

INQUEST INTO THE DEATHS IN THE 1998 SYDNEY TO HOBART YACHT RACE

STATEMENT OF HANS SOMMER

On 29 June 2000 I, **HANS SOMMER** of Unit 9, 12 Kareela Road, Cremorne, in the State of New South Wales, company director, say:

Involvement with the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia ("CYCA")

1. I have been a member of the CYCA for approximately 14 years and commenced sailing when I joined. I purchased my first yacht 12 years ago and became involved in offshore sailing. For the past 12 years I have regularly participated in short offshore and short passage racing. I have not done a lot of long ocean racing and in particular, I have not sailed in a Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race ("SHYR").
2. I have been a member of the CYCA Board of Directors ("the board") since July 1994. In July 1998 I was elected Vice Commodore and still hold that position. By virtue of my position as Vice Commodore, I am Chairman of the CYCA Sailing Committee ("Sailing Committee") and the SHYR Race Committee ("Race Committee"). Prior to 1998 I had not been a member of the Sailing Committee or Race Committee.

CYCA's Sailing Management Structure

3. The CYCA's Memorandum and Articles of Association and By-Laws outline the CYCA's overall management structure. I refer to Volume 13A of the Brief of Evidence, which contains true copies of those documents. For convenience, I will briefly outline in the following paragraphs the CYCA's overall management structure and then, set out the roles of the Sailing Committee, Race Committee, Sailing Office and Race Management Team in the organisation and management of the SHYR.

The Board of Directors

4. The overall management and control of the business and affairs of the CYCA is vested in the board, which meets once a month. The board is elected by the CYCA's members at the Annual General Meeting in July each year and has 11 directors being 6 ordinary directors and 5 office-bearers, namely, the Commodore, Vice Commodore, two Rear Commodores and the Treasurer.
5. The board delegates some of its powers and functions to various committees including the Sailing Committee. Each committee has a director as the Chairman and sometimes other directors as non-executive members. The Chairman of each committee reports to the board at the monthly meetings and all committee decisions must be ratified by the board.
6. The board's decisions are generally implemented by the CYCA's General Manager, who is a member of the board. However, it is the practise that the Vice Commodore as Chairman of the Sailing Committee may instruct the Sailing Manager directly if necessary.

Sailing Committee

7. The Sailing Committee meets once a month and determines the CYCA's policies in relation to sailing and in particular, it considers:
 - (1) The types of races the CYCA should conduct;
 - (2) The rules and race documentation for CYCA races;
 - (3) The handicapping of CYCA races;
 - (4) The types of yachts that should be eligible to enter the various CYCA races;
and
 - (5) Any issues in relation to the management of CYCA races.
8. The Chairman of the Sailing Committee presents the minutes of the monthly meetings to the board for ratification. As a matter of practice, the minutes are checked by the Chairman and the Sailing Manager and circulated to board prior to the board meeting. If an issue of particular importance arises during a Sailing Committee meeting, the

Chairman will generally present a report on that issue to the board with the Sailing Committee's recommendation.

9. If the board is not satisfied with the Sailing Committee's recommendation for any reason and/or wishes further research to be undertaken on a particular issue, it will send it back to the Sailing Committee for further consideration/ research.
10. It is important to note at this point that the CYCA and hence, the Sailing Committee operates within an international sailing management hierarchy which prescribes the rules by which the CYCA must conduct races. That hierarchy is as follows:

International Level

The International Sailing Federation (ISAF) internationally co-ordinates and regulates sailing as a sport and as such, publishes the Racing Rules of Sailing ("RRS") under which all races must be conducted.

National Level

The Australian Yachting Federation (AYF), which is a member of ISAF, is the national governing body for sailing. The AYF publishes prescriptions and special regulations to the RRS which provide how the RRS are to be interpreted and applied by local clubs.

The AYF consists of various state associations including the Yachting Association of NSW, to which local clubs are affiliated.

