

SENIOR CONSTABLE STEFANIW

Q1 This is an electronically recorded interview between Thomas Bibby and Senior Constable Paul Stefaniw and Senior Constable Alistair Greenwood of the Victoria Water Police conducted at the Portland Police Station on Thursday, the 19th of August, 1999. The time on my watch now is 11.43am. Seated next to me is Senior Constable Greenwood and seated across from me is Mr Bibby. Mr Bibby, for the purpose of this interview, could you please state your full name?

A Thomas Francis Bibby.

Q2 Your date of birth?

A 12th of the 2nd, '58.

Q3 Your current address?

A 101-107 Fawthrop Street, Portland in Victoria.

Q4 In Victoria?

A Yes.

Q5 And your occupation?

A Fisherman.

Q6 As I've already explained to you Senior Constable Greenwood and myself are making inquiries in relation to the 1998 Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race. Part of this inquiry involves rescues. I believe that you were involved in the rescue of Team Jaguar. Could you please start with your sea experience?

A Well I've been fishing 15 years now. I've been skippering this boat that I'm on now for the last six years. I've actually been on the boat for eight years

but I mean, skippering the boat for five or six years, anyway.

Q7 What qualifications do you hold?

A I've got a master 4 fishing ticket and I've also got engineers tickets et cetera for the boat.

Q8 Can you describe the vessel that, or your boat that rescued Team Jaguar?

A It's a 26 metre steel stern trawler. Gross weight of 170 ton. Anything else ..... ?

Q9 Just the registration and name of the vessel?

A Right, yeah, it's called the Moira Elizabeth, M-O-I-R-A Elizabeth with a distinguishing symbol, Uniform, Quebec, X-ray. That's about it.

Q10 And what type of survey is it in?

A It's on 2B survey.

Q11 2B. And how many crew?

A Four crew.

Q12 Four crew. And I take it the vessel's insured?

A Yes. Sunderland Marine, I think, yeah, I'm pretty sure it's Sunderland Marine.

Q13 Right. There was four crew on board at the time, is that right?

A That's right.

Q14 And what are they general duties?

A Just general deck hands. I hold both certificates on board the vessel, engineer's certificate and skipper's certificate. I also have another master 4 holder on board and two deck hands.

- Q15 How long have you worked with that particular crew?
- A The longest crew member has been on there for, it'd be four years, four and a half years and the next, probably about two years, the other two crew members have been on there.
- Q16 Right. And what sort of experience do they have?
- A Been fishing virtually, younger, youngest fellow, he's only 18, he's only been fishing for two years but the oldest crew member would be 43 and he's been fishing since he was about 15 and the other fellow's been fishing for six or eight years. Something like that.
- Q17 Can you recall their names?
- A Stephen Lee, Andrew Hogg and Justin Myer. That's sort of the longest serving now to the, the lowest serving.
- Q18 Right. I'll take you into the actual event. Could you tell me sort of what happened from the time you got the call out or the call in relation to this incident or what can you tell me, in your own words, what, what happened on the, on the particular .....
- Q19 Right. We were actually fishing, I was actually doing some survey work between Eden and Gabo Island, I was checking out some fishing grounds along there. We'd left port, actually I should go and get my diary, would that be easier?
- Q20 If you like, I'll temporarily suspend the interview now. It's now 11.47. I'll suspend the interview for a short time while Mr Bibby gets his notes.

INTERVIEW SUSPENDED

INTERVIEW RESUMED

SENIOR CONSTABLE STEFANIW

Q21 This is a tape recorded interview with Mr Bibby and Senior Constable Paul Stefaniw and Alistair Greenwood recommenced. The time now is 11.50am. Mr Bibby has just returned with his notes. Mr Bibby, would you like to continue on with what you mentioned before?

A Right. I think we said we were just doing some survey work out the front, between Eden and Gabo Island at the time. We'd been just steadily moving south. We'd sailed from, from Eden at 09.40 hours.

