

**MINUTES OF THE 1998 SYDNEY HOBART RACE REVIEW COMMITTEE AT THE
CRUISING YACHT CLUB OF AUSTRALIA ON MONDAY 15th of MARCH 1999 AT
6.00PM**

PRESENT: P.BUSH (Chairman)
H.ELLIOTT
G.HALLS
R.HAMMOND
R.HICKMAN
G.SIMMER

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: M. GRUCHOT
H. VAN KRETSCHMAR
J. MEYER

APOLOGIES: D.GRAHAM

ITEM 1: REVIEW/ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

- 1.1 It was proposed Roger Hickman and seconded Greg Halls that the minutes of the previous meeting held Monday, March 1st 1999 be accepted as a true record.

ITEM 2: MATTERS ARISING

- 2.1 Martin James gave legal advice to the Committee due to the summons presented to the CYCA last week by the Coroner's Investigators. All Committee members are covered by the CYCA's insurance policy with respect to litigation and other legal matters. John Harris of Deacon, Graham & James has been retained by the CYCA for all matters relating to the 1998 SHYR. The general legal advice is to not provide any information to the police verbally or in writing without consulting the Club's solicitors. Martin James also confirmed that all approaches from the Coroner's Investigators be referred to Peter Bush, and all contact and requests should be channelled through him. In extreme circumstance, Committee members should contact John Harris directly (#93308577) or in his absence Martin James (#92962198).

ITEM 3: WORK/PROGRESS TO DATE

QUESTIONNAIRE

- 3.1 Peter Bush reported that the Questionnaires have been returned by Yann, Campbell, Hoare & Wheeler along with an extensive statistical analysis which at this stage shows "no surprises" or new issues arising other than what is already being addressed by the Committee.

INTERVIEWS WITH YACHTS

- 3.2 Peter Bush reported that all interviews with yachts have been completed apart from the yachts where fatalities occurred. He will interview Business

Post Naiad within the next couple of weeks and is still awaiting an answer from Winston Churchill and Sword of Orion with regard to their willingness to be interviewed.

OTHER

Nil

ITEM 4: SUB COMMITTEE REPORTS

LIFE RAFTS

- 4.1 Greg Halls reported that all interviews re life rafts have been completed. Apart from some structural problems, 3 issues are emerging that need to be addressed. Firstly, the colour of the floor of the life rafts must be changed from black to yellow/orange for better visibility when the raft is capsized. Secondly, the internal bag must be installed in a manner that cannot become easily undone. While the content (flares, repair equipment, manuals etc) was generally found to be adequate, the attachment of the bag within the life raft was found to be very poor. Thirdly, the size of the various lines need to be increased or other lanyards be used.
- 4.2 Greg Halls stated that life raft manufacturers are concerned that life rafts might be used as a platform for air rescue rather than their original purpose.
- 4.3 Greg Halls pointed out that overall life rafts fulfilled their purpose and it was the massive lack of education that was the key factor for most of the problems encountered during the race. From the interviews he conducted it became clear that crewmen did not know how to use life rafts, how to get into them, how to right them when they capsized etc.
- 4.4 Greg Halls recommended the inclusion of harnesses, white parachute flares and Sylom sticks as additions to the internal bag. He further recommended the use of waterproof manuals.
- 4.5 Greg Halls further recommended banning life rafts being stowed below deck as crews encountered severe difficulties in getting the life rafts on deck.
- 4.6 Hugo van Kretschmar pointed out that rather than awaiting a change in the sailing regulations with regard to internal bags, a lot of items could be made compulsory to be included in Grab Bags.
- 4.7 Howard Elliott suggested making EPIRBS compulsory for life rafts. He further suggested getting a copy of the manufacturers' standards for further information and analysis.

ADMINISTRATION/COMMUNICATION

- 4.8 Jon Meyer is representing Donald Graham for this Sub-Committee.
- 4.9 Jon Meyer reported that the Sub-Committee is in the process of developing a crisis management structure and plan and is also currently addressing the role of the Radio Relay Vessel, the location of the Race HQ, SAR matters,

and all other general administration and communication matters. Nothing has been formalised as of this stage.

ITEM 5: COMMENTS ON REPORT TO DATE

- 5.1 Richard Hammond commented that the first draft of the report contained too much background information on basic facts that should be included in the Appendix, rather than the main body. He further stated that the problem of the audience needs to be addressed in order to find an appropriate format.
- 5.2 Grant Simmer stated that the report should be mainly aimed at yachtsmen and yachting authorities rather than the general public.
- 5.3 Hugo van Kretschmar commented that the first draft seemed to paint a too positive picture rather than just give hard technical data.
- 5.4 Peter Bush reminded the Committee that the report needed to be very thorough and extensive in order to appease criticism from the Coroner, the media and the general public, and that it would need to be written to the lowest common denominator, as the public interest in the 1998 SHYR is very extensive. He further suggested the printing of different versions, one version for the Coroner, the Board and the authorities, including an extensive appendix, one medium sized version for the general public and one short condensed version of the findings and recommendations for other interested parties.
- 5.5 Peter Bush also raised the issue of the circulation of the report. He suggested to send the report to all 115 yachts and other designated bodies and charge a \$100 donation fee for the Safety at Sea Trust Fund for further copies.
- 5.6 Grant Simmer disagreed with this view stating that charging people for the report would contradict the initial goal to make the report as widely available as possible. He suggested just loading it onto the Internet on a Web Site so that interested parties could download it.
- 5.7 Howard Elliott suggested to put a short summary version on the Web Site as well as a PDF style version which cannot be altered.
- 5.8 Peter Bush appraised the Committee that a longer draft would be available within the week and he asked for extensive criticism and comments.

ITEM 6: PERSONAL SAFETY EQUIPMENT

- 6.1 Peter Bush reported that as of July 1st, hand held VHF's will be made compulsory as per the "Blue Book".
- 6.2 Greg Halls raised the issue of legal responsibility of a member of the crew brings his own personal harness.
- 6.3 The Committee agreed that final responsibility for all safety equipment rests with the skipper/owner of the boat.
- 6.4 Peter Bush demonstrated the use of a Line 7 harness by using Roger Hickman as a model. He raised the issue of a potential change in standards

by including an age/use by date for harnesses in the safety requirements. This issue will need to be addressed in the next meeting.

- 6.5 Howard Elliott appraised the Committee of his handout relating to EPIRBs and other communication devices.

ITEM 7: NEXT MEETING

- 7.1 The next meeting will be held on 29th of March 1999 at 6pm at the CYCA.
- 7.2 Roger Hickman and Grant Simmer-apologies for next meeting due to Mooloolaba Yacht Race.