

DETECTIVE SENIOR CONSTABLE GRAY

Q1 This is an electronically recorded interview between Detective Senior Constable Gray and Mr Stephen Ainsworth at the New South Wales Water Police Station at Pyrmont in Sydney. The time by my watch is now 1.40pm. For the record, Steve, would you mind just giving me your full name?

A Stephen John Hastings Ainsworth.

Q2 Your date of birth?

A The 16th of February, 1954.

Q3 And your current address?

A 15 Crescent Street, Hunters Hill.

Q4 And your occupation?

A Investor.

Q5 O.K. As I've explained to you, I'm making inquiries in relation to the 1998 Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race.

A M'mm.

Q6 And I've been tasked by the coroner to conduct a number of investigations in relation to that race.

A Yes.

Q7 Basically, the reason you're here today is because we have chosen to speak to a number of boats and your boat, Loki, is one of those boats. O.K. Now, if I could just start with your sailing background experience?

A Well, I guess I've been sailing over 20 years.

Q8 Yeah.

A Started in small boats, catamarans, racing in skiffs,

VS, I used to race, progressing into keel boats, racing things like S80s and Bluebirds. Then I got into offshore racing, did a few races in a boat called Mystic 7 which is a Swanson 36, which is what I did my previous Hobart race in.

Q9 Right.

A Actually, I went over to live in England for six years and gave up sailing 'cause it was too cold. came back and got into sailing again. When I came back I was primarily, I had my own boat, it was a 40-footer, it was a cruising boat so I didn't do anything more than twilight races and that. And then I bought Loki which is my current boat, which I bought at the beginning of '98, it was delivered new in '98. And I've been that offshore.

Q10 How long, have you done any previous Sydney to Hobarts?

A Yes, I'd done one previously.

Q11 That was '97?

A No. That was, I think that was 1985.

Q12 O.K. Some time ago.

A Some time ago.

Q13 O.K. Can you give me some details in relation to Loki itself, the boat itself?

A Loki is, as I said, it's a new boat.

Q14 Yeah.

A It's built by very, very strong boat. It's 40 feet, 44 feet long.

Q15 Right.

A Got a masthead slip.

Q16 Fibreglass construction?

A Yeah, fibreglass construction, teak decks. What else?

Q17 That's fine.

A Yeah.

Q18 Now what number of crew can you have on that boat?

A I normally race with 10.

Q19 O.K. That's your ocean racing crew?

A Yes.

Q20 O.K. Now, are you aware of the, the categories so far as the Sydney to Hobart's concerned, in relation to stability, at all?

A Yes, yeah.

Q21 Are you aware what the Sydney to Hobart stability minimum requirement is?

A Absolutely, yes.

Q22 Do you know what that is?

A Which is 115 degrees, limit of positive stability.

Q23 That's correct. Now, I'll show you a certificate here with is an IMS certificate.

A Yes.

Q24 In the name of Loki. Do you agree with that?

A Yes.

Q25 And on your stability index there's a 120.9.

A Yes.

Q26 And your calculated limit of positive stability is 115 degrees.

A Yes.

Q27 So, she complies as far as the Sydney to Hobart is concerned.

A Yes.

Q28 O.K. Now, you entered what division?

A CHS division.

Q29 Now, can you tell me why you entered CHS division?

A Because we feel we're more competitive in CHS.

Q30 Right.

A The fact of the matter is with IMS is that boats really need to be designed around the IMS rule and optimised to the IMS rule, to win - - -

Q31 Right.

A - - - under IMS. And racing CHS suits our boat better. We thought we could do well in that category.

Q32 So is Loki, although you purchased it in 1998 - - -

A Mm.

Q32 - - - how old is the boat?

A It was launched in 1998.

Q33 O.K.

A It's a brand new boat.

Q34 So it wasn't build under IMS rules?

A It wasn't designed to that rule, no.

Q35 Right, O.K, that's fine. O.K. I'll show you another form here which is your mandatory crew list.

A Yeah.

Q36 And you'll see that 10 names appear on that list.

A Yes.

Q37 Can you just tell me if that is in fact the crew that

raced last year?