Q22 And what, what date's that on?

A On the 27th of December, '97.

Q23 '97 or '98?

A '98, sorry. Yep, '98. And we were mainly doing survey work, probably about between 20 and 30 miles offshore. And it sort of came away, the weather came away. It must've been about, actually didn't write what time that was, down there but it was around about the 1 o'clock in the afternoon. And the weather came away. We started heading inshore. I was heading into Gabo Island to take shelter or just travel down along the coastline, heading towards Hobart for the summer months. And at 16.20 hours we received a phone call from, from Lachlan Marshall who was helping the Eden Water Police, requesting assistance in salvaging the dismasted vessel, Team Jaguar.

Q24 Earlier on there you said, "the weather came away".

What do you mean by that?

A Like the weather came away, probably 40 knots plus and seas were building.

Q25 And what sort of direction from you?

A Westerly, west south westerly at that stage. What are we up to now?

Q26 And, and you've operated your, your vessel in those sort of conditions before?

A We don't actually fish in those, those conditions. We were actually heading out of the weather at the time, heading towards shelter.

Q27 All right. And your vessel's the Moira Elizabeth and is it correct that it's about 25 and a half metres long?

A That's right.

Q28 All right. And what, so what happened when you received this phone call? Were you given any specific directions or instructions?

A Yeah. I was asked if I'd be willing to go out and lend assistance to the Team Jaguar. They gave me a position of 37 degrees, 51 minutes south, 150 degrees, 19 minutes east. I plotted that out on the charts and like during the afternoon I'd been listening to the distress calls and everything and ABC, while we were actually heading in there with the weather, that was my understanding like there was quite a few vessels at that stage getting into trouble 'cause the weather, in the last two hours that I'd been coming into shore, the

weather had actually picked up quite a bit. It was running round the 50 knots, 50 to 60 knots and huge seas were building very quick at that stage.

Q29 What size seas would you say?

A Six metres plus. That was, just wasn't the size of the swell and everything else. It was just they were so short together and coming really close. That, that was the main trouble with them. The tide must've been running in a little bit and lifting them up as well, at the same time. What did I get up to then? They gave me the position of the Team Jaguar.

Q30 And you plotted it on the chart?

A Plotted it on the chart. Found out, on the electronic plotters that we've got on board. Found out it wasn't too bad a direction to take to sea on our vessel. To actually go down there and, also we were about to arrive there before it actually got dark that night. We managed to get down there and find the vessel and lend assistance during daylight. But as we got down, when we got down there, got down closer there and there was no sight of the vessel or anything and realised that they weren't in that position.

Q31 From the time you left your present position, when you received that call - - -

A M'mm.

Q31 - - - to the given position that you thought that they were, what sort of, what was your ETA to their position?

A           ETA about 9.30 that night. I thought it would take us three hours there. That was approximately, it was 18, 18 miles from our current position there, it - - -

Q32          And what sort of a wind, where had the waves been on, on - - -

A           That was still a westerly direction. They'd have come, come on the, on the quarter, on the front quarter or nearly side on, wasn't too bad for us. Side on seas are pretty good. It's just sort of stern quarter that are, that get really dangerous on our boat. We can take it on the side down there, it wasn't any drama. As long as we took it easy. But when we got down there of course the, the boat wasn't there. I was communicating with, what do they call - - -

Q33          Relay .....

A           - - - Telstra, Telstra Control, yeah, on the Young Endeavour during this period. We actually had, I had some trouble with my radio. I had a frequency put in the radio that only had a receive frequency and didn't have the transmit frequencies.

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Q34          Well what sort of radio are you talking about?

A           ICOM HF radio.

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Q35          What other radios do you have on board your vessel?

A           Two VHF's. I was listening to the ABC helicopter on the VHF but we weren't, they weren't receiving us. I'd given them a couple of calls but they hadn't, hadn't

received us.

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Q36 Can you remember what channel you were talking on?

A 16 on the VHF and just can't think off hand on the, on the HF.

