencil, that's all.

A Yeah, they always are, it's illegal to rub anything out of a log.

Q81 Right.

A But they're written in pencil, it even stipulates what type of pencil it's meant to be and not in ink, don't know.

Q82 That's fine.

A Good question.

Q83 That's fine. Now, you mentioned before that you, you went into Wollongong - - -

A M'mm.

Q83 - - - what was that in relation to?

A That was to get a new HF radio for Telstra control because the one that was installed wasn't working properly.

Q84 O.K. What date would that have been you got into Wollongong?

A That was the day we sailed, the 26th.

Q85 The 26th? And obviously you went to Wollongong, the radio was collected and, and put in the boat.

A And then it worked perfectly.

Q86 Right.

A Lucky we changed it.

Q87 Right. Now, obviously during the, the, on that trip you had cause to be in the radio room on a number of occasions?

A Yeah.

Q88 Is that right?

A It's a staff mess, you can't get anywhere on the ship without walking through there.

Q89 O.K. And did you hear a number of communications between the Young Endeavour or, Telstra control and other vessels in the yacht race?

A Yes.

Q90 O.K. And how was the, the clarity and the reception and, and the transmission in all those messages and the receiving of those messages?

A Well, it varied of course, but on the whole I would say

it was good.

Q91 Right.

A I could hear what the other yachts were saying.

Q92 Right.

A Anyone walking through could hear what the yachts were saying. In the peak period there was information overload and it was on the bridge too, people were screaming on channel, talking on channel 16 - - -

Q93 Right.

A - - - and not changing to other channels.

Q94 Right.

A Which was difficult.

Q95 Now, if a situation arises where a boat is in distress and there is a dedicated channel for the yacht race, is it a situation that another channel is dedicated to that vessel for monitoring?

A Can't answer that, don't think so.

Q96 O.K.

A I think the answer's no.

Q97 Right, O.K. Now, do you recall an incident in which you gave assistance to, in one way or another to Team Jaguar?

A I can't say we gave Team Jaguar any assistance - - -

Q98 All right.

A - - - but I'm certainly aware of them, we probably gave them voice, yes, we gave them radio assistance by talking to them.

Q99 That's fine, yeah, yeah.

A Mm.

Q100 Can you just go through that for us, as you recall it?

A Yeah, O.K. I, I can't remember when, if Team Jaguar was first one of the radio-ed ships that we were talking to, we being Telstra control, but as I say, it was during the night, Young Endeavour was en route at that stage probably to Winston Churchill and, or maybe even the yacht Stand Aside. But anyway, during the course of the night a tugboat, Elizabeth, Moira Elizabeth - - -

Q101 Yes.

A - - - tugboat's ..... fishing boat, whatever it was  
- - -

Q102 Yeah.

A - - - or something, was chartered by the Team Jaguar to go and find them. And in the course of the evening on two occasions that the, the fishermen thought the Young Endeavour was Team Jaguar and approached us very closely. Both to my, my distress and dismay on both occasions. And, but they were coming quite close to see us because vis was so bad. And, and they were, they were talking, they, the tugboat, were talking to Telstra control and Team Jaguar was talking to Telstra control and indeed I spoke to the tugboat myself at one stage ..... using Telstra control. Trying to identify to them that we in fact were not Team Jaguar, we were Young Endeavour.

Q103 Right. How were you tasked to assist the vessels in

the, in the race?

A We were tasked by the RCC. We, Young Endeavour, were tasked by the Rescue Co-Ordination Centre.

Q104 O.K.

A ..... whatever you want to call it.

Q105 Right, I see, in Canberra?

A Yeah.

Q106 O.K. Now, you said that the Moira Elizabeth was chartered by, by Team Jaguar, were you informed of that or, that they'd arranged - - -

A Not directly, no-one said to me that that charter had taken place, but, but we, you knew by the conversation that they were out there searching and I heard Lou Carter make the comment about, you know, they'll be getting their fee anyway, or something or other, or it's going to cost a lot because it was taking the tugboat so long to find the yacht.

Q107 Right.

A So it was obvious there was a charter or some kind of salvage agreement there.

Q108 So you were constantly, when I say, you, I don't mean you personally, the ship was constantly in contact with Team Jaguar during their - - -

A Yeah, we had good contact, yeah.

Q109 Right, O.K. Now, you said that to your distress and dismay they came close to us, could you sort of explain that to me?

A Yeah, sure. We were, at the time shall we say



approximately 23.00 without looking at the log, heading, heading towards the revised datum for Winston Churchill and as we were approaching the datum we saw this white light through the poor vis and we approached the white light to see what it was, hoping that it would be a yacht or something like that. As it got closer the white light got far too bright to be a, a yacht but we, we continued looking. And then, nothing on radar, the radar wasn't picking up anything at all and then suddenly to, we, we thought we could see a searchlight and, and then we saw two mast headlights, it's hard to say, but I think the mast headlights might have been switched off, that's speculation because just with the sudden intensity that we suddenly saw them

- - -

Q110 Mm.

