

SENIOR CONSTABLE UPSTON

Q1 This is an electronic recorded of interview between Senior Constable David Upston and Fenwick James Thompson, on Saturday, the 31st of the 7th, '99, Quinmarine in South Australia. The time on my watch is now 10.17am. And also present and seated to my immediate left, is Detective Senior Constable Rob Beatie, from the South Australia Police. Fen, for the purpose of the interview could you please state your full name?

A Fenwick James Thompson.

Q2 And your address?

A 18 Farriers Way, Woodcroft.

Q3 And your date of birth?

A 7th of February, 1939.

Q4 And your occupation?

A I'm the ship supply manager, Quinmarine.

Q5 O.K. Rob, I'll just ask you to, Fen, I'll just ask you to read that short statement as I indicated to you earlier. Would you read it aloud, please?

A Right. Sorry. "This statement was made by me and accurately sets out the evidence which I would be prepared, if necessary, to give in court as a witness. The statement is true to the best of my knowledge and belief and I make it known that if it is tendered in evidence I should be liable to prosecution if I wilfully stated anything which I know to be false or do not believe to be true". Question two, I am 60 years

of age.

Q6 Thank you. Fen, do you agree that we spoke last on the 28th of June, 1999?

A Yes, I agree.

Q7 And we spoke on a number of issues in relation to life rafts.

A That's correct.

Q8 And the reason why I'm back here to talk to you today with Detective Senior Constable Beatie, as that as indicated to you earlier that I'm making inquiries into the 1998 Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race.

A Yes, I understand.

Q9 And we spoke about a life raft which was from the VC Stand Aside.

A Correct.

Q10 Do you agree with that?

A I agree with that, yes.

Q11 O.K. Now, with this particular life raft and as we indicated earlier, we've been informed that it failed to open. And the, the owners of that particular life raft purchased the life raft from RFD Australia, through Quinmarine. Is that correct?

A That's correct, yes.

Q12 Right. Now, with that particular life raft, I understand that when it was purchased it came in a soft pack valise. Is that correct?

A That's what I've been led to understand, yes.

Q13 Right. You never saw the life raft at all?

A I never saw it, no.

Q14 O.K. Was it your understanding that the life raft was to be packed through the request of the owner into a hard case or a fibreglass or hard plastic case?

A Yes, I understand that.

Q15 Right. Now, did you have anything to do with that packing or re-packing?

A No, not personally, no.

Q16 Right. Does an employee here at Quinmarine have any part of that?

A An ex-employee, David Waite, was the person who packed it, I believe.

Q17 Right.

A I was told - - -

Q18 Right. And that would have been under the supervision of somebody else here?

A No.

Q19 Right. So, David Waite is an, was an employee of, of Quinmarine?

A Yes.

Q20 And to the best of your knowledge he was a licensed, packer from RFD?

A He had an RFD survey ticket.

Q21 O.K.

A Which he'd had for some years.

Q22 Right. And how long had David been working under your employment?

A I think he'd been at Quins for something like three to

four years. I'm not sure on that though - - -

Q23 O.K.

A - - - David.

Q24 All right. Now, with that, that life raft, and it, I understand and I'm led to believe that when it was sold to Quinmarine or sold to the owner of VC Stand Aside, through Quinmarine, that it came in a valise, a soft pack.

A I believe so, yes.

Q25 Right. Now, is it the case that when a request is made by an owner to have it transferred into a hard pack that you would then ask the suppliers to supply a hard pack?

A I couldn't tell you, I wouldn't know. Haven't got enough knowledge on that part of that.

Q26 All right. Well, who would be able to tell me about where the hard pack came from?

A I suggest David Waite.

Q27 O.K. Do you have any paperwork here to suggest that you, that you applied for hard packs or, or that spare hard packs for life raft packing?

A No.

Q28 Right.

A Not that I know.

Q29 Right. I'm led to believe that RFD Safety has no records of sending or invoicing you for any hard packs as they stand on their own. Do you, you've, have you got any to comment - - -

A For that, for that particular raft?

Q30 For that particular raft.

A Yeah, I believe that's correct. Mark has told me that.

Q31 O.K. And you can't shed any further light - - -

A No.

Q31 - - - as far as that's concerned?

A No. What happened up here when the owner came in, or the owner's rep, I don't know, I wasn't present. And there was no set procedure, nothing written down, if that's any - - -

Q32 Right. Now, is it the case where you would have life raft supplied from RFD or any other packer, that you would keep records in relation to equipment purchased?

A Yes, there'd be. In the purchasing department, there'd have to be that sort of paper work.

Q33 Right. O.K. And just to the best of your knowledge, you have no other information relating to a spare pack?

A No.

Q34 Detective Beatie, is there anything you'd like to add?

DETECTIVE SENIOR CONSTABLE BEATIE

Q35 Perhaps I just want to reiterate with the life raft, since you've been working here, Fen, how long have you actively sort of participated or had anything to do with the life raft area?

A At Christmas time, in December this year. Well, late December I was made supervisor or manager of the life raft department.

Q36 And since the time that you've been here, to the best of your knowledge, the procedures that are set out at Australia standards and all that are, are adhered to strictly?

A Yes, yes. Yeah.

Q37 That's all I'd like to say.

SENIOR CONSTABLE UPSTON

Q38 O.K. Now, Fen is there anything now that you would like to add that you feel would be able to assist me in my further inquiries in regards to the, this particular life raft and the valise transferred from it's original pack in, into a hard case?

A No.

Q39 O.K. All right. The time on my watch is now 10.24am. This interview is now concluded.

INTERVIEW CONCLUDED