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Q37 All right. What, what communications did you have with Team Jaguar?

A I had the mobile phone. They were actually talking to us on the mobile phone and talking to Team Jaguar on the HF. It was only later on that night I got to transmit on the HF. That was around about midnight.

Q38 So did you have any actual direction contact with Team Jaguar - - -

A Yes, after midnight there, I had direct contact with Team Jaguar.

Q39 And what did they say to you?

A At that stage they were still reporting their position as whatever it was, the original position there that we were given. We got down to that position and we talked to Team, Telstra Control there and we told them that the boat wasn't there. We were at that position and, or within half a mile of that position. Couldn't see the boat. It was still daylight at this stage. It was approximately 9.30 at night. Visibility wasn't terrific but was still light enough to be able to see a boat there. And they asked them for an up-date on their position. Asked Team Jaguar for an up-date on



their position. They gave their position as the same, same position that we, where we were and the ABC helicopter happened to be above them at the time and said that they weren't at that position. They gave a new position of 37 degrees, 42 south, 150 degrees, 31 east, which was virtually another 18 miles back in the direction we'd come from. Had we gone due east of our position to start with, we'd, we'd have been there within - - -

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Q40 No time.

A - - - sort of an hour, sort of thing - - -

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Q41 Mm.

A - - - it all would've been over and done with in no time at all. Anyhow so, we sort of headed up to that, that new position 'cause we were sort of out there, it was a bit late going back in again, you know. So we sort of went up there to find them and continued north east. And we were actually waiting for them to give a new position off their handheld GPS at that time.

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Q42 And what was supposedly their problem, like what  
..... - - -

A Well they'd been dismayed.

Q43 Right.

A At the start and they were steaming back to Eden and they fouled their propeller with rigging or something

that was hanging over the side, so they'd stalled out and they had no, no steering, no, no power or anything. They were just drifting around at that stage. They'd been speared off a wave and broken all the top decking, smashed all the bulkheads and, all the bulkheads or whatever they call them, across the top of the yacht, I'm not quite sure but, and they were sort of pretty panicking. They thought if they'd taken another wave the same that they mightn't come back up again. And that was the main reason for, they must've got a, I don't know how the message got to Eden or, and got back to me. I still haven't found that part of it out, how they got the message through to, like the Eden Police. It's, but they must've been in communication with someone there at some stage of the game, so.

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Q44 Were you given initially a description of the vessel or, what were you given it as?

A Yeah, we just, we had been given a description there at the time. I'm just trying to think of what they described it as. I think it was just a something like 27 metre or something. Maxi, I knew it was a maxi yacht anyway and it had been dismasted, they said you wouldn't have any trouble recognising it. It's floating around down there with no mast. So -

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Q45 Is that, no trouble finding it, is that also obviously because of the condition it's in as opposed to the

colour of it or, whatever? Were you given a colour or  
-?

A I can't remember now, to tell you the truth. On that side of it, we more than likely would've been given a colour of it. I, I wouldn't be positive on that side of it. If I'd known it was a maxi yacht down there with no mast and it was sort of bobbing around in the ocean, so that was virtually about it, I think.

Q46 Now you started heading back to where you had come from?

A Yeah, yeah, well we started heading back up north east and we were waiting for them to give us another position on their handheld GPS. There was something else in between there and I can't remember what it was. Like the seas were really big at this stage. The further south we got the worse it was, you know, it was 60 knots easy, easy, huge seas. And I realised that it was going to be pretty dark by the time we, we found them 'cause it was getting just on towards dark then. And that sort of put a different light on things, you know - - -

Q47 What was your sort of feelings for the whole thing, were you a bit concerned about the weather yourself?

A Well, I was really concerned about the weather, yeah.