A Jason, Phil, Michael, Richard, Mike, John, Adam, yeah, all of those.

Q38 So there were no changes to that?

A No changes.

Q39 O.K. Now, I believe you unofficially retired around about the 28th of December?

A Yes.

Q40 And that was due to any one thing?

A The, the primary reason we retired from the race was on the, the afternoon, late-afternoon on the 27th, we were hit by a huge rogue wave that, that turned the boat over, rolled us, passed horizontal, just how far over I don't know, but I recall I was down below at the time
- - -

Q41 Yeah.

A - - - hitting the headlining and bouncing off it and -
- -

Q42 Sure.

A As, and everything, you know, on the starboard side of the boat went over to the port side of the boat, and during the roll-over a window on the port side smashed and we took a fair bit of water in through that window
- - -

Q43 Right.

A - - - and when we righted the boat it came up itself -
- -

Q44 Yeah.

A - - - you know, there was total chaos - - -
Q45 Yes.
A - - - you know, water sloshing around the bottom of the
boat, and we decided to run with it - - -
Q46 Yeah.
A - - - drop, we only had the storm jib up at the time.
We decided to run with it while we, to protect the, the
window - - -
Q47 Yeah.
A - - - the opening. And we, we thought if we could fix
it in a suitable fashion that we would try to continue.
Q48 Mm.
A But we didn't have sufficient materials on board to
adequately fix it.
Q49 M'mm.
A So we eventually decided that we'd better retire from
the race.
Q50 Yeah, O.K. O.K. I'll go into your roll-over when we
get further into the interview.
A M'mm
Q51 But if I could take you to when you were first affected
by the weather - - -
A M'mm.
Q51 - - - in the race, the day and date of that. Do you
recall that?
A First affected by the - - -
Q52 By that, that low.
A Gee - - -

Q53 Would that be the 27th?

A Yeah.

Q54 O.K. Would you like to take me through that?

A Well, it was in the early hours of the morning on the
 27th.

Q55 Yes.

A Is when the, when the change came through.

Q56 Yeah.

A And we, you know, we'd noticed that the wind'd changed.
 We'd actually blown out a ring on the spinnaker.

Q57 Right.

A And we'd sort of had to drop it and, as luck would have
 it, as we had that down, we noticed the, the wind was,
 was backing round more to the west. So, we, we
 continued on without putting a spinnaker up.

Q58 Right.

A And the wind just gradually built.

Q59 Yeah.

A You know. And all during the, the, that day, the
 Sunday, the wind just kept on increasing and
 increasing. We kept reducing sail.

Q60 M'mm.

A Till, you know, we got down to, we got rid of the
 mainsail during that night, because we'd broken some
 batons on the main, we had the trisail up. And we got
 down to the trisail and storm jib.

Q61 Yeah.

A Eventually as the day wore on, we were down to the

storm jib along, because there was just too much sail with the trisail up.

Q62 Yeah.

A And we got hit by this huge wave. You know, we were, we were going all right, there was a lot of banging and crashing, you know, the weather was very fierce.

Q63 Yeah.

A The wind was, you know, the strongest wind that I've ever seen and the waves were bigger than I'd ever experienced, and then we got hit. As I said, probably sometime after 5.00.

Q64 PM?

A Yes, 5.00pm, yeah, sorry, on the 27th, 5.00, 5.30, something like that.

Q65 O.K.

A Which is when we were rolled, and the window broke.

Q66 So far as the waves, can you put an estimated height on those waves, some of those waves?

A Yeah, the, you know, there's been a fair bit of talking amongst the crew - - -

Q67 Yeah,

A - - - and it is hard to estimate - - -

Q68 Mm.

A - - - the size of waves, but it was about, the average, and we're talking about average, it was about nine or 10 metres.

Q69 Mm.

A That's the best estimate.

Q70 What about the wave that hit you? I know you were downstairs, but has anybody indicated to you what size that wave was?

A The two guys that actually saw the wave, because we were, at that stage we were only running it through people on deck.

Q71 M'mm.

A Seven down below. They estimated it at around 15 metres.

