

'DETECTIVE SENIOR CONSTABLE GRAY

Q1 This is an electronically recorded interview between Detective Senior Constable Stuart Gray and Mr Hans Sommer at the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia in Sydney, Rushcutters Bay, on Wednesday, the 20th of October, 1999. Also present seated to my right is Senior Constable David Upston from the New South Wales Water Police. The time on my watch now is 10.26am. For the purpose of the record, Mr Sommer, could you please state your full name?

A Hans Sommer.

Q2 Your date of birth?

A The 14th of June, 1939.

Q3 Your address?

A Flat 9, number 12 Karela Road, Cremorne Point.

Q4 And your occupation?

A Company director.

Q5 O.K. As I already explained to you prior to the commencement, commencement of this record of interview, Senior Constable Upston and I are making inquiries in relation to the 1998 Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race and today we're here to speak to you about your role as the chairman on the race committee for the 1998 Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race. Do you understand that?

A Yes.

Q6 O.K. Could we just start by getting some background so far as sailing for you? How long have you been sailing for?

A I've been a member of this yacht club for I think about 14 years and I've been sailing all that time. I've had some lessons at a couple of, the local sailing school here with the club and another sailing school and I bought a boat about 12 years ago and got into, into an offshore sailing, but mainly short offshore, short racing and short passage races to Pittwater and so on and I haven't done a lot of long ocean races.

Q7 O.K. Have you in fact sailed in a Sydney to Hobart race before?

A No, I haven't.

Q8 O.K. What positions do you hold in the club currently?

A Vice Commodore.

Q9 Right.

A And that also automatically gives me the position of chairman of the sailing committee.

Q10 O.K. And would you be moving to the position of commodore in the near future?

A That depends on the members, if I get nominated and elected.

Q11 Right.

A I have no choice in that.

Q12 That's a nominated process?

A Yeah.

Q13 O.K. Now if I take you back to 1998, you just said that because you're the Vice Commodore you automatically receive the position of race chairman?

A No, sailing committee chairman.

Q14 Sailing committee chairman, O.K. So that's the position you held last year?

A Yes.

Q15 And what is actually the role so far as being the sailing committee chairman? What's your role?

A It's to basically oversee the policies of the club in regard to the yacht racing we do, what kind of racing we do, what rules we apply, what kind of boats we allow to race and, and the running of the various races that happen in this club.

Q16 O.K.

A And there's a number of people on this, on this board that help in it.

Q17 O.K. And is it the case that in fact last year for the Sydney-Hobart race there were the following members on the race committee, well, it's called a race committee when the race started for the Sydney to Hobart. Is that correct?

A Well, there is, there are two different committees.

Q18 Yes.

A The sailing committee is, goes all year round.

Q19 Yes.

A The race committee is appointed by the sailing committee and it really comes into play after the race starts.

Q20 Right.

A Because those, that's a smaller group of people who are more mobile.

Q21 Right. O.K. So it's the case that after the start of the 1998 Sydney to Hobart the race committee formed, so to speak, and that consisted of yourself, Howard Elliot, Robert Badenack from Tasmania?

A Yes.

Q22 David Boyes from Tasmania?

A Yes.

Q23 Bruce Rowley - - -

A Yes.

Q23 - - - who used to be the general manager here?

A Correct.

Q24 Mark Robinson from the sailing office?

A Yes.

Q25 And Phil Thompson from the, the sailing manager?

A Correct.

Q26 Is that correct? O.K. At any time prior to the 1998 Sydney to Hobart Yacht did you as a group meet and discuss any issues so far as the Sydney to Hobart race was concerned?

A No, we didn't, we, we only had a meeting to, to do a course construction for the I.M.S. regulations for the actual race.

Q27 Right.

A And not all of us were in that meeting.

Q28 O.K.

SENIOR CONSTABLE UPSTON

Q29 Hans, could you just keep your voice up a little bit, please, because of the building construction that's going on here, please?

A Yeah, that's fine.

Q30 Thank you.

DETECTIVE SENIOR CONSTABLE GRAY

Q31 Now so far as the collection of entry forms for the 1998 Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race did you have any input for that administration?

A No.

Q32 None whatsoever?

A No.

Q33 O.K. Are you aware of the procedures in which vessels are vetted to ensure they comply for the race?

A Not totally, no.

Q34 What - - -

A I rely on the, the staff - - -

Q35 Yes.

A - - - the sailing office staff to do all that because they're all experienced people.