Q48 And did you ..... - - -

A Especially being out there in dark. I knew we wouldn't be able to do anything much for them, once, once it had gotten dark anyway, even when we did find them, you

know. It was just, it got really, it was really sort of strange that they, they didn't know where they were. That was the, the silliest part of the whole lot, you know. They've got these handheld GPSs, obviously they're not, I don't know whether they were expensive ones or whatever but they obviously didn't, didn't give out a proper position. And they were just waiting for hours to get a fix on them. And had the ABC helicopter not been above them at the time, when they gave out their last position, we'd have been just sort of steaming all over the ocean looking for them. You know, so it would've been just a complete waste of time. And I wouldn't have liked to go, when they gave the second position, from where we were at Gabo, originally I wouldn't have liked to head out in that direction anyway 'cause it was the other one, I'm trying to think of the other yacht that was out there at the time, that had been rolled over. I plotted his position but he was miles away. I mean they were about 40 miles away from where they were. Where we sort of turned out there a couple of days later when they found them, they weren't anywhere near them. See ..... was going in a northerly direction. They all thought the tide was running south and he was actually drifting north. And we sort of fished up there quite often there and found that once you got out wide, there was a northerly tidal stream. So we just headed up in that direction till, we were waiting for them to give a new

position. And they finally gave us a new position of 37, 37 degrees, 37 south, 150 degrees, 33 east. That's when we realised that they were actually drifting in a northerly direction. So we just proceeded in a, just kept going north until we could actually catch up to them.

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Q49 On the way to Team Jaguar did you encounter any other vessels?

A We passed, passed, there was one set of lights that I'd found, we passed but they had all masts up. I don't know who the vessel was. We actually had a look just to see if it was the right one but they were actually travelling south at the time. I don't know the name of the vessel. We didn't communicate with them at all. I just sort of realised it wasn't the one we were looking for, so we just kept going. I was talking to Telstra Control all during this period. When we got up to that second position we couldn't find them there 'cause they were obviously, they were drifting about 4 knots at that stage.

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Q50 And what sort of speed were you doing along the way?

A About 5 knots. She was taking a long time catch up. Well we couldn't go any faster, you know, not in those conditions. We were just taking it easy. We actually had to go, steam north and then go east for a while and just had to keep tacking ourselves, you know, just for

the weather because the seas were that big we just couldn't go east for very long periods of time 'cause it was just too scary.

Q51 What's the maximum speed of your vessel?

A 10 knots. And, so we just took it in short periods of heading east with the weather up the, up the stern 'cause it was ..... I had two men on watch all the time keeping their eyes astern and that, just calling out the waves as they were coming up 'cause I was hand steering. I was standing at the wheel for hours on end so that we could actually just keep the vessel in a straight line when we were heading down the, the big swells 'cause had we sort of gone, slewed off a bit, there was a good chance of ..... at that stage.

Q52 Did you have any precautionary measures out the stern, did you drag anything behind you?

A No, I thought about shooting the net and that and I thought one of the waves is going to bring it up and drive her into the prop or something, so it was actually a lot safer at that stage just to keep everything on board, tie everything down and just sort of keep going. If there was, sort of had to get around in a hurry, well, you know, you'd be looking at, at lot easier if you haven't got anything streaming out. If we, if we were just out at sea dodging away and we weren't looking for anything we, we'd certainly stream a net and just run with the sea at that stage but because we had to keep turning and everything else it

was just, well we wouldn't have been running with that sort of sea, on a normal, normal fishing trip, if you know what I mean. We'd be turned around and just diving into it, so.

Q53 So what time did you actually get to Team Jaguar?

A We caught with them at 4 o'clock in the morning at 37 degrees, 16 south, 150 degrees, can't read my writing, 25 east.

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Q54 All right. Now when you, when you came across them, did you have a conversation, be it a radio conversation or verbal or what communication did you have?