Q72 Mm.

A And it wasn't so much the actual size of the wave, it was the shape of the wave that was, it was - - -

Q73 All right, so was it - - -

A Describe it. It was breaking, the top, top third, I guess, was described as pretty much vertical and breaking.

Q74 Mm.

A And there was actually, the, one guy said it felt like the water was being sucked out from - - -

Q75 Mm.

A - - - the front of the wave, so the actual trough in front of this wave was deeper than, than the rest.

Q76 Now, what about the wind speeds, what, what was the greatest wind speed that you experienced, or were aware of?

A Well, I mean, personally, I saw it up to 65.

Q77 And that was, on what, what did you notice that on? On your instruments?

A On the wind instruments, yes. Yeah.

Q78 O.K.

A I was - - -

Q79 Was that a sustained wind?

A Well, put it this way, I made a point when I was on deck at the time, and you'll understand that not everybody's on deck - - -

Q80 Mm.

A - - - you know, all at the one time. And you're not sort of sitting there looking - - -

Q81 Yeah, that's right.

A - - - looking at the wind instruments all the time, too. So, it was just for a short period - - -

Q82 Yeah.

A - - - we thought, geez, what it is blowing?

Q83 Mm.

A I looked and it was, was constantly between 55 and 65 knots.

Q84 Right.

A Others have told me that they saw wind instruments, other crew said they saw it gusting 74,75.

Q85 Right. O.K.

A So.

Q86 What type of wind recording instruments do you have?

A We've got wind instruments.

Q87 Right. I mean, they're a 1998 version, are they?

A Yeah, they're new instruments, yeah.

Q88 O.K. Now, so far as a routine on board your, your

boat, you had a routine?

A Yes.

Q89 Was that routine hindered in any way because of the weather?

A Yeah, it was. It was, clearly, you know, normally you'd have sort of half the crew on - - -

Q90 Yes.

A - - - different watches, you know, three or four-hour watches.

Q91 Yeah.

A When we got down to, you know, we were in survival mode, I guess.

Q92 Yeah.

A We only had three on deck - - -

Q93 Right.

A - - - at any one time.

Q94 Yeah.

A Seven down below - - -

Q95 Right.

A - - - 'cause there was no point in having people on deck.

Q96 Any seasickness?

A Yes, yes.

Q97 Yeah.

A Not severe.

Q98 Right.

A Everybody could continue on.

Q99 Right. So there was no incapacitation at all?

A No. I mean, people were not eating.

Q100 Yes.

A And, I mean, not personally, I felt, you know, like, sick and - - -

Q101 Yeah.

A - - - I was throwing up occasionally.

Q102 Yeah.

A Others, you know, were throwing up. But everybody could function.

Q103 Right. O.K. Now, was anybody injured as a result of the race in your crew?

A What happened, when, when we got rolled, three guys in the cockpit and they were - - -

Q104 Yeah.

A - - - obviously thrown around.

Q105 Yeah.

A They were all at the end of their tethers, because they all had safety harnesses on, tethered to the boat. During that roll-over, one of the fellows hit his thigh - - -

A Right.

A - - - I guess, on what I don't know. It could have been a winch, it could have been the combing in the cockpit.

Q106 Mm.

A And when we, we got him down below, and he, he couldn't move his leg properly, it was painful to move it, but when he was sort of still, it was O.K.

Q107 M'mm.

A I mean he was not complaining or anything, but - - -

Q108 Yeah.

A - - - when we got into Narooma, which is where we eventually made port, you know, we didn't know whether he'd fractured his leg or he'd just turned muscles or what.

Q109 Mm.

A Anyhow, we got an ambulance down, got him into the ambulance and they diagnosed it as a haematoma on the bone - - -

Q110 Right.

A - - - which is a big blister.

Q111 Yeah.

A Yeah. So, it wasn't too serious, but.

Q112 And he's recovered from that now?

A Yeah, yeah.

Q113 O.K. There's been no long-term effect from that?

A No, no, no.

Q114 Now, so far as that roll-over, now if we can just go to that roll-over, are you aware of how far you went? Did you go 180?