Q36 O.K. And if there's a problem in the sailing office do they come to see you about it?

A If there's an issue, yes, I believe so.

Q37 And did it occur last year that in fact a number of issues were raised with you with certain problems - -  
-

A No.

Q37 - - - with boats?

A Not that I'm aware of.

Q38 O.K. I'll show you a letter which is dated 25th of November, 1998 with your signature on the bottom.

A Yes, that would be, that would be a letter, I won't read it all.

Q39 Yeah, certainly.

A That would be a letter that the sailing office wrote -  
- -

Q40 Yes.

A - - - on my behalf which I then checked - - -

Q41 Right.

A - - - and signed and it was sent out - - -

Q42 O.K.

A - - - over an issue with the yacht Nokia.

Q43 Right. So - - -

A But I don't remember the specifics of the issue.

Q44 No, that's fine. But at least there are some occasions last year where there may have been problems with, with certain boats - - -

A Yes.

Q44 - - - and in fact a letter would be compiled on your behalf, you would read that letter, sign it as the chairman and that would go to the, the boat in question.

A Correct.

Q45 O.K. At any stage were you involved in checking applications for any reason other than vetting them?

A No.

Q46 O.K. Are you aware of the requirements of boats for the Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race so far as the various paperwork, that is, safety certificates, crew lists, I.M.S. certificates and there are a number of other - -  
-

A Yes, I'm aware of those.

Q47 O.K. And is it the case that before a boat can actually enter the race it must comply with those documents?

A Correct.

Q48 O.K. Now in the case of the I.M.S. certificate in fact there are calculations on those certificates which relate to speed and handicap?

A Correct.

Q49 Is that correct? And there are also calculations in relation to stability index - - -

A Correct.

Q49 - - - and calculated limit of positive stability?

A Yes.

Q50 And I'll just show you one of those certificates. You can see here that we have a stability index.

A Yes.

Q51 And we have calculated limit of positive stability.

A Yes.

Q52 O.K. Are you able to tell me what the importance is in relation to those two figures, not technically but what  
- - -

A I, I can't.

Q53 O.K.

A I can't, I think a, a yacht designer can best answer that.

Q54 Right. Are you aware that the Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race requires a minimum stability of 115 degrees?

A Yes.

Q55 O.K. So is it fair to say that, that certainly if a yacht has a stability index of over 115 it therefore complies?

A Correct.

Q56 O.K. There is also a grandfathering clause. Are you aware of that?

A Yes.

Q57 Which allows certain yachts that can show that they have previously sailed in Sydney to Hobart Yacht Races are able to enter if they have a stability rating of between 110 and 115.

A Correct.

Q58 O.K.

A Yeah.

Q59 So do you agree that certainly the I.M.S. forms are an imperative part of the paperwork to ensure a boat complies?

A Yes.

Q60 O.K. At any stage last year was the I.M.S. certificate relating to a boat called the Business Post Naiad brought to your attention?

A No.

Q61 O.K. At any stage after the 1998 Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race was a certificate, an expired certificate or a new certificate which was issued in relation to the Business Post Naiad mentioned to you?

A No.

Q62 O.K. Do you know the circumstances surrounding the Business Post Naiad?

A Well, only what I've heard - - -

Q63 O.K.

A - - - afterwards from, basically from you.

Q64 O.K. So you, are you aware that a certificate for the Business Post Naiad arrived at the sailing office some time last year? This is in hindsight, this is what you've been told.

A Yes.

Q65 Do you understand that?

A Yes.

Q66 That's what I'm saying. And are you aware that a new certificate or the certificate that arrived was in fact expired and a new certificate was issued for that particular boat? Are you aware of that now?

A I'm aware of that now.

Q67 O.K. And as a result that boat fell some 8 degrees less than the minimum requirement into the Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race.

A Yes, I'm aware of that now.

Q68 You're aware, O.K. As race chairman are you able to offer an explanation to us today as to how this possibly could have happened?

A No, I can't.

Q69 O.K. Is it your role as race chairman to ensure at the end of the day when all entries have been gathered for the Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race to oversight those final application or entry forms?

A No, it's not.

Q70 O.K. Are there any guidelines or standard operating procedures in place or were in place last year as to your specific role and responsibilities and that of the sailing or racing committee that you're aware of?

A I'm not aware of any specific roles, no, not in relation to that.

Q71 O.K. And when was it that you became aware of the problem with the Business Post Naiad?