Club Level

Local clubs, such as the CYCA, who wish to conduct races under the auspices of ISAF and AYF, must conduct those races in accordance with the RRS and the prescriptions and special regulations of the AYF. Local clubs are permitted to amend certain rules, however, those amendments must be approved by the AYF and published in the Notice of Race and Sailing Instructions for that race. Amendments are usually only made by local clubs to allow for the local conditions and requirements of a particular race.

Sailing Office

11. After the Sailing Committee's resolutions have been ratified by the board, the Sailing Office under the supervision of the Sailing Manager implements those resolutions and has the day to day responsibility for managing and conducting the CYCA's sailing activities.
12. As a matter of practice, the Chairman of the Sailing Committee will discuss issues that arise directly with the Sailing Manager and vice versa. If necessary, the Chairman will then refer those issues to the Sailing Committee for their consideration.

CYCA's Management of SHYR

13. In the following paragraphs is an outline of the manner in which the CYCA organises and manages the SHYR. In this regard, I note that the SHYR management chart in Volume 4.13 is incomplete and partially incorrect.

Sailing Committee

14. The Sailing Committee is responsible to the board for the overall conduct and management of the SHYR. However, it delegates the day to day pre-race planning and organisation to the Sailing Office and the race control/management to the Race Committee and more particularly the Race Management Team.
15. Consequently, the Sailing Committee's role in the SHYR is really one of determining the CYCA's policies in relation to the race and overseeing the preparations for the SHYR by reference to the Sailing Manager's regular reports to the committee throughout the year.
16. The Sailing Committee performs the following tasks in relation to the SHYR:
 - (1) Reviews the management and conduct of the preceding SHYR and assesses whether any alterations are desirable for the upcoming race based on recommendations received from the Sailing Manager/Race Director;
 - (2) Approves the sponsorship arrangements;

- (3) Reviews the Notice of Race and Sailing Instructions from the preceding SHYR and assesses whether any amendments are desirable for the upcoming race based on recommendations received from the Sailing Manager/Race Director;
 - (4) Approves the Notice of Race and Sailing Instructions prior to publishing;
 - (5) Appoints personnel/volunteers to perform safety checks. In addition, the Sailing Office generally has a measurer as a member of staff;
 - (6) Nominates the Race Committee, Jury and Race Management Team based on recommendations the Chairman receives from the Sailing Manager/ Race Director;
 - (7) Approves the involvement of organisations such as Young Endeavour, AMSA and the Bureau of Meteorology ("BoM") in the on water management of the SHYR; and
 - (8) Considers any issues which may arise in relation to the SHYR based on the regular report its receives from the Sailing Manager. For example, in 1998 the Sailing Committee considered:
 - (a) The Applications for *Sir Thomas Sopworth*, who wanted to enter with a crew of 16 minors and only 2 adults; *Jarkan*, who refused to supply documentation in relation to speed and stability; and *Noumea*, a New Caledonian yacht, which did not initially comply with the stability requirements; and
 - (b) The publication of an Addendum to the Notice of Race to include a CHS category.
17. In or about February 1998 the Sailing Committee nominated the following persons to be on Race Committee for the following reasons:
- Myself (Chairman) as I was the Vice Commodore and Chairman of the Sailing Committee.
- Bruce Rowley as he was General Manager of the CYCA, a member of the Sailing Committee and heavily involved in the budgeting for the SHYR and liaising with Telstra, the sponsor.

Phil Thompson as he was the Sailing Manager and Race Director and hence, responsible for day to day organisation and conduct of the SHYR.

Mark Robinson as he was the Sailing Administrator, CYCA measurer and a member of the Race Management Team.

Howard Elliott as he was an experienced sailor and juror with particular expertise in IMS scoring and communications and a member of the Race Management Team.

Robert Badenach as he was the immediate past Commodore of the Royal Yacht Club of Tasmania ("RYCT") and co-ordinated the Hobart end of the SHYR with Thompson.

David Boyes as he was the Commodore of the RYCT and was also involved in organising the Hobart end of the SHYR with Thompson.

18. At or about that time, the Sailing Committee also nominated the Race Management Team, which is in fact a subset of the Race Committee. The nominees for the Race Management Team were Phil Thompson (Race Director), Mark Robinson and Howard Elliott. It should be noted that Sam Hughes, the AMSA Liaison Officer based in the Race Control Centre ("RCC") with the Race Management Team throughout the race, is also considered an unofficial member of the Race Management Team.