A That's, I mean - - -

Q115 Is that a good question?

A - - - we don't really know.

Q116 Right.

A You know, between 180 being absolutely upside down - - -

Q117 Yeah.

A - - - and 90. I would, and I'm guessing, it could have been 110, it could have been 130.

Q118 Yes.

A You know. Something like that.

Q119 So it's possible that you did right, it's possible she did go 180? Is that possible, do you think?

A Yes. I don't think it went to 180.

Q120 Right.

A It'd be something less than 180, but whether it was, I would say somewhere between 130 and 150.

Q121 Right.

A That would be my guess.

Q122 Now, did she come up fairly quick?

A Yeah. My feeling on that is that it was about 10, 15 seconds.

Q123 Right.

A And, you know, it's hard to judge - - -

Q124 Yeah.

A - - - 'cause it all - - -

Q125 But we're not talking minutes here?

A No, no, no.

Q126 Right. Is that would you would expect with a, a boat with a stability index of 120, from your experience in sailing?

A Well, I've never gone upside down before, so it was a new experience to me.

Q127 Are you aware that boats with high stabilities do right

themselves quicker?

A Yeah.

Q128 Right. So that sort of runs in conjunction with your boat, in fact, doing it?

A Yeah.

Q129 O.K.

A I was happy that it came up - - -

Q130 Yes.

A - - -

Q131 Yes, yeah. When you hear some of the other things that happen with boats that stay inverted for four to six minutes.

A Yeah, that would be scary.

Q132 Yeah. It certainly would. O.K. Now, you said that everybody had a, a lifeline, or a tether?

A Yeah.

Q133 Now, do you have those supplied on your boat?

A Yes.

Q134 O.K. Do they meet the Australian safety standard?

A Absolutely.

Q135 O.K. Is it the case that crew that come on to the boat bring their own?

A No. I supply the safety equipment.

Q136 O.K.

A I know that at least one of the crew - - -

Q137 Right.

A - - - has an inbuilt harness - - -

Q138 Yes.

A - - - in his wet weather gear.

Q139 Right. Are you aware of that meets the Australian safety standard of 2227?

A I can't say, you know, that I know that it does, but I would believe that it is, knowing the person involved.

Q140 Certainly your gear meets that standard?

A Absolutely, yeah.

Q141 O.K. And you were subject to a safety test prior to the race, well, safety examination prior to the race?

A Um - - -

Q142 did you supply a safety certificate to the CYCA?

A Absolutely, yeah, yeah.

Q143 And where was that done? Was that done at the CYCA?

A CYC, yeah.

Q144 It would probably be a David Carter perhaps who might have done that?

A No. It was Andy, Andy Koil.

Q145 Right, O.K. O.K. Now, in relation to the forecast, did you, did you or your crew attend the briefing, weather briefing prior to the race?

A Yes, yeah.

Q146 Yourself?

A Yeah, myself and my navigator.

Q147 Navigator, O.K. Now, when the bureau indicated that wind speeds were going to be 45 to 55, how did you interpret that?

A Well, they didn't do that at the briefing.

Q148 Did they not?

A No. I don't remember them saying it was going to be 40 to 55 knots at the briefing.

Q149 What did they say, do you recall?

A I mean - - -

Q150 It's a long time ago.

A It's a long time ago, and I mean, I'm left with impressions.

Q151 Yes.

A I, it was, I found that briefing, that weather briefing, confusing.

Q152 In what regard? I mean, this is to help us.

A Yeah. It was, just, it was all over the place.

Q153 Right.

A You know. It went on for too long and it was - - -

Q154 Yeah.

A - - - there seemed to be a lot of superfluous information. It wasn't sort of direct. I know that it's in inexact science - - -

Q155 Yeah, that's right, yeah.

A - - - but there were a whole lot of alternatives that were presented.

Q156 Yeah.

A And, you know, by the time you'd been sort of inundated with all these alternatives about what, you know, could happen and might happen, you were left wandering just what they were predicting was going to happen.

Q157 Right, yeah.

A You know. I came away knowing that we were in for a

bit of a pasting, heading south.