A Well, when I, when I heard it on the, whilst I was in the control centre in Hobart. You're talking about when the - - -

Q72 So far as the certificate, not that incident?

A Oh, no, long time after, after the event.

Q73 O.K.

A Only through the information we got back from you.

Q74 Right.

A I wasn't aware of anything up to that point.

Q75 Not having met you prior to this particular interview today, who, who informed you of the information about

the Business Post Naiad from the club? Would it be Mr Peter Bush?

A I can't, I'm not 100 per cent certain, it was either Peter Bush or possibly Hugo, but I'm not sure about that.

Q76 O.K. Now as you're aware a race review committee was formed earlier on this year and a number of persons chaired that committee and commenced an investigation, independent investigation into various aspects of the 1998 Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race.

A Yes, I'm aware of that.

Q77 At any stage did investigators from that group interview you in relation to your knowledge of the problems associated with the Business Post Naiad in relation to their certificate, I.M.S. certificate?

A No.

Q78 Were you at any stage approached by that organisation?

A I was, yes.

Q79 And what was the basis of that conversation or that approach?

A It was an interview by Peter Bush - - -

Q80 Right.

A - - - with me to, to establish what my role was in Hobart - - -

Q81 Right.

A - - - at the time of the race - - -

Q82 O.K.

A - - - especially after the storm hit the fleet.

Q83 O.K.

A And that's all I remember about that.

Q84 Was it a recorded interview like ours today?

A No, he wrote it down.

Q85 So there were notes taken?

A Oh, yes.

Q86 And presumably that was, you were interviewed here at the club?

A Yes.

Q87 O.K. Were you present at the final briefing on the 24th of December last year, if you recall?

A Actually I think I was.

Q88 Right. Now is it the case that at that briefing amongst other things there was mention of boats who haven't completed the necessary paperwork or may have a problem in one area or another and they were given a warning about having their paperwork in order by, I think the decision last year was midday?

A Yes, that, that has been standard practice.

Q89 Right. Now if you were present at that meeting last year do you recall whether the Business Post Naiad was mentioned in that group of boats?

A I don't recall.

Q90 O.K. Are you aware if there were any notes or any, any notes made as to who those boats were?

A No, I'm not, I can't answer that, I don't know.

Q91 O.K. Now after the commencement of the race did you travel to Tasmania?

A Yes.

Q92 And on what date was that?

A I think, if I remember right, it was the day after Boxing Day.

Q93 So it would be the 27th of December?

A I think so, yes.

Q94 O.K.

A In the afternoon.

Q95 In the afternoon.

A Yes.

Q96 When you arrived in Hobart what did you do down there or what were your duties as - - -

A I, we had the race control centre in Hobart and I visited them to just see how things were going.

Q97 Right.

A And then soon after that the problems started.

Q98 Right. Now before you left Hobart, sorry, before you left Sydney to travel to Hobart did you in fact, did the race committee have a meeting at all, a get together for - - -

A We had the final get together on the 26th in the morning - - -

Q99 Right.

A - - - to check the weather forecast and the race construction, we construct a racecourse based on the, the weather conditions, the direction and the strength of the wind.

Q100 Right.

A That had already been done, I think, 2 days prior to that. On the morning of the race we go through that again.

Q101 Right.

A And make any changes that we deem necessary and at the time the weather forecast hadn't altered much from before and the constructed course was kept as it was.

Q102 Right. O.K.

A And that was done here at the C.Y.C.

Q103 O.K. Now are you aware at about 2.14pm on the 26th, race day, a storm warning was issued by the Bureau of Meteorology?

A I'm not aware of that.

Q104 O.K. Now if I could show you a document which is a, this is just a covering sheet of a fax to indicate that a fax was sent on that date, 26/12/98, at 14.49, which is 10 to 3.00. Accompanying that document was these two documents here, which is an updated weather report and in fact a confirmation of a storm warning. Now I've been informed that these documents were faxed to the C.Y.C. and in fact shortly thereafter a phone call was made by the Bureau of Meteorology to ensure that this document had been received and somebody was spoken to by the Bureau but we're unable to establish who that was. Can you tell me if these documents here were ever shown to you?

A I've never seen them - - -

Q105 O.K.

A - - - nor heard of it.

Q106 That's fine. As a situation of a, you know, of a chain of command situation in, in the C.Y.C.A. if a document like this was forwarded to the C.Y.C.A. which was relative to the Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race should it be ordinarily passed to the race director and the race committee ordinarily?