A Actually when we got up to, up to within, within close to, we actually picked them up on the radar, when I was, at three miles away from them. That time I, I'd caught up to them, we bled off just a bit earlier than that, when we got to their second position I was telling you about, we let off a red flare ourselves because, and told them over the radio what we were up to, through Telstra Control and everything else. Told them we were letting off a red flare to see if they could get a position on us 'cause they'd be able to see us from miles away, we had big flood lights up the top. They'd pick us up within about six or seven miles. We let off a flare, they, they didn't see the flare, they couldn't see us so sort of realised that they weren't in the second position that we'd been given from the ABC helicopter when we finally got there.

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Q55 So what ..... now?

A Well, that's when it really got, you know, what are we doing, you know. Like we're out here bouncing in this sea for nothing, you know. And Telstra Control said, actually spoke to them at the time and says, well, what are you going to do, like, you don't know where you are, no-one knows where you are, like you, you can't get a position. Do you want to call it off virtually and I just told them, well we're out here now, we're bobbing around and we've been out here for, this was around midnight, you know. We'd been out there for sort of around eight hours at that stage. I says, there's no use, by the time we headed back in again to shore, it's going to take us another four hours to, to get into shore again so, we just said we'd, we'd continue on. I had a fair idea they were heading in a sort of northerly direction. So I just said, "I'll, I'll follow, just keep going north until they can get another position on their GPS", you know, they were, they were waiting for hours, you know, just to bring up the position and then it wasn't sort of, it was only within 10 miles sort of thing which, but I thought if I could get up there and just head up in the general direction they were moving, they'd be able to, able to see us eventually. So I thought it might give them a bit of hope 'cause I thought they were, at this stage I thought they were pretty sort of, in dire straits,



you know, so I thought they were, at least they'd be sort of, hope someone's coming out to have look for them. I thought that might sort of help a bit. So we told Telstra Control we'd continue having a look for them. They were in a search pattern, looking for Winston Churchill, that was the other vessel that Telstra Control was looking for. They were in a search pattern looking for them. Anyhow when we got up close to them we sighted a red flare. It came off another vessel and Team Jaguar sighted it at the same time and we actually got a bearing on Team Jaguar. They gave us a bearing to actually travel to them and this other, where I'd seen this other red flare was on the way. And I reported that red flare to Telstra Control and gave them a position, approximate position and bearing from us and gave them our position, the, the position where I'd seen the flare and everything else and they assumed that was the Winston Churchill at that time. So they were heading towards there. I continued on looking for the Team Jaguar. I didn't want to sort of go chopping and changing onto different boats 'cause I thought Team Jaguar was in sort of dire straits at this stage so I thought we'd keep going after them and let the, Telstra Control go and find this other vessel that had let off the red flare.

Q56           What, what's the airways like on the radio at this stage?

A             There was, there was maydays, there was red flares

sighters, there was, there was so much traffic on the radio at this stage, you know, there was just, you know just vessels calling in one after the other, you know. Replied sightings of flares. Other ones in trouble, you know, needing assistance ..... all just the whole lot, it was actually pretty chaotic at that stage, you know. It was just that many vessels in trouble with not enough people to go and help. So -

Q57 So you finally, you eventually found them?

A We eventually found them at 4 o'clock in the morning.

Q58 Yep.

A Attempted to get a line across to them at that stage and they couldn't, we floated a line with a big float on, onto a line. Floated that across to them 'cause we game to get too close to them at that stage 'cause the seas were actually still, still huge seas. So floated a line across to them. They couldn't, they attempted to grab hold with a boat hook but ..... line went straight underneath of course. And visibility was fairly, well, virtually nil. So then I told them we'd wait till daylight and make another attempt to get a line across to them at daylight. It was, like visibility was that bad that we actually steamed up to, when I first sighted the Team Jaguar, we had them picked up there a couple of torches and picked them up on the radar, heading towards them and 'cause the Young Endeavour was in a search pattern at the same time and he'd come around and virtually coming past the other

one. And then I started following him off, virtually took their lights off the, off the Team Jaguar, so but it was all within a couple of miles of each other and we finally found them in the end. Got a line to them on there and took them under tow at quarter to 6.00 in the morning and towed them in. Well, at that stage we were 43 miles east south east of Eden.