A - - - it may have been alteration of course for the ship or it may have been he just switched them on. I mean it could well have been just an alteration of course, and suddenly I saw two mast headlights. I was on his port bow, he was on my starboard bow, and it's very hard to tell range, and it, but the range was closing and we altered drastically to port, 90 degrees to port to avoid. And, you know, it was, it was a bit scary.

Q111 Right.

A And then at 3 o'clock in the morning another vessel was approaching us on our starboard port again at close

range, the watch officer called me and I, I came up and I said, "That's the tug that's looking for Team Jaguar, it just has to be". 'Cause I've heard them say on the radio that, that the vessel that they were looking for was, you know, travelling at 4.9 or 5.9 knots or something - - -

Q112 Mm.

A - - - and they had it on radar, and I said to Lou, they said that on the radio, I said that to Lou Carter, I said, "Lou, that's us, we're going that way, that fast and we're the only thing out here that's going to ..... up on radar". I don't know if Lou told them that, I went off to do something else on the bridge. And, and then Team Jaguar said that they had, they had, I said to Lou Carter, that is a tugboat looking for Team Jaguar, you know, I guarantee it, I mean they, they just keep coming to us, the officer of the watch is steering away and they're sticking on chasing us.

Q113 Yeah.

A And, and Lou said, "No, no, it isn't, they're hooked, they're hooked up to Team Jaguar". I said, "What does hooked up mean?" I mean I, ask him what is hooked up, is he really, does he have the tow-line to Team Jaguar. Lou asked him and he said, no, no, but he's chasing them now, he's very close and he's manoeuvring to try and pass a line. I said, "That's us, it's us he's trying to chase, we're a two-masted rigging team with lights all up our mast and he's looking for a dismasted

yacht".

Q114        Yeah.

A            He, he's obviously not real switched on. And, so I said to them, "I will flash my mast headlights on and off three times and prove to you that this is Young Endeavour", and we, I flashed the lights, these are not our ..... lights, but masthead working lights that we have ....., very bright lights, they flashed on and off and he, and I think he, expletive, expletive, that's the Young Endeavour. And then Team Jaguar came up on the line and said, "I can see both of you, I can see both lights of ships in transit". So Team Jaguar was bloody close.

Q115        Right.

A            And we're just all going with the, with the weather basically about 5 knots north. So, at least by that time the bloody tugboat had realised that we were not Team Jaguar, and I heard in the morning that they'd towed Team Jaguar in.

Q116        Right. Are you able to give me a position, the position you were at at that time?

A            Yeah. Yes, I can. I brought the chart. Now, you want an exact answer, I'll have to really read the log thoroughly, but, if we're talking at 03.00, it is from memory - - -

Q117        Yeah.

A            - - - now, the log may or may not say, see what the log says, what day are we talking about now? So it's the

28th now, isn't it? 28th.

Q118 Morning of the 27th.

A No. They started the 26th, the weather, bad weather came in on the 27th, it's now the 28th at 3.00 in the morning. Yeah. Yeah, O.K, at 03.00 we were at 3715.8 south, 15044 east, 44.5 east. Which is there on the chart, O.K, that's our GPS fix. And from memory that's when it all happened, I was called, yeah, log doesn't say that we had this, this meeting with the ship, obviously too much was happening.

Q119 Yeah.

A But that's where it was.

Q120 O.K. If you could just explain to us what a datum is?

A O.K. The position that we were told that a vessel was at, last known position, the place we're heading.

Q121 Right. So far as your radar not picking up anything at all, is that, could you explain why that occurs or -?

A Yeah, the waves were too big and the boats out there were too small.

Q122 Right.

A They wouldn't, they were no bigger than, than the waves sitting on the swell.

Q123 Right.

A We'd pick up a merchantman - - -

Q124 Right.

A - - - but we wouldn't and couldn't pick up a yacht.

Q125 O.K. Now, prior to leaving Sydney did you have anything to do personally with AUSAR at all, were you

briefed by AUSAR in any way?

A No.

Q126 Were there any instructions provided to you, as the captain of the vessel, from AUSAR so far as search and rescue instructions and, instructions so far as vessels in distress?

A No, the only instruction to me is, and it's, you need a lawyer to determine if it's even an instruction to me but it's the race rules, and the race rules issued by the yacht club talk about vessels in distress and talk about what my vessel's role is. It actually clarifies that I'm not a rescue ship.

Q127 Right.

A Other than in the normal course of any ship at sea, you'd go to the rescue of someone.

Q128 Right. And during the actual incident, I suppose what we'd call the storm incident, sort of, 27/28, or 26/27/28, were you given any specific instructions from AUSAR?

A Yes.

Q129 You were in constant contact with them?

A Yeah.

Q130 O.K.

A ..... control.

Q131 Right. Now, can you relate some of those instructions to me so far as vessels were concerned?

A Yeah, well, I can give you a narrative of, of the event that I wrote on the 28th of December.

Q132 Right.

A So the morning after, if you like, or the afternoon after, and at the back of that narrative are all, are copies of every SATCOM Charlie message that we gave and received to, to the RCC, to AUSAR.

Q133 To AUSAR, O.K, that's fine.