A No.

Q107 O.K.

A But it should go to the sailing office.

Q108 Right. O.K. Now you're in Hobart on the afternoon of the 27th, that's right?

A Yes.

Q109 At what stage did you become aware of the crisis that had developed in the, in the race?

A On memory I think it was late that night.

Q110 Right.

A Sort of heading towards the morning of the 28th.

Q111 O.K.

A Because I stayed in the race centre.

Q112 Right. At any stage did the race committee convene a meeting and discuss the weather or the crisis that was occurring?

A There were always members of the race committee present because the whole race committee hadn't met as a whole, but there was always a quorum, there was always at least three or four - - -

Q113 Right.

A - - - race committee members present - - -

Q114 Right.

A - - - and we were aware of the weather.

Q115 Right. Were you aware of whether winds at 70 knots at 9.00am on the 27th of December recorded at Wilsons Prom?

A I can't remember.

Q116 O.K. Were you aware at any stage about whether, well, wind in particular in excess of 80 knots that was reported to the radio relay vessel by Doctel Rager?

A I can't recall that either - - -

Q117 O.K.

A - - - specifically.

Q118 That's fine. Do you recall whether the committee or quorum of the committee spoke about severity of the weather and what they intended doing about it?

A Yes.

Q119 And what was the basis of the conversation?

A It was, it was suggested at one stage by AMSA - - -

Q120 Yes.

A - - - via Sam Hughes that we should consider perhaps abandoning the race. We discussed it and I can't remember the timing exactly.

Q121 Certainly, certainly.

A We discussed it and, and came to the conclusion that in our opinion it wouldn't have, the worst of the storm was heading away - - -

Q122 Yeah.

A - - - and it wouldn't have made any difference to the fleet whether we called the race off or not since they were already out there anyway and that we felt perhaps continuing in the same direction was safer than trying to turn back. And this decision was supported by AMSA as well, we put that to them and they agreed that to be right and they felt if, if a skipper then wanted to pull out it was their own decision, which it is anyway.

Q123 Yes. And did that prompt a message from the committee to the Young Endeavour to Lou Carter to remind skippers of their responsibilities?

A I believe so.

Q124 O.K. Are you aware of that warning?

A Yes, yes.

Q125 Right. O.K. Now was that a situation that the race committee considered to be important so far as passing a message to all skippers about their responsibilities?

A Well, we saw that as a reminder of what skippers already know.

Q126 Right. O.K. So what were the, what were the actual discussions or who discussed the cancelling or abandoning of the race? Do you remember what members were there, what committee members were there offhand?

A It would be pure guesswork.

Q127 Yeah.

A But I, I know that Phil and me were there and Sam Hughes, he is not a committee member but he is from AMSA.

Q128 Yes.

A And I think Howard Elliot as well.

Q129 Right.

A But there may have also been Bruce Rowley and someone else but I, I just don't recall.

Q130 All right. O.K. then. Who did you travel down with in the aircraft on the 27th from the committee? Do you recall?

A No one from the committee.

Q131 No one from the committee?

A No.

Q132 Anybody else?

A No, just my lady friend.

Q133 O.K. Was there ever a situation in the organisation of the race last year, that you know of, of something that was, some administrative procedure that wasn't brought to your attention as chairman that you're aware of?

A Not really, no, not that I recall.

Q134 Did you have a, a set of instructions verbally to the sailing manager as to what you expect as race chairman so far as any inconsistencies or problems that may arise?

A No.

Q135 Is that something that was, well, I suppose implied, like, one would expect that the chain of command would be the sailing, sailing administrator, sailing manager, then yourself? Was that accepted procedure?

A That was an accepted procedure but I, in my role I just had to be sure that the, the people in the sailing office - - -

Q136 Yes.

A - - - were competent and experienced in what they were doing.

Q137 Right.

A And I was satisfied with that.

Q138 Right.

A And I relied on their experience.

Q139 What, I don't know whether you were aware at the time or after the event, were you aware that a three member panel vetted and checked entries for last year's 1998 Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race apart from the sailing office?

A I'm not aware of that.

Q140 O.K. What would you consider the, the Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race in so far as blue ribbon ocean races in the world? Is it up there with the best?

A Oh, I believe so, yes.

Q141 The hardest?

A One of the hardest and one of the best and one of the most prestigious.