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Q59            Could you recall what, what conversation, if any, you had on the radio or the phone with the, be it the skipper or any crew member of the Team Jaguar as to what - - -

A               Well, we were actually talking on the radio operator on there. I don't even know his name but, yep.

Q60            Can you recall the conversation as to what, did they ask you for help or did you ask if they required help or what?

A               Well, I assumed they were after help otherwise they wouldn't have asked for someone to come out and get them. But it was earlier on there that they, one of the, a steamer had come up beside them and offered to take the crew on board. And they, they declined to, to leave the vessel at that stage. I thought that was a bit, bit stupid. If you've got to, got to sit there, we'll steam you down to them and someone would look, but they said there was a vessel coming to take them under tow. That was over the radio.

Q61            Can you recall the, the vessel that offered to assist

them?

A No, it was a, one of the steamers. There was a steamer that came up, looking for them. They, they'd given, I was listening to Telstra Control give the steamer the position of the Winston Churchill and the Team Jaguar at the time and they were heading to the nearest vessel which was the Team Jaguar that they actually came up beside. But they declined to, to go on board at that stage and I thought, here I am, bloody steaming out here in this sort of weather and they've got a vessel there, ready to take them on board. I was getting a bit dejected at that stage. So -

Q62 Was there any mention by you or whatever, in relation to, was this a situation of salvage or an agreed money tow or was there no mention of that?

A No, there wasn't anything at that stage. We were just interested in picking up the people. It was only later on, when we found that he was a real, didn't even bother to give us a thanks of anything else when we arrived at the wharf there. That the owner decided well he'll go for salvage on the, they had agreed to pay all costs of going and picking up the, up the vessel earlier on.

Q63 Right. And was there any - - -

A That was only, sorry, that was only gonna be fuel costs and that sort of thing.

Q64 Was there any damage to your vessel as a result of towing Team Jaguar?

A There wasn't any, there was a, in the towing, we lost a few boxes and that over the side in one of the big waves there.

Q65 What sort of cost would you put it?

A What the whole cost of the operation?

Q66 Well, the cost of losing any equipment or any damage or any injury of your crew. Did any of your crew  
..... - - -

A No, it was more loss to fishing time and that sort of thing that we missed out on our New Year market where, it's sort of one of our biggest markets of the year. Probably total cost of, it would probably cost about \$20,000 all up like to actually go out and do it.

Q67 At any stage did you believe that your lives of yourself or your crew, were in danger?

A Well there was always that possibility but we were taking every precaution that we could, to make sure the vessel stayed upright but there was, there's always that chance that if you had your steering go or we had, if we experienced some mechanical problem or something like that, while we were out there, there's always a possibility that we mightn't have come back ourselves.

Q68 Can you recall what time you returned back to the harbour, to Eden?

A Into Eden, yeah, we got back at midday.

Q69 So in effect, the whole tow took you how many hours?

A From 4 o'clock that afternoon, the, the previous afternoon when we got the original phone call which was

at, yeah, 20 past 4.00, the previous afternoon, till midday on the 28th. So, what's that? Minus 4, 20 hours.

Q70 When you got back to Eden, how did the Team Jag crew treat yourself or your crew. Were there any problems ..... please feel free - - -

A Yeah, well that - - -

Q70 - - - please feel free - - -

A - - - we thought it was pretty shoddy. Like, the skipper, when, when I was coming in, we brought the boat alongside it, so we could dock and I was also talking to Lachie Marshall on the shore. I thought they'd have a, an area where we could get into the wharf at least, to dock as well but there was all yachts, just lined up. They weren't prepared to move to allow us to pull in with another one tied along side us. They wanted to put us down in this little corner where we, it was just impossible to get in there. Their crew just sort of stayed on board, didn't give us a hand to, to moor or anything else. They, my boss came down from Ulladulla to, you know, like just to thank us for, for doing the job. He just left everything up to me. When I originally told him that we were asked to go out and get this vessel, he says, "Just leave it in your hands. If you want to do it, you can, if you don't, just don't".