A So I'll give it to you.

Q134 Yeah, that's fine. Is there anything you'd like to ask, Dave?

SENIOR CONSTABLE UPSTON

No, not at that stage, I feel the interview's going quite well.

DETECTIVE SENIOR CONSTABLE GRAY

Q135 O.K. So far as dispatching, or so far as, if you were at sea in a position that you were in, Young Endeavour, the, Telstra radio relay ship, and there was a yacht in distress that needs assistance, what would be your role?

A My role?

Q136 Yeah, the ship's role.

A As, as Young Endeavour's role, if there is a vessel in distress and we are within X hours of being able to get there and X is decided by the RCC, by AUSAR, then, you know, we, we do as any seaman would do, and is obliged to do, is search to, to that position.

Q137 Right. Now, was your ship or your crew responsible to relay messages from, from vessels to AUSAR, would that be one of their roles?

-

A My crew or Telstra control?

Q138 Sorry, Telstra control, as far as you're aware.

A Well, common sense says so.

Q139 Yeah, that's right.

A Yeah.

Q140 So - - -

A And like, like, common sense says that my vessel would as well, and we did. And I think Telstra control did do that, they can't radio AUSAR directly - - -

Q141 O.K.

A - - - unless AUSAR have a HF radio that is on the race web or frequency and I'm - - -

Q142 Right.

A - - - pretty sure they don't. Maybe that's a thing that they should do. But, they, Lou Carter would talk to me if, if he wanted something to be sent to Canberra.

Q143 So - - -

A To AUSAR.

Q144 Right. Was that the case during those, during that incident?

A I can't, I can't say categorically whether he gave me a message which in turn was sent to AUSAR, no, I don't think so.

Q145 All right. Now, were you trusted in any, tasked to any other vessels during the incident?

A Yes, we were tasked to, the first one was Stand Aside - - -

Q146

Yeah.

A

- - - and then we received a Mayday from Winston Churchill, we heard the Mayday ourselves and we made the decision to go to that position. Advised AUSAR that we were no longer going to Stand Aside, we were going to Winston Churchill, which was quite close to us, an hour and a half sail or steam away. And they then said to us, "Yeah, concur, go to that position". They sent out a, a message that said, well, here we go, "From Young Endeavour to AUSAR, 'Currently en route to yacht Stand Aside 10 nautical miles south of Winston Churchill, request, advise priority'", sorry, ..... O.K. Do you want me to read these out for the tape?

Q147

Yeah.

A

O.K. This to AUSAR from us, we said, Young Endeavour's currently in position, 3722.1 south, 15014.5 east, ETA, expected time of arrival at Stand Aside is 2709.30 Zulu, that means, that was 20.30, 8.30pm on the 27th, we do our times in Zulu time.

Q148

Right.

A

Intend recovering remaining passenger from life raft as required, awaiting further instructions. RCC came back and said, "Received a Mayday from Winston Churchill in position approximately 20 nautical miles south east of Twofold Bay", Twofold Bay is Eden, "abandoning ship to life rafts, vessel taking on water rapidly, Young Endeavour unable to determine exact position, ABC aircraft in contact". Then from RCC Australia, "Yacht



Winston Churchill with nine persons is in position 2714 south, 1509 in east, at 17.15 local time, sorry, 18, 17.15 local time. Hulled and taking water. Crew abandoning to life raft, vessels within four hours, report best ETA and intentions to this station. Other vessels requested to monitor coast radio stations or SATCOM through Perth". From the Young Endeavour, "We're currently en route to Stand Aside 10 nautical miles south of Winston Churchill, request, advise priority". So I'm saying to them do you want me to go to Winston Churchill or Stand Aside.

Q149 Right.

A "Intend proceeding to Winston Churchill unless otherwise advised, ETA 19.00". They came back and said, "Please proceed to position 3714 south, 15019 east which is Winston Churchill's last known position, crew reported to be abandoning to life raft". So what that means is AUSAR are saying to us, go to Winston Churchill at 3714 south.

Q150 Right.

A Remember that, that's significant. Then they changed the position, AUSAR said to us that yacht Winston Churchill with nine persons sinking is in position 3746 south, 15033, so it's a different position. Vessels report best ETA and intentions. So then Young Endeavour said to them, "We're proceeding to Winston Churchill at that position", i.e. the revised one, "3746, attempting comms with search and rescue aircraft

for direction". That was a hint there, in that message, I, I would say, to the, that I'm going to the position 3746 south, and I'm attempting comms with aircraft for direction, there was a subtle hint there, I don't know where the hell I'm going, you've changed the position so I'm talking to an aircraft, and I was talking to an aircraft, I'm trying to talk to an aircraft on HF, I thought they'd, I thought that maybe a mistake was being made, because the position had changed. You really need to look at a chart and concentrate on the lats and longs carefully but, 3746 south is not 20 miles south east of Eden.

Q151 Right.

A It's further away, it's over near Stand Aside, which was reported to us as a dismasted yacht. I believe, possibly that we were, we were going to Winston Churchill, 20 miles south east of Eden, that is about 3714 south.

Q152 Right.