Q142 O.K. Is it reasonable for me to ask you that as an organiser you as a reasonable person would consider that there could be problems which occur in a race like this which are unforeseen?

A Oh, of course.

Q143 And that's a reasonable assumption of yours?

A Yes.

Q144 Now have you read the 1998 Sydney to Hobart Race Review Committee report?

A Yes, I have.

Q145 Are you aware of a comment which was made in relation to yourself, which I'll just find, on page 57? The chairman of the committee was unsure of the precise responsibilities of the committee as a result. Have you read that comment?

A Yes, I have.

Q146 Would you like to make any, any comment in relation to that particular comment?

A Well, that would relate to the events that happened after the storm hit.

Q147 Right.

A I, I wasn't too certain exactly what my role was at that time.

Q148 Right. O.K.

A Because there are no set of instructions - - -

Q149 Yes.

A - - - for that kind of situation at the time.

Q150 O.K. Do you feel now that you're sufficiently armed with experience to handle a situation like this again should it arise?

A I believe so.

Q151 Are you able, able to tell me if there are now guidelines or standard operating procedures in place

for the various roles on the sailing committee and race chairman or intend to be?

A Not specifically for individual people but - - -

Q152 Yes.

A - - - more for the procedures that need to be followed  
- - -

Q153 Right.

A - - - by the sailing, by the sailing office with the help of the sailing committee and race committee.

Q154 Right.

A Specific guidelines.

Q155 O.K. Are you aware of the formula that the Bureau of Meteorology mentioned this year about adding 40 per cent to wind strengths and adding 87 per cent to wave heights?

A That was all news to me at the time.

Q156 So you'd never heard of it?

A No, never.

Q157 So as a, as the race chairman for last year's race and finding out about the situation with the Business Post Naiad how do you, how did you respond to that particular problem within yourself?

A It was a - - -

Q158 What were your views about that?

A - - - tragic event that happened but I haven't got any view on - - -

Q159 The administrative side of things?

A No.

Q160 O.K. Dave?

SENIOR CONSTABLE UPSTON

Q161 Hans, in the 14 years that you've been now a member of the club you've got a fair knowledge on sailing rules?

A Reasonable.

Q162 Do you often sail yourself?

A Yes, yes, I do basically short ocean races and harbour races - - -

Q163 O.K.

A - - - regularly.

Q164 Right. And you're familiar with the A.Y.F's Blue Book set of rules?

A Yes.

Q165 O.K.

A Not all of it.

Q166 No, but you, you have a, a knowledge - - -

A Yeah.

Q166 - - - of it and an understanding, a general understanding of it?

A Correct.

Q167 O.K. Now as far as the document that Senior Constable Gray showed you earlier that you signed that was prepared by you - - -

A The, the letter?

Q167 - - - or ..... the letter that was prepared by someone else for you to sign, who prepared that letter for you?

A It would have been the sailing office.

Q168 Right. Anyone in particular?

A I can't say, I don't know.

Q169 So that, is that the normal procedure - - -

A Yes.

Q169 - - - that all your correspondence is prepared for you and you sign and have it passed on?

A Not all of it, some I write myself, some, if it's normal procedure the sailing office will write it and I'll check it and then if I'm satisfied with it I'll sign it or if I'm not we'll change it and then I'll sign it.

Q170 But what do you check it for?

A Well, to see if I agree with the content.

Q171 O.K. And, and, and the reason why that correspondence has gone out, say, for this instance that certain requirements were required from that vessel Nokia prior to its entering the race?

A Right. I don't understand what you are - - -

Q172 I'll get the document again.

A O.K. I'll have a look at it.

DETECTIVE SENIOR CONSTABLE GRAY

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SENIOR CONSTABLE UPSTON

Q173 In fact there's, there's two, two documents, there's two letters and each of them has your, your name, one with your signature, relating to the Nokia. I'd just like you to peruse those. And from my understanding they both relate to entrance, entrance into the 1998 Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race.

A Yes, that's right. Oh, this relates to technical issues with the I.M.S. certificate which - - -

Q174 That's right.

A - - - I'm really not that familiar with.

Q175 .....

A And this is the main reason that the office will put this together because it contains technical stuff.

Q176 Right.

A And - - -

Q177 Is it, is it normally the procedure that you would still sign your name to something that you're not, not aware of?

A Oh, I ask for an explanation and if it's satisfactory I'll sign it.

Q178 O.K.

A Yes, I didn't sign this but it, it does happen that letters are written on a technical nature over someone's name.