Sailing Office

19. As I have indicated, the Sailing Committee delegates the pre-race planning and organisation of the SHYR to the Sailing Office. The delegated tasks include the following:
 - (1) Review of the management and conduct of the preceding SHYR including logistics, equipment and facilities, sponsorship and the involvement of authorities/ organisations such as AMSA and BoM;
 - (2) Review of the Notice of Race and Sailing Instructions from the preceding SHYR and drafting any necessary amendments;
 - (3) Gaining approval from the Yachting Association of NSW Racing Rules Committee and Sailing Committee to the Notice of Race and Sailing Instructions and thereafter, arranging distribution;
 - (4) Processing of Applications for Entry and Entry Forms;

- (5) Organising all facilities, support vessels and equipment required for the SHYR;
 - (6) Co-ordinating and liaising with authorities and organisations involved in the SHYR such as the Royal Volunteer Coastal Patrol, Young Endeavour, AMSA and BoM;
 - (7) Co-ordinating and liaising with volunteers and/or personnel involved in the SHYR including radio operators on the Radio Relay Vessel ("RRV");
 - (8) Researching and reporting to the Sailing Committee where issues arise warranting its attention. For example, the need for the inclusion of a CHS category;
 - (9) Drafting any necessary correspondence in relation to issues referred to the Sailing Committee for the Chairman's review and signature. For example, the correspondence with *Nokia* which was discussed in my police interview on 20 October 1999;
 - (10) Dealing with entrants enquiries and providing/distributing information in relation to the SHYR;
 - (11) Compiling data in relation to the entrants to enable the production of results;
 - (12) Arranging and co-ordinating the Pre-Race Briefing;
 - (13) Organising and co-ordinating the start of the SHYR; and
 - (14) Liaising with the RYCT in relation to the berthing of entrants in Hobart, the Hobart Telephone Information Centre, Radio Room, Race Information Centre and other necessary facilities.
20. I do not read all correspondence addressed to the Sailing Committee. Correspondence addressed to the Sailing Committee is given to the Sailing Manager to deal with. However, if a letter is contentious or otherwise important, the Sailing Manager will refer it to me and, if necessary, I will then refer the matter to the Sailing Committee for their consideration.
21. In the months prior to the 1998 SHYR, I frequently discussed with Thompson, the Sailing Manager, how the Sailing Office was progressing in its preparations and/or problems it was experiencing with entrants. I recall communicating directly with some of the entrants which were perceived to not be co-operating with the Sailing Office in

providing their entry documentation. For example, *Nokia*. I felt that, as Chairman of the Sailing Committee, I may have more weight in requesting their co-operation.

22. I was not aware of the circumstances surrounding the entry of *Business Post Naiad* and in particular, the problems relating to its IMS Certificate until after the SHYR. I believe that either Peter Bush or Hugo Van Kretschmar first told me about the problem some time in 1999. I am now aware that the initial IMS certificate submitted in relation to *Business Post Naiad* was not current and that subsequently a current certificate was received by the Sailing Office which did not comply with the SHYR stability requirement.

Race Committee

23. The Sailing Committee delegates the responsibility for the management and conduct of the SHYR from the start of the race to its conclusion to the Race Committee. However, the Race Committee does not assume the day to day control of the race, this responsibility is delegated to the Race Management Team.
24. The Race Committee and the Race Management Team are all present in Sydney for the start of the SHYR and progressively move to Hobart from early on 27 December. The Race Management Team is fully operational in the RCC in the RYCT from approximately midday on 27 December.
25. Each member of the Race Committee has a different role in the SHYR and not all members are involved in the hands on management of the race. The roles of the individual members of the 1998 Race Committee were intended to be as follows:

Hans Sommer

My role was to be largely public relations and liaising with yachts and sponsors.

Bruce Rowley

Rowley's role was to be similar to mine. He was to be responsible for liaising with sponsors and being their host for the duration of the race.