A Then it was changed by RCC for us to go to a revised position, 3746 south.

Q153 Right.

A So I don't know if that was a typing error or a decision or whatever, but we were changed from a position that tied in exactly with the Mayday - - -

Q154 Yeah.

A - - - with 20 miles south east of Eden to somewhere near Stand Aside. And we were told that, that a

aircraft had had visual sighting of dismasted yacht. I thought possibly that that dismasted yacht was the Stand Aside and not Winston Churchill.

Q155 Right.

A Because Winston Churchill had said they're abandoning, yacht sinking, that doesn't tie with an aircraft seeing it, does it. So I thought they'd cocked up, basically.

Q156 Yeah.

A But, it's the RCC, they've got imperves, they've got aircraft saying positive ID, the guys who said, the guys on the Winston Churchill who said that they had, were abandoning to life raft, well, they were distressed, maybe they changed their mind, maybe they managed to patch it and didn't indeed. So we proceeded as directed. But I had this feeling, are we going to the right place. 'Cause we were quite close to 3714 south and now we're going further away. We get there after dark, at least the first place we could have got there before dark, but there's no point if there's no boat there. So we followed orders. I contact SAR and a, and a merchant vessel who were having a conversation on channel 16 and taking up the whole bloody channel 16, they should have gone to another channel, that merchant, I'll read from my notes here.

Q157 Yeah, yeah.

A "Overheard aircraft speaking with, with call sign Oscar, Yankee, Quebec, Juliette, 2, garbled conversation re being in area and able to assist. Also

received cancellation of AUSAR 984372". In a nutshell I was trying to talk to the ship and aircraft to determine did they sort of think, like I thought, that maybe we were going to the wrong place. The aircraft couldn't hear me, or if they could they didn't get back to me, the ship did hear me and got back to me and, I don't recall what they actually said, I think they were a bit confused as well, and we didn't resolve the issue.

Q158 Right.

A So my decision was to, well, on the basis of the RCC, who probably had all the best information and, I just continued to proceed to the position. But when we got there during the hours of the morning and the weather just got much, much worse, and we were blowing north, I contacted the RCC at 7 o'clock in the morning on mobile phone, or I contacted Sam Hughes in Hobart to start with, and he advised me to get on to the Canberra people, so I phoned the 1800 number in Canberra and said, "Look, guys, we've found nothing out here, the Winston Churchill's last datum, 3746, I think you need to go and look downwind of 3714 south".

Q159 Right.

A Which is the 20 miles south east of Eden, 'cause I think, it looked to me like the mistake had, in fact had been made.

Q160 Right.

A So I think, I mean I don't want to dob people in

..... - - -

Q161 No, no, that's not - - -

A But I think it, I think it needs, we need to, and you've probably already done this, where were the survivors actually found and where was the yacht when it sunk. If it was 20 miles south east of Eden, as they said, well, then there was, a boo-boo was made.

Q162 Yeah.

A We were dispatched to the wrong place.

Q163 Right.

A And in hindsight maybe I should have questioned it more thoroughly but a positive ID from an aircraft, imperves going off and we can't see imperves, RCC can - - -

Q164 Yeah.

A - - - you know, you'd think that we were going to the right place. But I believe they, the aircraft got Stand Aside and Winston Churchill confused.

Q165 O.K, then - - -

A Something major.

Q166 When you reached that position, 3714, I think it was  
- - -

A M'mm.

Q166 - - - what was the weather like there?

A We didn't reach it.

Q167 You didn't reach it, O.K.

A The weather there was, well, the weather there was, we would have reached it around 19.00 - - -

Q168 Yeah.

A - - - so I can look and see if we've managed to record the weather at that time. Wind, at 8.30, so that's a little bit later, was from the west at 48 knots, so, yeah, I mean, there you go.

Q169 Right.

A West at 50 knots or so.

Q170 O.K.

A Later on at 3 o'clock in the morning we were in the 65 knots from the west.

Q171 Right. How was it aboard your ship, so far as comfort?

A Mine, yeah, fine. It's rough.

Q172 Yeah.

A But, we're a very seaworthy ship.

Q173 Righto.

A No problems at all.

Q174 O.K. So far as AUSAR's concerned, if they send a, a signal to you so far as starting a search, you obviously do what they say. Is that correct?

A Yes.

Q175 Unless otherwise you consider it to be - - -

A Yeah, I, I understand that if AUSAR sends something to a navy ship then the navy are going to do everything they can to oblige, unless it's a war of course. So there'd be no question that I would obey AUSAR.

Q176 Yeah.

A Yeah, I'm not under their operational control - - -

Q177 Right.

A - - - I'm under the navy's but, I'm in no doubt that if

AUSAR tell me, or ask me to do something, in fact Sam Hughes asked me verbally on the telephone, so he was requesting me, that was his style of language and I said, sure, mate, off we go.

Q178 Yeah. Yeah. Could you explain to us the laymen Zulu time - - -

A Zulu's Greenwich - - -

Q178 - - - .....?

A - - - Greenwich Mean Time, and we're 11 hours ahead of Greenwich.