Q71 And what's the name of the owner of the - - -

A That's Joe Parrello.

Q72 Right.

A We pulled the boat alongside to go in and dock in Two Fold Bay and sort of the skipper didn't even say hello or thanks or anything like that. We were running around, I had my crew running around with ropes and everything else, with water through the whole boat, I mean we've had, everything was sort of tossed out of shelves during that. But during the night we had property and everything else. Everything sort of landed on the floor. It just got left there. It was, the boat was a total mess in that, that, that regards, you know. It took a lot of cleaning up the next day. There was no offer, you know, their crew walked across our boat with slabs of drink. Didn't offer my crew a, a drink or anything, just sort of - - -

Q73 So it wasn't as if he was cold and miserable at the time they got in. They haven't even bothered later on the next day - - -

A Yeah, well it was nice when we were coming in towards the end there, you know. Like the weather had broken by about, probably 9 o'clock that morning and once we'd got in close to shore anyway, while the sun was shining, they were all out on deck there, sort of sunbaking on the way in, while we were towing them in. And towards the last part of the tow sort of thing, they had everything out and they were just sort of running around themselves. They'd come and just wanted to borrow diving equipment off our boat so they could

go and get away from us as quick as possible. That seemed to be the, the whole attitude. They just wanted to, didn't want to know about us, if you know what I mean. That was, the skipper came on there, they'd been talking to the media there for probably about an hour or an hour and a half. The owner, Joe, came down and says, "Have you seen the skipper? Who's the skipper? And I says, "Well, I wouldn't have a clue, you know, like, I haven't seen him. He hasn't sort of come on board or anything like that" and he sort of rolled on with a cameraman about an hour and a half later to come and sort of give us a big thanks in front of the camera and that was -

Q74 Did any of the, the crew from the Team Jaguar or the skipper appear to be injured in any way, or something to prevent them from assisting you or -?

A No, well there was one fellow there who'd taken the tow line and I think he'd hurt a finger or something. That was about it. Yeah, but the others. The rest of the crew didn't seem too bad, you know, they were quite happy that, that we came and got them but the, as you got up the level, on the, on the boat there, they didn't want to know about us. That was when my boss decided that well, he'd go for salvage. He said, "They can't even be bothered thanking us, so we'll go and do a salvage".

Q75 Is there anything else that you can think of, in relation to this incident, that may be able to assist



with these inquiries?

A Well I think they should get something into provisions before the race starts for some sort of rescue operation. Actually have vessels on stand-by or something along those lines so they've actually got a, a plan for anything that does happen. There's no use planning afterwards. I mean something's going to come out of it of course, but I think they must plan ahead.

Q76 How did you find, in your own words or opinion, the, the organisation of, of the whole event?

A Well, I couldn't really sort of go into that very much. I don't how well it's organised or anything. I couldn't tell you on that side of things.

Q77 After going through this incident, how do you think you would handle it in, in another sort of - - -

A Well, I'd still do the same if you, if people are in danger and, you know, like, if there's something you're virtually morally committed to, aren't you? It's, it's like, if it was the same bloke out there, I'd sort of tell him to go and get stuffed, if you know what I mean. It's just, I think it's, their whole attitude or the whole attitude of the, the actual yachtsmen is wrong, you know, like you can't just go and expect someone else to put their lives at risk to come and get you because you made the mistake of going out there. They should have heeded the weather warnings, like we did, you know. The weather's come up bad, we head in towards shore, get out of it. They're, they're just

sort of, yeah, we want to win this race, let's keep going and that's when they've got into trouble. And then they're, we're, someone else has got to pick up the pieces .....

Q78 Was there any mention by anyone from Team Jaguar in relation to other boats involved to you, was there any conversation, do you recall?

A Involved, what?

Q79 In relation to the, the race, was there any mention  
- - -

A Not that I know of.