Phill Thompson

Thompson, as Race Director, was to be responsible for the hands on conduct and management of the race.

Mark Robinson

Robinson, as a member of the Race Management Team, was to be involved in the conduct of the race with particular responsibility for the IMS scoring, results and the SHYR website.

Howard Elliott

Elliott, as a member of the Race Management Team, was also to be involved in the conduct of the race with particular responsibility in relation to IMS scoring and results.

Robert Badenach and David Boyes

Badenach and Boyes were to be responsible for organising and co-ordinating the berthing of yachts in Hobart, RYCT Telephone Information Centre, the dockside Race Information Centre, Radio Room and other facilities in RYCT.

26. Despite the day to day management of the SHYR being delegated to the Race Management Team and there being no schedule for the Race Committee to convene as a committee during the SHYR, the Race Committee was available if necessary to convene and make decisions about the conduct of the race and/or deal with any issues which arose. This would have been arranged by Thompson telephoning me on my mobile telephone and I would have then telephoned any committee members which were not already present in the RCC.
27. Additionally, members of the Race Committee typically visit the RCC a couple time a day throughout the race to talk to the Race Management Team, listen to Skeds and discuss the progress of the SHYR generally.
28. The Race Committee also meets on 25 December to construct the IMS handicap course.

Race Management Team

29. The Sailing Committee and Race Committee delegate the race management/race control for the SHYR to the Race Management Team under the supervision of the Race Director. Since 1995 the Race Director has as a matter of practice been the Sailing Manager.

30. The Race Director assumes control of the SHYR from the start of the race although the Race Committee is available for the Race Director to consult if any issue of particular importance arises during the race. As such, the Race Director and his team have the following responsibilities after the start of the SHYR:

- (1) Co-ordinating and controlling the on and off water conduct of the race;
- (2) Monitoring Skeds;
- (3) Monitoring weather forecasts received from BoM;
- (4) Collating position reports and producing results after each Sked;
- (5) Liaising with the AMSA representative based in the RCC;
- (6) Liaising and co-ordinating with the RRV, Media Centre and other organisations/authorities and personnel involved in the SHYR; and
- (7) Publication of final results and post-race review in relation to matters which could be improved for the next SHYR.

Bureau of Meteorology ("BoM")

31. I was not aware of any formal protocol in relation to communications between the CYCA and BoM. My understanding was that BoM would provide special race forecasts for the SHYR and if they thought something dramatic was going to happen to the weather, they would contact Thompson or someone else from the Race Management Team or Race Committee.

1998 SHYR

24 December 1998

32. On 24 December 1998 I attended the pre-race briefing at the CYCA along with the other members of the Race Committee/ Race Management Team. I recall during that briefing, yachts who had not submitted all their entry documentation were given a warning that it must be submitted by a certain time or they would not be allowed to race. I do not recall the names of any yachts on that list.

25 December 1998

33. On 25 December 1998 I attended the CYCA to plot the course construction for the IMS handicapping. This was based on a weather forecast Thompson had received from BoM that day. To the best of my recollection, Thompson, Robinson and myself were present. However, there may have been other members of the Race Committee present including Elliott and Rowley.
34. I do not recall the specifics of the weather forecast received from BoM. However, I do recall that it did not contain anything to my mind that was alarming or unusual for a SHYR. At the time of preparing this statement I was shown that forecast and I am still of that view.

26 December 1998

35. On 26 December 1998, early in the morning, I reviewed the course construction for the IMS Handicapping with Thompson at the CYCA. Thompson had obtained an updated forecast from BoM prior to our meeting. We reviewed the course construction in light of that updated forecast and given that there were no major changes from the day before, decided it was unnecessary to alter the course construction. As far as I am aware, Thompson then published the handicaps for the race.
36. Following the above meeting, I walked around the CYCA and the marina speaking to various crews and sponsors until my family arrived. At sometime prior to 10:30am my family and I went to Darling Harbour and boarded a boat chartered by Telstra, which I believe was called *Aussie Magic*, and went out on the harbour for the start of the race.
37. Our boat returned to Darling Harbour at around 3:00pm and then, I went to the CYCA with my family for a few drinks. For the remainder of the day, I looked after my family and talked with the SHYR sponsors.
38. On 26 December 1998 I was not aware that BoM had issued a storm warning. I did not hear the 20.00 Sked nor did I see the forecasts issued after my meeting with Thompson earlier that morning. I do not usually see the weather forecasts BoM forward to the CYCA, RCC and RRV.