Q179 O.K.

A So all our times and this and that signals are done on Zulu time.

Q180 Right, O.K. Now, are you aware of any other boats during that time who were in, in problems at all?

A Yeah, there seemed to be a cast of thousands.

Q181 Right.

A And not all of them in our area, but, well, there's Winston Churchill, Stand Aside, Team Jaguar was not sinking - - -

Q182 Right.

A - - - so they said, they were just dismasted and had that tugboat looking for them.

Q183 Right.

A But further away there was, Sword of Orion.

Q184 Yeah.

A And Business Post Naiad they were much further away. Yeah, it seemed to be, you know, yachts in trouble

everywhere.

Q185 Right. Do you recall any Maydays that may have been sent from Naiad or did anyone discuss any Maydays that may have been sent from Naiad?

A No, I don't think we heard anything from Naiad.

Q186 Right.

A Either ourselves, on the radio or from RCC.

Q187 Right.

A No, they were never our concern. We were really Winston Churchill and Stand Aside only.

Q188 Right. So you have the position of Naiad there at a time?

A I don't think I do on this chart, 'cause I think they were further south than this chart, this chart goes to 3830 south - - -

Q189 Right.

A - - - and on my recollection is on the next chart we have a datum for them further south.

Q190 Right. So far as - - -

A No.

Q190 - - - that's there, what - - -

A No, I'm sorry, you're quite right. I didn't see that in the, yeah, yeah, I do.

Q191 So can you just explain where they are on the map so far as the longitude and latitude?

A Yeah, O.K. This datum for Business Post Naiad is 38 degrees 5 minutes south, and 15032 east.

Q192 O.K. Now - - -



A And the time, there's a time written here, 00.10, so that's 10 minutes past midnight.

Q193 O.K. Now, why would they be marked on this map, would that be for a reason?

A Yeah. That was, I can tell by the handwriting that was done by Matt ....., the navigator, so obviously that's information that has come in from Telstra control, I would suggest, and, you know, that's our picture compilation.

Q194 Right.

A Just trying to gather information. Here's a note here, forget it.

Q195 O.K.

A It's someone called on the telephone. Yeah, forget it, it's a private message for one of the staff crew there. The guy who received it obviously on the chart.

Q196 O.K. Now, look, so far as you're concerned the, is this the first time you've been involved with the Sydney to Hobart?

A No, we were, I was captain for the radio relay vessel last year.

Q197 Right. The same vessel obviously?

A Yeah.

Q198 Have you got any, anything you'd like to say so far as communications and organisations, so far as search and rescue and that sort of thing, that you'd like to put on, on tape, any concerns, you give us a concern about that aircraft position - - -

A Yeah. To repeat the aircraft one, I think that needs to be thoroughly looked at, and Sam Hughes is aware of it, he and I have discussed it.

Q199 Right.

A He and I, Sam Hughes and I know each other. I don't wanna point the bone at AUSAR but it certainly needs clarification. And I would like to, I personally am professionally interested to find out where the hell was Winston Churchill when, were they where they said they were.

Q200 Right.

A And if they were Young Endeavour was not very far away, you know, one hour's sail away - - -

Q201 Yeah.

A - - - we could have got to them.

Q202 Yeah.

A I think. But, we were diverted. So one part of me says, shit, I hope we've been diverted to the right place, I really believe there was a, some kind of problem there. Possibly because the aircraft mis-identified the yacht. Other concerns with Telstra control, not really. I mean Lou Carter is excellent, I, maybe, I think the other two guys, Lou, Audrey and Michael might be a little bit elderly for it - - -

Q203 Right.

A - - - and in fact they were frightened at one stage of the game, you could tell because they were very keen on me taking, when I said that we were going to take

shelter, before this even happened they were very keen that I take shelter. And I was a bit worried about them possibly having a heart attack or something like that, because they are getting a little elderly.

Q204 All right.

A They're lovely people and they do - - -

Q205 Yeah, but - - -

A - - - you know, but they are getting on a bit. So, yeah, I think that would lessen the risk next time, if there was younger people.

Q206 Yeah.

A They're competent but they're elderly. They dither a bit, I suppose.

Q207 Right.

A I wish that, for two years running now we've had HF radio problems with Telstra control, you guys know personally, Dave, you know, we had to replace the HF, last year we were out there and the HF wasn't working properly and we had a fuse problem and luckily my engineer had the right fuse and was able to make the radio work. So last year we had potentially a problem as well, and we might have had to go back in and do something if the engineer didn't have the right fuse. And we resolved before this search and rescue operation that we need to sail the Young Endeavour with the HF radios embarked prior to the race start, yeah, a couple of days before, couple of business days before to go outside the heads and check the radio actually does

work. They tested it inside but, and the reception was poor, but you put that down to buildings and things like that. Well, we went outside and reception was poor still, that's why I had to get a new radio. So I think we need to sail the ship and get the radios put in. And I think the guy that installs the radios also seems a bit slack.

Q208 Right.

A I mean two years running we've had problems with the HF, which we got over on, you know, in the afternoon of the 26th of December, but if we didn't, you know, the radio relay vessel wouldn't have a bloody HF, which would be not good, but the ship's HF worked fine.