Q158 Right, yeah.

A And - - -

Q159 You didn't know when, though?

A I knew that we'd, you know, sort of within 12 hours, we'd get it.

Q160 Yeah.

A But, I didn't, you know, there was certainly no indication that we'd be getting sort of 60, 70 knot winds.

Q161 Yeah.

A And huge seas.

Q162 O.K. If you take everything out of your mind that you've read in the last couple of days since the report came out and various media reports - - -

A Yeah.

Q162 - - - if you were told by the bureau on the 25th of, or the 26th of December, 1998, that you could expect winds of 45 to 55 knots, how would you interpret that?

A Oh - - -

Q163 Putting everything you know now away.

A But that's a difficult thing to do.

Q164 Yeah.

A What, how would I interpret it?

Q165 Yeah, would you say, well, there's going to be 45 to 55, 55 knot winds, and that's it?

A No.

Q166 All right.

A Knowing, knowing what fronts are like when they come through - - -

Q167 Right.

A - - - you know, I've seen a lot more, you know, if you say - - -

Q168 Yeah.

A - - - you're told that there's going to be, you know, a 25 knot southerly coming through, you know that, you know, when it first hits there's often a lot more than that 25 knots.

Q169 So what would you predict yourself? I mean
- - -

A I mean if I was told 44, 40 to 50 knot winds - - -

Q170 Yeah.

A - - - you'd, you'd say, well, you could easy get 60s.

Q171 Yeah.

A Yeah. But not sustained 60s.

Q172 Yeah.

A You'd think - - -

Q173 Good gusts.

A - - - gusts up to 60.

Q174 Yeah.

A In the 60s, yeah.

Q175 O.K. So you probably had been made aware of recent times in relation to the 40 per cent which the - - -

A Yeah.

Q175 - - - weather bureau have said you can add on to your wind.

A Yeah.

Q176 And 86 per cent you can add on to your waves.

A Yeah.

Q177 Now, from your, from your attendance that day - - -

A Mm.

Q177 - - - was that mentioned, about this mean wind speed, 40 per cent and 86 per cent on waves?

A I don't recall it, no. I don't recall, I mean, I've always known that, I mean anyone that spends any time on the water, knows that there are waves that come through that are always a lot bigger - - -

Q178 Yeah.

A - - - than, than the average wave height.

Q179 Yeah.

A So that's always on.

Q180 Yeah.

A But I've never known that it was 86 per cent.

Q181 Yeah, well that's - - -

A I mean - - -

Q182 O.K. If you had known, or if you were told, or had known, that you would be expecting winds of in excess of 70 knots, would that have made a difference to you leaving?

A Yeah, I'd have to say. I mean, it's, once again, it's hard to, to - - -

Q183 Yeah.

A - - - think back - - -

Q184 Think back, yeah.

A - - - and put yourself in the situation - - -

Q185 But if you knew that winds could be in excess of 70 knots in your trip, would you have considerations to - - -

A you know, I wouldn't have gone, no. I mean, it wouldn't have been entirely my decision.

Q186 But a crew decision.

A Yeah, yeah, it's a crew decision.

Q187 But certainly you have the final say.

A Yeah. But it's, I mean, that's, that's a severe wind. I mean, it's cyclone force.

Q188 That's right.

A You don't go out into that voluntarily.

Q189 What's your attitude or view on, if the weather bureau say they got it right, what's your, your view on cancelling the race until that front had gone through, or postponed it? As a yachtsman?

A Yeah.

Q190 What would be your view? If you, if they were told on the 25th or the morning of the race, if you were all told that in the next 12 hours, it could be 70, 80 knot winds, but the low will pass.

A M'mm.

Q191 And it would pass in 12, 12 hours to 24 hours. Would, I don't know what you people all think in relation to this.

A Mm.

Q192 What would be your attitude to the committee saying, or

the race organisers saying, "Well, the race is going to be postponed till the next day, until the low passes"? What would be your attitude towards that? Would that have a significant, would that hold anything significant to you?

A Yeah.

Q193 Putting away tradition here.