27 December 1998

39. On 27 December 1998 I flew to Hobart at about midday with Rowley. I arrived in Hobart in the late afternoon and checked into my hotel. I then went to the RCC to see the Race Management Team. I arrived at the RCC between 5.00 and 6.00pm.
40. I recall that Thompson, Hughes, Elliott and Robinson were in the RCC when I arrived. It may be that other members of the Race Committee were also present but I cannot now recall. I am uncertain whether Elizabeth Drolz, Thompson's wife, was in the RCC at that time. However, she definitely arrived later in the evening and assisted with the recording of events as they occurred.
41. Prior to that time I was unaware of the deterioration in the weather conditions. After arriving at the RCC, I became aware that the fleet had reported very strong winds, some yachts were in serious trouble and that a man overboard had been reported on *Kingurra*. From my conversations with the Race Management Team, I quickly grasped there was a crisis on the water. It was my view that the Race Management Team was operating as could have been expected in response to the situation and appeared to be coping well.
42. At or about the time of my arrival in the RCC, I was informed by someone in the Race Management Team that they had instructed the RRV to broadcast a message to the fleet urging the fleet to consider the weather being experienced and to take appropriate action for the safety of their crew.
43. When I arrived Sam Hughes was liaising with AMSA and reporting to Thompson as he either received information or AMSA required information in relation to the fleet. The Race Management Team was receiving information on the fleet from AMSA through Hughes, the RRV and the Radio Room which was next door to the RCC in the RYCT. The RCC did not at that time have yachtcomms permanently on, being the telephone link up with Channel 4483.
44. After I arrived in the RCC, I began assisting the Race Management Team. I answered telephone calls from relatives if Hughes or Elliott were on the telephone. However, it had been previously decided by the Race Management Team that it was preferable if Elliott and Hughes handled most of the inquiries from relatives of yachts thought to be in serious trouble.

45. Not long after my arrival in the RCC I spoke to Peter Bush in Sydney about sending somebody to Eden to assist retiring yachts. I recall that Greg Halls was suggested. It was agreed that Halls would be asked to go to Eden. I spoke to Halls on a couple of occasions after he arrived in Eden later that evening. However, I do not recall the content of those conversations.

46. When I arrived at the RCC the Race Management Team were already recording on pieces of paper attached to the windows:

- (1) The events relating to yachts that were in trouble;
- (2) The yachts that had retired and whether they had arrived safely at their planned destination; and
- (3) The yachts that had missed skeds.

The pieces of paper were ordered in priority/urgency and moved as events required. When an issue was resolved, the yacht was crossed off or the piece of paper relating to that yacht was taken down from the window.

47. From the afternoon of 27 December 1998, the Race Management Team and the members of the Race Committee that were present in the RCC were primarily performing the following tasks:

- (1) Recording incidents/events as they occurred and thereby, keeping abreast of the status of the fleet and the yachts in trouble;
- (2) Co-ordinating communication/information between AMSA, the RRV and the fleet. This was mostly done by Hughes, Elliott and Thompson;
- (3) Keeping the relatives of the yachts in trouble informed; and
- (4) Continuing with the routine co-ordination and management of the SHYR, which Thompson did with his team.

48. At some stage during the evening of 27 December 1998 or in the early hours of 28 December 1998, I recall Hughes said words to the following effect:

Hughes said: "My counterpart in Canberra has asked that you consider cancelling the race. However, do not make a final decision without confirmation from AMSA first".

