

DETECTIVE SENIOR CONSTABLE GRAY

Q1 This is an electronically recorded interview between Detective Senior Constable Stewart Grey and Mr John Bayley at Helimed One Headquarters, at Traralgon, Victoria, on Tuesday, the 20th of April, 1999. Also present, seated to my right, is Senior Constable David Upston, from the New South Wales Water Police. The time by my watch now is 10.19am. Just for the record Mr Bayley, could you just please state your full name? Do you agree there

A John Bayley.

Q2 Your date of birth?

A 27th of the eighth, '56.

Q3 And your current address?

A Post office box 2043, Traralgon.

Q4 And your occupation?

A Ambulance officer.

Q5 O.K. As I already explained to you, Senior Constable Upston and myself are making inquiries in relation to the 1998 Sydney to Hobart Race, and part of our task is to speak to persons involved and organisations involved in the rescues, during that period of time, which was around the 27th, 28th of December last year. So, basically, what we're going to do is speak to you about your role, within the Helimed service during that time. If we could just start by getting some background experience in the Victorian Ambulance Service. How long?

A Approximately that I have been in the Ambulance Service for eighteen and a half years.

Q6 Eighteen and a half?

A Yep.

Q7 And what position do you hold in the ambulance service?

A Basically it's classified as an ambulance officer, paramedic.

Q8 O.K.

A The name change is only recent.

Q9 Right. Now, you, when you did commence duties with Helimed?

A Well, we had done, I have done work with Helimed in the past, but recently, as an observer, we did a course about two and a half years ago, to be trained as a Helimed observer, which was a three day course, then we actually did the ..... and our job is to be an observer on the surf and rescue missions.

Q10 O.K. Now, so far as medical work's concerned, are you involved with that on the actual helicopter as well?

A No.

Q11 In addition to observing?

A My role is purely as an observer and I would be sitting opposite the pilot, in the front, and observing out of the helicopter - - -

Q12 O.K.

A - - - on a search.

Q13 O.K. Now, if I could take you to the 27th, 28th of December, you look like you've got a log book there in

front of you, you might like to take us through what happened, so far as you were concerned, or involved.

A Basically, I was notified early on the 26th, if I can recall that, that there was a problem with the yacht race and I might be actually called in to observe. I left there, ..... TV at 4.30. I assume that was the 27th. I arrived there at Malacoona at 5.48. Our first sortie was at 6.52, lasting for two hours, 32 minutes, arriving back at 9.24.

Q14 And do you recall much or most of that sortie, was that .....

A What I can recall, I can't be actually certain - - -

Q15 Yeah.

A - - - there's nothing can log here. I think I can remember there were two people rescued from a boat. I can't recall the boat.

Q16 O.K. What can you tell us in relation to the seas or the weather conditions, for most of that rescue? Do you recall anything about that?

A Well, my experience being out on the water is limited, so, I can't really compare it.

Q17 Mm.

A The water was very, there was a lot of white caps, and the waves were still quite large.

Q18 Right.

A And there was a wind, but what the speed was I - - -

Q19 Yep.

A - - - I have no idea.

Q20 Did you have, did you encounter any difficulties yourself, whilst conducting observing duties on the chopper?

A No.

Q21 Now with the other two sorties, do you recall those?

A There was one other sortie I did, that was at 10.55 to 13.29, or 13.27. That lasted two hours, 34 minutes. I'm uncertain if that was at that same day or the following day, and basically, that was just going out, searching and coming back. I think that was basically looking for a body. And we didn't find anything in that search.

Q22 Right. The conditions that you were involved in the search, would you describe them as being above moderate conditions, like, you know, were they extreme conditions, so far as the helicopters involved?

A I couldn't comment.

Q23 Have you flown in conditions like that before?

A I've only done three rescues on the helicopter, or three searches.

Q24 Right.

A And I really couldn't compare it.

Q25 O.K. At any stage during the rescues that you were involved in, were, did you consider the situation to be dangerous?

A (NO AUDIBLE REPLY)

Q26 Personally?

A Personally, depends what you classify as dangerous.

Q27 All right, well did you have any - - -

A No, I couldn't comment, you know, I really couldn't comment.

Q28 All right, to put it to the layman, did you have any fears within yourself, involved in these rescues?

A No.

Q29 O.K. That's fine. Are there any other things you'd like to bring to our attention that you have views about, in relation to the yacht race, or anything that may assist you in the future, or your crew in the future, so far as search and rescue is concerned, observer?

A This is general talk afterwards. Possibly, that more people on the yacht races, when they're wearing their, I think there should be a standard jacket, standard colour, and on the standard jacket they should have their own personal, what's it called, a -

Q30 Beacon?

A Beacon.

Q31 Locating beacon, is that what - - -

A Locating beacon.

Q31 - - - you're saying? Yep.

A And that should be either, whether it can be done, I'm not too certain, but it should be either activated by the water, and the person wearing it.

Q32 O.K. Dave?

SENIOR CONSTABLE UPSTON

Q33 As an observer on the helicopters, did you have any

difficulty at the particular time of the sorties that you had of locating the vessels?

A Like I said, my experience is limited, so when I was looking out, it was difficult, I mean the seas were, there was a lot of white caps, so, my experience is limited in searching. So, it was difficult sort of

- - -

Q34 Mm.

A - - - finding anything in, on the white caps.

Q35 Mm.

A Especially a small item.

Q36 Did you find that the yachts blended particularly with the seas?

A (NO AUDIBLE REPLY)

Q37 The colour of the yachts may have blended with the seas and made it more difficult for you to observe them?

A Couldn't comment.

Q38 O.K.

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Anything else?

SENIOR CONSTABLE UPSTON

No, I'm right.

DETECTIVE SENIOR CONSTABLE GRAY

Q39 O.K. The time is now 10.26, this interview .....

INTERVIEW CONCLUDED