Q209 Yeah.

A So it wasn't a propagation problem, it was a radio problem.

SENIOR CONSTABLE UPSTON

Q210 Would you have had any problems at all using the ship's HF, or was that solely put aside for the safety and the use for the, of the Young Endeavour?

A Yeah, well, well, technically, no, we can, it's no problem, we just dial up the right frequency and do it, but it's physically located on the bridge, so they'd be in the way of our navigation chart house and they'd have to stand up and couldn't sit down, so it'd be, technically you could do it, practically it'd be impossible. But worse than that is, we wouldn't then be monitoring 2182, which is, we have to do by law, so,

the answer's no, you can't do it.

DETECTIVE SENIOR CONSTABLE GRAY

Q211 So what's channel 2812?

A It's the International 2 meg distress frequency which you must listen to, it's like you must listen to channel 16 on VHF.

Q212 Right.

A Every vessel must maintain a listening watch on those frequencies for, for search and rescue purposes.

Q213 The, does that include yachts as well, I mean, if they have those facilities, do you know?

A I don't know.

Q214 Is that a required - - -

A I think every yacht would, would have VHF - - -

Q215 Yeah.

A - - - and there, if you have it, the law says what radios you have to have, and therefore if you have to have that radio, then you have to maintain the frequency listening watch. Every yacht listens on 16, you'd be a fool not to. Do the yachts have to have HF, well, they certainly do for Telstra control, yeah, look, yes, is the short answer, they must have to have HF. But ask AMSAR that question, to get the categorical answer.

Q216 Yeah.

A Yeah.

Q217 What type of rescue facilities do you have on your own boat, on the Young Endeavour?

A We're not, we don't have nothing particular for the race, and we have nothing particular in general, we have normal RAN standard, and AMSAR approved rescue, so we have man overboard recovery, we have a boat that we can lower - - -

Q218 Right.

A - - - we're, we're, we're in survey first class 1A vessel, so we surveyed to navy, probably not the right term there, we are a navy ship so we have the navy requirements and we're surveyed to class 1A, which is an offshore seagoing passenger ship by AMSAR, so we have the requirement, required gear there.

Q219 O.K. Is there anything you'd like to ask, Dave?

SENIOR CONSTABLE UPSTON

Q220 Just, after finishing your operations with the Team Jaguar and then heading off to, to assist the Winston Churchill, not getting there - - -

A No, we had operations for Stand Aside - - -

Q221 ..... Stand Aside.

A - - - ..... didn't get there.

Q222 Right. O.K, after those concluded were you in fact aware of any other incidents that were happening at the time?

A In general, yes.

Q223 O.K.

A We knew that there were red flares and distress signals all over the place. And there were, I mean, we heard there were 25 aircraft out there searching and .....

.... Sydney, Newcastle had been dispatched, navy helicopters, yeah.

Q224 O.K. On the chart you've, you've got marked, Business Post Naiad which we brought to your attention earlier  
- - -

A Mm.

Q224 - - - and you're aware of. Did AUSAR in fact then task you to those positions at any time?

A No, we were never tasked to go to Business Post Naiad. Only Stand Aside and the two positions given for Winston Churchill.

Q225 O.K. And then were you aware that the, the persons were in fact recovered from Business Post Naiad?

A Possibly, I can't recall.

Q226 O.K. If you had misgivings over the positions of the vessels that you were tasked to, Stardust and - - -

A No, Stand Aside.

Q227 Stand Aside. Why would you not then possibly if you, if you in communication with AUSAR in fact send hard copy to, to question those positions?

A Yeah, good question. I've asked myself that question. And the, the reason is, we discussed it on the bridge, when we were sent to, there was never any doubt about Stand Aside, by the way, the doubt is Winston Churchill.

Q228 Winston Churchill.

A Yeah.

Q229 Yeah.

A           When we were diverted from the position 20 miles south east of Eden, 3714 south, we'll call it that, from the most northern position to the most southern position, 3746 south, I, I wondered why, but, I didn't query it because, and as we, we discussed it on the bridge of the ship, the navigator and I, and I think the ..... as well, you know, 'cause we had to alter course and change sails and do, well, change the direction of the sails to, to do this and go to the further datum and we weren't very happy about it, because I, we felt we were right on the cusp of rescuing someone here, you know, we were less than an hour away, but, we thought that the RCC had the best information, I mean they've got an OBS room, they're professionals, I, I gather that they had a positive ID from an aircraft, they have EPIRB information, and it wouldn't be a decision that they would take lightly, so, you know, if, if someone in Canberra's saying to you, we have a positive ID on this Winston Churchill go there, yeah, sure, well, you know - - -

Q230           Yeah.

A           - - - arguing, well, not arguing, but questioning. In hindsight I, I wish I had done it but we discussed it on the bridge and we thought, well, you know, there's a lot of information here that, that they must have, they're the operations room, a cast of thousands. And if, it would be a brave man that, that said let's go one hour further towards Winston Churchill, which



actually takes you two hours further away from the, my southern position of Winston Churchill, so we'd be delaying our arrival by two hours at the, at the revised position. Now, that would be a foolhardy thing to do.