49. At that time Thompson, Elliott, Robinson, myself and possibly Hughes and Rowley discussed whether we should abandon the race. I cannot recall the specifics of what said during that discussion. However, I do recall that Thompson rang BoM and got an update on the weather and that there was a consensus that we should not abandon the race. This consensus was arrived at for the following reasons:
- (1) It would make no difference to the majority of the fleet if we called off the race as they were already in the storm and we could not remove them from that situation;
 - (2) From the weather update Thompson had received on the telephone from BoM, we understood that the worst of the storm was heading away from the fleet and hence, that continuing in the same direction was probably safer than trying to turn back to Eden;
 - (3) Each yacht was in the best position to assess how they should respond to the storm taking into account the condition of their crew and yacht; and
 - (4) The chances were that if we called off the race, the fleet would instinctively turn back towards Sydney and hence, into the storm when it was safer for them to keep sailing towards Hobart.
50. After the above discussion, we told Hughes that we were of the view that there was no advantage in abandoning the race and that it may make the situation worse for the above reasons. As far as I am aware, Hughes then conveyed our decision and our reasons to AMSA by telephone. Shortly thereafter Hughes said words to the following effect:
- Hughes said: "Canberra no longer think there is any advantage in calling off the race and agree with your decision".
51. Abandoning the race was not discussed again. If AMSA had directed the RCC to abandon the race, we would have complied with their directive.
52. In retrospect, I am of the view we made the right decision in not abandoning the race as returning to Sydney was not the safest course for the majority of the fleet. In other words, I believe the reasons which led us to make the decision were correct.

53. At the time of preparing this statement I had the opportunity of reading Hughes' police interview dated 20 July 1999 and Brian Willey's police interview dated 9 November 1999. In relation to Hughes' interview, I agree that it was too late at that time to abandon the race, the majority of the fleet was already in the storm.
54. In relation to Hughes and Willey versions of their conversations in relation to abandoning the race, I am personally unaware of the content of their conversations. However, as far as I was aware Hughes conveyed our views on abandoning the race to AMSA and they agreed with those views.
55. At some stage during the evening of 27 December 1998 and the early hours of 28 December 1998, I also recall Hughes advised us not to release any information until it had been approved and confirmed by AMSA.
56. At or about that time, I recall speaking to Colin Wilson and Jon Meyer (the volunteers assisting Peter Bush in Sydney) about their concerns that the RCC was not releasing information about yachts and the relatives were hearing about the race on the radio and television rather than directly from the CYCA.
57. It was difficult to deal with complaints from relatives and the volunteers in Sydney as we had clear instructions from AMSA not to release information until they told us to. Despite this problem, throughout the race there was a flow of telephone calls and information between CYCA Sydney and the RCC.

28 December 1998

58. I recall hearing the Sked at 03.00 on 28 December 1998 and recall being aware at or about that time 3 people were winched off *Sword of Orion* with the balance to be picked up in daylight.
59. Also at about that time AMSA released the name of the man overboard from *Sword of Orion* being Glynn Charles. At that point, Rowley and I tried to make contact with Glynn's mother in England. However, we were unable to contact her because a number was missing from her telephone number on the crew list. Consequently, we drove to the police station to obtain assistance in contacting Mrs Charles. The police could not assist us, but they spoke to Scotland Yard who subsequently informed Mrs Charles Glynn was missing.

60. After being at the police station for approximately 30 minutes, Rowley and I returned to the RCC and sometime thereafter I returned to my hotel to have some sleep. It must have been approximately 6.00am as it was daylight when I got back to the hotel.
61. I returned to the RCC before midday. I do not recall who was at the RCC when I returned. My memory of this day is not as vivid as the afternoon/night of 27 December 1998.
62. I recall hearing the 14.00 Sked, notifying the relatives of the crew members in the first life raft from *Winston Churchill* that they had been rescued, Hughes advising Mrs Charles the search for Glynn had been terminated and that at about 11.00pm the second life raft from *Winston Churchill* was found with only 2 crew members.
63. I returned to my hotel sometime after 11.00pm on 28 December 1998.
64. Throughout 27 and 28 December 1998, I had my mobile telephone with me which was always switched on. I cannot recall whether I turned my mobile off when I went back to the hotel for a few hours sleep, I may have.