A Yeah. No. If the winds were that, predicted to be that severe, and the conditions to be, you know, extraordinarily difficult, as a wind like that would produce - - -

Q194 Yeah.

A - - - you'd have to agree that it wouldn't be wise to start the race. And I - - -

Q195 Are you aware, sorry.

A And I would agree with that decision.

Q196 And that, and that clause does exist within the Australian Yachting Federation rules, you may be aware of that. In fact, it's rule 32B.

A Right.

Q197 And that is an option which a racing organising committee can, can use, can action if they wish.

A Yeah.

Q198 O.K. Now, so far as life rafts on board the vessel. How many did you have?

A One.

Q199 Was it a 10-manner?

A 10-man.

Q200 O.K. And what brand was that?

A A Zodiac.

Q201 Is that your own raft or was that a raft from, hired.

A Yeah, that's my own raft.

Q202 O.K. And that was checked prior to the race? It's annual - - -

A Service.

Q202 - - - service, yeah.

A Yeah. I mean, it's a brand new raft.

Q203 O.K.

A You know, when I bought the boat, I said in January, it landed here in January.

Q204 Yeah.

A All new equipment was, was purchased and the first race that we did was in March.

Q205 Right.

A Yeah, the end of March, and so we, it was all new safety equipment, so. That was a brand new life raft, it was eight months old.

Q206 Yeah. Now, where was that stowed during the race?

A We stow that in a locker just off the cockpit on the starboard side.

Q207 Right. And what's the weight of that raft, do you know, offhand?

A Weight of the raft, that's a good question. It's probably 40 kilos.

Q208 Yeah.

A 50 kilos, maximum. Yeah, probably around 40.

Q209 Well, I believe that if a raft is over 44 kilos, it should be stowed above deck.

A Right.

Q210 By rules.

A Yeah.

Q211 Due to, apparently the law's so that one person has to be able to carry that raft from the bottom of the boat to the top of the boat.

A Yeah.

Q212 If it's in excess of 44, it then has to go on top of the - - -

A O.K. There was a fair bit of discussion about this with - - -

Q213 Yeah.

A - - - the CYC and the safety officers there - - -

Q214 Yeah.

A - - - as to what constituted below deck - - -

Q215 Yes.

A - - - and on deck. So they spent a bit of time looking at this locker which is, you know, it's not below - - -

Q216 Yeah.

A - - - so it's not in the main cabin.

Q217 Yeah.

A Neither is it sitting on the top - - - - -

Q218 Top deck.

A - - - top of the deck.

Q219 Yeah.

A So it's sort of a little bit - - -

Q220 Yes.

A - - - of both really.

Q221 Yeah.

A But they were satisfied that we could access it adequately.

Q222 That's fine. O.K. Now, is there anything you'd like to add to this interview that, that you consider appropriate so far as future racing is, you know, races are concerned, and Hobart's concerned. Any views that you have, ideas, any comments you'd like to make?

A Um - - -

Q223 Any dissatisfaction or -?

A No.

Q224 Certainly weather, you've mentioned, you don't think that was particularly good.

A No, it was, actually, you know, I thought it was a little bit trite, you know, it wasn't seriously done, it was a little bit too jovial, you know. I remember, I mean it's Boxing Day and everyone's sort of in a party mood.

Q225 Right.

A But, yeah, it was just a little bit, you know, too light-hearted.

Q226 Yeah.

A I don't know.

Q227 O.K. While you're thinking, perhaps I could ask you this.

A Yeah.

Q228 Did you or any of your crew attend a flare and life raft demonstration at the CYC sometime before the race which was put on? Or are you aware of it?

A We didn't attend it. I recall, yeah, now whether it was before - - -

Q229 Yeah.

A - - - or after.

Q230 Yeah, it was before.

A It was before?

Q231 Yeah.

A No.

Q232 So you're aware of it?

A Yeah.

Q233 How were you made aware of that, do you know? Do you recall? Was it in a written form or an oral statement made?

A I'm not sure, you know. When you're down at the club and there are different things - - -

Q234 Yeah.

A - - - you know, you've got a regular newsletter from the club - - -

Q235 Yes.