Q231 I'm not questioning - - -

A Yeah.

Q231 - - - you know, your - - -

A But the thought, the question, is a question I ask myself.

Q232 Yeah.

A Why didn't I get on the telex to say, are you sure, over.

Q233 Yeah.

A Well, I wish I had done it.

Q234 Yeah.

A But, we discussed it on the bridge of the ship and we felt that, well, a positive aircraft ID and all this sort of stuff, you know, it's pretty hard evidence and we needed to, to dispatch ourselves pretty quickly. But it was on my mind and that's why I called at 7 o'clock in the morning when we got, when we got nowhere and I said to them, I think you've got to go back and check that prior position, because, you know, with the benefit of new information and having mulled it over for a couple of hours, I think. But we didn't find anything here, maybe you better go, the other thing is there were, we knew there were 25 aircraft or something

out there - - -

Q235 Yeah.

A - - - ..... along at 6 knots, in those conditions, so, you know, there were aircraft going all over the place.

Q236 I think that's probably, you know, a question too we've got to, to raise with Sam, in fact - - -

A Yeah.

Q236 - - - it was obviously his decision to do that. But just without instruments, could you give us a, a rough estimate of distance between those two positions that were given, from the - - -

A Yeah, with the benefit of the chart.

Q237 Yeah.

A I'll try and do it. If I point it out to you guys, you can understand.

Q238 Yeah.

A At 18.29 the ship was there, and we altered course and that was the datum for Winston Churchill. And that ties in, there's 20 miles, right, that ties in with 20 miles from Eden, that position was given to us by the RCC.

Q239 Yes.

A It ties in with 20 miles south east of Eden. We were there, we weren't far away, we were 10 miles away, that's a bit over an hour - - -

Q240 Right.

A - - - in those conditions. And down here is Winston

Churchill's revised position. So, you know, it's, 25, almost 30 miles away from the other position. Big difference.

Q241 Mm.

A And it was, it's an amount that you'd think a yachty, you know, who's abandoning ship and he says verbally on his Mayday, 20 miles south east of Eden, you wouldn't think he'd actually be 50 miles south east of Eden, he'd have some idea. Yeah. It, it's an interesting one. And with, you know, with, I mean hindsight's a wonderful thing isn't it?

Q242 Yeah. No, I - - -

A You know.

Q243 No, that's no problem at all, it was just a question I think that, that had to be, be raised.

A It'd be pretty, I actually thought about going, continuing on to the first position of Winston Churchill, but you, where, as you can see from the chart I'd be sailing away from where in fact the RCC wanted me to go. But one of the things that alerted me to the possibly, the aircraft having ..... confused, the confusion, see where that is - - -

Q244 Yes.

A - - - and see where Stand Aside is, that made me think and we both, we knew that I think from Telstra control that they were, Stand Aside was dismasted and these guys were meant to have abandoned to the life rafts, so, I think the aircraft was saying that that there,

Stand Aside I'm pointing to on the chart, was Winston Churchill dismasted, whereas Winston Churchill was, according to the Mayday abandoning to life rafts. And that is not 20 mile, that position there is not 20 miles south east of Eden, whereas this one is.

Q245 Now you - - -

A It seems bleeding obvious now, but in the confusion and you can't hardly stand up and the wind's howling and the radios are crackling - - -

Q246 Mm.

A - - - and the RCC says to you go there - - -

Q247 Mm.

A - - - well we went there.

Q248 Are you aware of where any persons were in fact picked up from the Winston Churchill?

A Yeah, we'd found out the next, yeah, it was some considerable time wasn't it, that people were picked up from the life raft, I think they found out on the, on the afternoon of the 28th.

Q249 And where do you think that would have been?

A I'd have to speculate.

Q250 Yeah.

A I mean one part of me, I'm hoping like hell it was downwind of that.

Q251 Yeah.

A Because if it was downwind of the northern position

- - -

Q252 Yeah.

A - - - well, I'd be off to Government House getting my gong now and, and maybe three people would be saved, they are deceased. So, it makes me feel bad if in fact we were diverted from there.

Q253 But you, as far as, as far as you're aware, well as far as you know you, you don't know the, the positions where they were picked up?

A I have no idea.

Q254 O.K.

A No. I have no idea. Do you?

Q255 No, not at this stage.

A Not at this stage, O.K. I'm trying to, there was another reason why we didn't go to that position and I'm just trying to think why we discounted that position as well, I'm just trying to think what the hell it was. I can't remember. Can't remember what it was, but something else, someone might be able to answer it, also indicated, I think there was a positive aircraft ID and, yeah, I don't know. But anyway it's in this piece of paper here which I'll give you and, yeah, anyway it's aircraft in contact with these guys.

Q256 With those telexes that you read out earlier - - -

A Mm.

Q256 - - - they're numbered on the left-hand side of the page.

A Mm.

Q257 Are they in order now as - - -

A Yes.

Q257 - - - as, they are in order?

