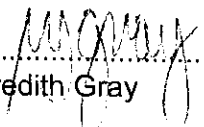


INQUEST INTO THE DEATHS IN THE 1998 SYDNEY TO HOBART YACHT RACE

STATEMENT OF MEREDITH GRAY

1. My name is Meredith Gray and I reside at 5/50 Wrights Road, Drummoyne. I am a Sports Administrator by occupation. At the time of the 1998 Telstra Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race I was casually employed by the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia to work in their Media Centre.
2. My role in the Media Centre included liaising with Australian and International Media Agencies, writing media releases, organising media boats, answering telephone enquiries from the media, putting together press kits and any other general office administration. Peter Campbell, Lisa Smith, Kelly Foster and Amelia Cater were similarly employed at that time.
3. In 1998 the Media Centre was based on the 2nd floor of the CYCA Club House, Rushcutters Bay until 27 December 1998 when the Media Centre was moved to the Hotel Grand Chancellor in Hobart. In 1998 the Media Centre staff change over from Sydney to Hobart was performed in stages on 26 and 27 December 1998.
4. Prior to the 1998 race I recall receiving a copy of the CYCA official contact list. A copy of that list had been placed on the wall in the Media Centre. I also had various contact numbers for key people on the internal telephones. Contained in the CYCA official contact list and the internal phones there were amongst others the mobile telephone numbers of Phil Thompson and Peter Campbell.
5. On the 26 December 1998 from approximately 11.30am to 2.30pm I was on the water on one of the media boats for the start of the 1998 race. At approximately 2.30pm I returned to the Media Centre where I provided some assistance in the writing of a media release about the start of the race. As far as I am aware the other media staff were also on the water from approximately 11 to 11.30am until 2.30pm.
6. During the course of the afternoon and into the evening I continued performing my duties. I do not recall specifically what time I left the Media Centre but believe it may well have been mid-evening.
7. At no stage on the 26 December did I receive a telephone call from anyone at the Bureau of Meteorology and I have no knowledge of any other staff receiving a call or facsimile from the Bureau of Meteorology. On the afternoon of 27 December I flew to Hobart to continue my duties there. During the course of the flight I was listening to an inflight radio broadcast where I heard of the seriously deteriorating weather conditions. That was the first time that I became aware of the seriousness of the prevailing conditions. I remained stationed at the Hobart Media Centre for the duration of the 1998 race.

Dated: 1 May, 2000


.....
Meredith Gray