Q179 All right. And are you, are you made aware of, of any problems associated with prospective entrants into the race by the race, by the, the sailing office?

A Only if it's an, of a personal nature where, where there is some abuse involved by a yacht owner in regards to supplying certain information and instead of doing that abusing the staff. I will then get involved and talk to the person and ask him to be a bit more civil and more cooperative.

Q180 Why - - -

A I do more that sort of stuff.

Q181 Why would it be the case then that you have been asked to sign a letter to Nokia and I draw your attention to a situation that arose with the Business Post Naiad that the sailing office contacted the owner in regards to obtaining further information, why wouldn't you be made aware of that?

A Well, that - - -

Q182 Or were you in fact made aware of that?

A No, I wasn't and it doesn't always, they don't make me aware of everything, there's only some issues that are, they make me aware of if it, if it requires further attention or if they see some difficulties.

Q183 As chairman, pardon me, as chairman do you believe that it's necessary for you to be made aware of, of any anomalies that may occur with entrants?

A I don't believe so.

Q184 O.K. Did you attend the sailing office on a regular basis prior to the 1998 Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race?

A Yeah, reasonably regular, yes.

Q185 Were you familiar with the, the layout of the office?

A Yes, more or less.

Q186 O.K. Were you also familiar with the procedures that had been adopted by the sailing office personnel in regards to receiving information and, and in fact a check was made of that as that information came in pertaining to each vessel?

A I didn't specifically see that.

Q187 Right. Can you recall seeing three pages of A3 paper that were, that were placed on the wall with a list of names of the entrants and also on that paper was a check list of pertinent information that would allow that yacht to race, that is, an I.M.S, current I.M.S, current and valid I.M.S. certificate, a safety inspection certificate and crew list, next of kin list and the like?

A I can't specifically recall seeing that on the wall, no.

Q188 O.K. As, you as chairman, what would you expect in your position, as chairman in that position what would you expect from your sailing manager or your race director so far as the collection of entry forms and the checking of those entry forms to ensure compliance?

A Well, I expect that that would be done.

Q189 O.K. Are you aware as the chairman last year whether anybody in the sailing office, which consisted of three people, Mr Phil Thompson, Mr Mark Robinson and a lady named Andrea, are you aware if any of those persons were designated to follow up any documents that were missing from vessels who applied to enter the race?

A No, I'm not aware of that.

Q190 Is it the case that you assumed that that would be done by one of those people?

A I guess so.

Q191 Right. That's all.

DETECTIVE SENIOR CONSTABLE GRAY

Q192 With any correspondence or letters that were sent to the club that had been addressed to the sailing committee and they were to, and you received those, those documents what would you do with them?

A Normally they would go to the sailing manager first and he would deal with it and if he had a problem with a specific issue he would then bring it to the sailing committee.

Q193 As a sailing committee member and you received correspondence from outside in, in the form of letters would you open that information?

A It's, to the best of my recollection, this information is normally sent to the sailing office.

Q194 Right.

A Not, not to the committee.

Q195 Can you recall ever opening any correspondence that was received perhaps addressed to the sailing committee?

A I certainly can't recall that, no.

Q196 Does the club run incoming correspondence books in any area, are you aware?

A I'm not aware of that.

Q197 Are you aware if the sailing committee run an incoming correspondence book?

A The sailing committee?

Q198 Or the sailing office?

A No.

Q199 You're not aware?

A I'm not aware of it.

Q200 O.K. O.K. Look, is there anything that you'd like to speak to us about, any suggestions that you have or anything that you feel is pertinent to this investigation, please, by all means - - -

A No, I, I don't believe I have anything to add.

Q201 O.K.

A I think we are as a club working on the review committee finding to, to implement those things and make it a better race next year.

Q202 Mmm. And you're satisfied from your standpoint that, that things have improved in certain areas?

A Oh, absolutely.

Q203 Right.

A Well, you can never fully guarantee - - -

Q204 No, certainly.

A - - - absolute safety - - -

Q205 No.

A - - - when you're dealing with the elements but we're certainly doing as much as we can humanly do to make it a safer event in the future.

Q206 O.K. That's fine. Nothing more, Dave?

SENIOR CONSTABLE UPSTON

(NO AUDIBLE REPLY)

DETECTIVE SENIOR CONSTABLE GRAY

Q207 The time on my watch is now 11.02am. This interview is concluded.

INTERVIEW CONCLUDED