A - - - and, I'm pretty sure it was actually through a newsletter from the club.

Q236 Right, O.K.

A One thing I can tell you, though, subsequently, when I've had my life raft serviced, which I have - - -

Q237 Yeah.

A - - - I went there and watched it opened, watched it inflated and talked to the guys that service it, about how to use it - - -

Q238 Yeah.

A - - - so I know how to use it.

Q239 Yeah.

A And I've seen it now inflated and got in it.

Q240 So, well that's my next question actually, the reason for my next question. Have you or any of your crew ever, ever used the life raft? Employed a life raft?

A In a real life situation?

Q241 Real life situation?

A I don't believe so.

Q242 What about flares?

A I don't know. Tony Kirby might have.

Q243 Right.

A He might.

Q244 O.K.

A I know he's been wrecked, so he's lost a boat.

Q245 Right, O.K.

A But that was on the shore, so - - -

Q246 Right.

A So I think he just jumped out of the boat and walked across on the rocks to land.

Q247 O.K. Now, during the race, the part you were involved in the race, did you hear any Maydays?

A I recall hearing a Mayday.

Q248 Do you know who it was from?

A No, I don't.

Q249 O.K.

A And I guess, yeah, I might say something about that. You know, there was an enormous amount of traffic
- - -

Q250 Yeah.

A - - - on the radio, and you know, I remember thinking at one stage, I was, because, you know, clearly there was a lot of terrible things happening - - -

Q251 Yeah.

A - - - to boats. And, and I remember thinking about Team Jaguar. Team Jaguar was on the bloody radio and they were clearly not in a life-threatening situation.

Q252 M'mm.

A And they were getting, using up all this radio space you know, trying to get a tow.

Q253 Right.

A And - - -

Q254 What, frivolous talk was there?

A Well, I mean, obviously they were in trouble, but there were other people in a whole lot more trouble.

Q255 Yeah.

A And, and, you know, Team Jag, you know, was taking up a lot of time on the radio.

Q256 Yeah.

A But, what struck me was the lack of a second channel.

Q257 Yeah.

A And it would have been a lot better, and this is something I suggested when we were interviewed by the CYC - - -

Q258 M'mm.

A - - - for their, their investigation, that, that a second channel should have been opened and used, you know. 2524 for instance, you know.

Q259 Mm.

A Because, you know, 4403 was just, just inundated - - -

Q260 Mm.

A - - - you know. It was very difficult for people to communicate. The other thing was, of course, that we wound up relaying for some boats - - -

Q261 Right. Which boats

A - - - radio messages. I can't - - -

Q262 That's all right.

A Tony, Tony will remember because he was actually the radio operator and doing the relaying. Clearly, some boats didn't have the, the correct radio installations, you know.

Q263 Right.

A Radios weren't performing for one reason or another. I don't know.

Q264 Mm.

A But communication was a problem.

Q265 Yeah, I think it was a major problem.

A Yeah.

Q266 O.K. Is there anything else that you can think of

worth mentioning?

A Only a general statement. You know, I, you know, I've got nothing but admiration for the, you know, the way the race was conducted and, like, the conduct, say, of Lew Carter - - -

Q267 Mm.

A - - - on the radio relay vessel, you know, I thought was fantastic.

Q268 Mm.

A And, you know, I'll just repeat what I said to the CYC. You know, I hate to see any sort of witch hunt go on.

Q269 Mm.

A I don't think it really is a case of apportioning blame to anybody for what happened. I'm, you can't hold somebody responsible for, you know, the vagaries of the weather.

Q270 That's right.

A You know.

Q271 That's right.

A Some comments about, also, cutting the race off and stopping the race in the middle, just, they're crazy, because when you're out there, you're out there. You can't sort of, say, blow the whistle and walk off the pitch.

Q272 No, that's right.

A It doesn't work like that.

Q273 Exactly, exactly.

A So, no, apart from that I haven't really got any other

comments. I'm sure when I walk out of here I will, but

-

Q274 You will. O.K. The time on my watch is now 2.09pm.
This interview is now concluded.

INTERVIEW CONCLUDED