A They're in chronological order and they're referred to in the text that I wrote, as by numbers, like, message, one, two, three, four, five, et cetera.

Q258 O.K. O.K. Well, can you make that chart available to us - - -

A Yeah.

Q259 Will you need that chart for any reason now?

A No, we'll order another one.

Q260 Is that, that no problems?

A Yes, it's O.K.

Q261 No problems. And, and of course as earlier you indicated you don't mind if we, we can photocopy the ship's log and we can return that to you now?

A Yeah. And photocopy this, please, as well, it's my only copy.

Q262 Yes.

A ..... photocopy the narrative.

Q263 Is there anything else that you have that we can use at all that may assist the, the coroner in his inquest?

A No.

SENIOR CONSTABLE UPSTON

Q264 Anything further you'd like to say?

A No.

Q265 Overall were you satisfied, I mean other than the things that you told us that you're concerned about, apart from those were satisfied with the way things went so far as your involvement?

A            Yeah, as far as my, my involvement, my ship's involvement, yeah, very, very satisfied that the scheme, the Young Endeavour youth scheme takes returnees, that is, crew that have been on the ship before, so we don't take raw bone recruits, we take people that have been on a ship before and we upped the age from 16 to minimum age 18. Now, the, the young people on this trip were excellent. A couple of them were seasick but they were up there on the lower top, that's high in the rigging and acting as lookouts, they were still steering the ship and, and working sails, which ..... the ship, well, yeah, which ..... the ship 1,000 times, many times, I should say, during the night and the ship was rolling all over the place, and they were good. The navy crew knuckled down and did, did an excellent job. We prepared the decks for recovering people and I'm very proud of the way the ship did it. It's just a lingering doubt that if we, in hindsight went to the bloody wrong place - - -

Q266        Fair enough.

A            - - - found nothing. I'm feeling quite sick in the gut about it.

Q267        And at no time you felt that your ship was, was in danger - - -

A            No.

Q267        - - - and, and the crew? And if that - - -

A            Only when that bloody idiot Elizabeth Moira. But other than that, no, not with the weather, they were all

right.

Q268 And of course if that was the case then you, as the master, obviously would have - - -

A I would have - - -

Q268 - - - abandoned?

A - - - turned around.

Q269 And, and - - -

A I would advise the RCC that, that I was endangering my ship and my crew and we were proceeding to shelter.

Q270 O.K. This, the time by my watch is now 10.11am. This interview is now concluded.

INTERVIEW SUSPENDED

INTERVIEW RESUMED

DETECTIVE SENIOR CONSTABLE GRAY

Q271 Time is now 10.20am. This interview is recommenced with Neil Galletly. The time, yeah. Do you agree that a short time ago we had a break, actually the first interview was completed and we were outside doing some paperwork and you had a conversation with Senior Constable Upston. Would you be able to relate that conversation on tape for me, please?

A Yeah, sure. I said to Senior Constable Upston that I now recall what it was that had also convinced me that we were doing the correct thing in going to the revised position of Winston Churchill. In, when listening to the tape you need to go and have a look at message 3 in, in the paperwork that I've given you. Message 3 is AUSAR 98/4372, and it says that yacht, Winston, it's



from the RCC, "Yacht Winston Churchill with nine persons in position 2714 south" and a longitude, "is hulled and taking water and" the crew abandoning to life raft vessels within", sorry, "crew abandoning to life raft vessels". That's important, crew are going to life raft vessels. You then look at message 7 for AUSAR, AUSAR 4381, yacht Winston Churchill is sinking, it says that, "Yacht Winston Churchill with nine persons is sinking in position". So it says that the yacht is still with nine persons, which is not the same as crew abandoning to the ship. And remember we had this ID, aircraft ID, positive ID from an aircraft, so we're thinking, they haven't gone to life rafts, they're still, it's a yacht with nine persons, sinking in position 3746 south. So that, and our discussion, ..... discussion on the bridge, we realised that it wasn't a typing error, it was them saying that there were still nine people on the ship, Winston Churchill and not them having to abandon to life rafts. So, it wasn't a typing error. They had an aircraft ID, we thought that it wasn't a mistake. So we didn't query it.

Q272 O.K.

A I mean to make a textual change like that, isn't a typing error. You've actually got, have new information.

Q273 Right.

A You know, they're still on board, so, shit, they

must've had comms.

Q274 Yeah.

A Or visual.

Q275 No, that, that in fact clarifies your thoughts and, is there anything now further that you'd like to add to that while you've got the opportunity?

A No, not really, it's, no. I, I, I still feel sick in the gut if it was so close but, you know. We, we did what we did and we analysed it and in the event didn't question RCC, and, nor should we really question them unless it's glaringly obvious that they've made a boo-boo, it looked like they actually had it in order, so, so it's only with hindsight and, and, and thinking about it for days, you know, did we really make, make a mistake. Or, or were we unlucky. Or were the guys on Winston Churchill even more unlucky. You know, that we were so close but they were, yeah, that's it.

Q276 O.K. Thanks very much for that. Time is 10.23am. This interview's now concluded.

INTERVIEW CONCLUDED