Q79 - - - problems encountered or what the other blokes may have - - -

A Not that I recall on that side of things, no. But I think, you know, like in the end there, they've, they've just said, you know, like we weren't really in any danger at, at the end there. That's their whole, what they're saying on the salvage side, you know, we didn't really need a tow. And that's what's sort of hurt me more than anything.

Q80 After 20 - - -

A Yeah, - - -

Q80 - - - hours out there?

A Yeah, well, that's what they're saying now, you know like, we took one of the biggest waves there when we were actually getting the tow line, that rolled us right over. We just, the boys are hanging on. We got bloody, the waves come straight over the side of the

boat, like they'd be sort of hanging onto the wires and everything else. We were just side on virtually, near, near tipped us right over at that stage and I mean that's just before we got the, the tow line to them in the end, you know. And they come out and say, well, we, you know, at this stage, we didn't really need a tow, you know. I said, well, how the hell, how the hell were they gunna get in, I don't know but they weren't in any real danger and here they are, they've dragged us out to go and get them and they're not in any real danger. Not only that but you've got other vessels, we could have gone off to help someone who was in danger. No, to actually come and say that, that was pretty low, I thought.

Q81 How, how would you rate these conditions - - -

A They'd be the worse conditions I've been in, in our vessel. They'd rate up to the worst conditions. Even those the east coasts is sort of, generally not too bad, working up the east coast of New South Wales and that but it was just the steepness of the seas and the short period, it just picked up so quick, came up really, really bad, really quick. Sort of, a lot of tidal influence was standing those waves up ..... when they stand up vertical it's not very nice to look at.

Q82 So you, you can say that you were given enough warning in advance about the weather or not?

A Well, I knew there was some bad weather coming.

SENIOR CONSTABLE GREENWOOD

Q83 Was that from the radio or from your own - - -

A No, from the radio. We listen to the Melbourne radio. They gave out enough warnings. I don't think there was any, any trouble with the radio warnings or the met warnings. I don't know whether the yachts were actually listening to Melbourne radio or whether they were just on their own sched channel. I'd say that's probably more the point, they weren't listening to the weather reports being put out except on the scheduled reports and then they were given the warnings from them which is a bit late. You know, like Melbourne put them out every sort of half an hour or so when you've got bad weather coming. Especially at that time of the year, like they'd know the race was on so they'd be putting out fairly regularly, I'd say. But as, we just found out, like the weather's coming up, bang, head inshore. But obviously we, we aren't in a hurry to go anywhere at that stage, so -

SENIOR CONSTABLE STEFANIW

Q84 Is there anything else you wish to make mention of in relation to this?

A No, I don't think so. I think I've -

Q85 So you've mentioned about the GPSs, you weren't happy about their sort of set-up?

A No, that, that was - - -

Q86 And - - -

A - - - that was sort of really bad. Even when we were

beside them at the end there. I have two GPSs on board and ours was giving the same position of where we were and asked them for a position for what the GPS was showing and it was some 10 miles away from where we were and we were right beside them at the time.

Q87           So you never found out what sort of GPS they had  
                  ..... - - -

A             No, I don't what sort of handheld GPS they had. So I didn't actually ask them that. We sort of felt that we weren't treated very good in the end there and didn't really have anything to do with them, so I just told them to sort it out with the owner. I says, "You can sort, sort things out with him". He, he actually tore strips off this bloke, this Martin James who was the skipper and the owner when he come down there from Ulladulla to see us and the owner didn't even bother to come on and thank us or anything like that so, he just sort of tore a few strips off him in the end there and I just left it at that.

Q88           Senior Constable Greenwood, do you wish to say anything further?

SENIOR CONSTABLE GREENWOOD

No .....

SENIOR CONSTABLE STEFANIW

Q89           Mr Bibby, I thank you for your assistance in relation to this, this interview. The time now is 12.27 so I'll now conclude the interview.

INTERVIEW CONCLUDED