29 December 1998 onwards

65. On 29 December 1998 I returned to the RCC prior to 8.00am as I went out on the water to see *Sayonara* cross the finish line at approximately that time.
66. From that time on I greeted yachts as they arrived and only visited the RCC occasionally as by this time the on water crisis was largely over.
67. At some stage on 29 December 1998 we had a debrief in the RCC. Attached and marked "A" is true copy of the notes prepared from that debrief. Those notes accord with my recollection of our discussions during the debrief.
68. The last yacht arrived on 1 January 1999, which I greeted. From that time onwards I look after Glynn Charles' sister and cousin, who were in Hobart, and assisted with the memorial service.

Implementation of CYCA's SHYR Race Review Report ("HRR")

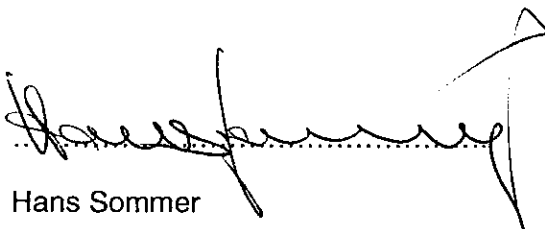
69. After the HRR was handed down, the board appointed Rowley, Thompson and myself to implement the HRR recommendations. I am aware that Peter Bush has outlined the manner in which the HRR recommendations have been implemented. Therefore, I will not repeat that information in my statement.

70. I refer to page 57 of the HRR which states in the final sentence that I was unsure of the precise responsibilities of the Race Committee. This sentence as it is written could be misunderstood. In 1998 I had a clear understanding of the role of the Race Committee within the CYCA's SHYR management structure. However, I did not have a clear understanding of the Race Committee/ Race Management Team's role in AMSA's co-ordination of on-water search and rescue operations ("SAR") or AMSA's SAR procedures generally including the notification of next of kin. In this regard, I understood that AMSA co-ordinated the SAR and that the RCC supported AMSA by ensuring the flow of information between AMSA and the fleet via the RRV. However, I was unsure if the RCC should be doing anything further to support AMSA.

Police Interview

71. I have reviewed my interview with the Police on 20 October 1999 and have clarified some of my answers in the above paragraphs. I also wish to add the following comment in relation to my answer to question 52. Although I am not aware of the technical relationship between the stability index and the limit of positive stability, I am aware that these figures relate to different methods of calculating stability.

Dated : 29 June 2000



Hans Sommer

SEARCH AND RESCUE PROBLEMS / ISSUES

(Collated following debrief held 1500 hrs 29/12/98.)

Present: H. Sommer, Sam Hughes, Howard Elliott, Phil Thompson, Mark Robinson, E Drolz

Please note the issues are not in order of priority.

Next of Kin

- notification procedure
- NOK information needs to be checked for accuracy and include full name and relationship of NOK.

Crew Lists

- include crew addresses
- two contact persons
- ensure contact persons have all crew NOK details

Information

- accuracy and slowness of information forwarded to Race Centre
- lack of regular, consistent information from external agencies eg Eden Coastal Patrol

Media Issues

- information being released from multiple sources eg AMSA
- reportage of inaccurate and premature information
- negative image of race management created by the perception of our lack of information as a result of the preceding points

Communications

- secure / better communications channel to radio relay vessel
- Telstra Yachtcom access/usage
- radio reception not adequate
- position reporting system relies on too many variables

Process / Procedure Issues

- no formal 'disaster' control plan / process for Race Control on place
- knowledge deficit of AMSA process
- lack of inclusion of CYC role in AMSA process
- 'missed sched' procedure – time delay considered lengthy
- standard operations procedure manual required for all centres

Crew Procedure Issues

- Crews not following standard procedures such as listening watches (perceived) and 'missed sched' procedure

Race Centre Issues

- ? too many - CYCA, Eden, Hobart
- difficulty controlling multiple centres
- deputy backup required for AMSA personnel
- more secure office environment required

Eden Base

- Role clarification and duty statement required for personnel
- Formalised processes and procedures required

Safety

- review personal safety equipment to include mandatory items such as inflatable floatation jackets and personal EPIRBs