

Tape 1

CORONIAL HEARING

DEATH OF CHRISTINA MAE WATSON

RECORDING OF INTERVIEW ON 24/04/2007 OF DAVID GABRIEL WATSON &
ROBERT AUSTIN (LAWYER)

Time now is 4.55 p.m. Take up with Robert Austin, Suite 106, 120 Summit Park Road,
Alabama Campbell and Noel.

Indeterminable – movement from vehicle to suite.

Knock at door.

Hello.

Yes

Mr Austin

Yes.

We got a little bit lost getting over here.

Can we come in.

Indeterminable

..... that video taken from me.

That's correct

Within several days they can take it.

Lawyer: As a matter of housekeeping, yo'all gonna have everything that yo'all take back
with you back to Australia released to Mr Watson that was taken from his
residence yesterday.

Pol.Off: I would think so. We have to go through it

Lawyer: That's what I'm saying, if there is something there that you need a copy made
of here, then you will take it and everything else and the original will be released
to him when yo'all finish here.

POL1: I don't know how it works here...um.....I just know that we have to take the
originals.

Lawyer: That's what I'm saying.

Pol.Off.: Oh ok.

Lawyer: You have the original of whatever you thought was necessary..

POL1: That's right.

Lawyer: And you would make a copy of that and return the copy to him and anything that you didn't physically take to Australia you return back over to him.

POL1.: That's correct.

Lawyer: And yo'all would be headed back when ?

Pol.Off: Not sure at the movement. Basically, we are meeting again with the FBI again on Friday. We got to comply with their evidence handling procedures. Chain of.... Now that's booked for Friday morning at this stage ...um... cause while they enabled us to have an initial viewing of the material yesterday, we weren't given full access to it. So on Friday I would like to think that we would have a lot better idea of what we can return, what we can copy and um if there is any other circumstances there to be able to advise you of the status of the exhibits. So

Lawyer: Would you think probably by the end of the week ?

Pol.Off.: Well the ...

Lawyer: Cause he really needs his computer is the main thing

POL1.: Yep

Lawyer: He is trying to get his computer or a back up generated so he can go out buy a replacement computer and

POL1.: And that is a more than fair concern too.

Lawyer: Right.

POL1: The FBI have basically told us we have to wait until Friday and what I would

Lawyer: They will make it available to him then ?

POL2: I think what they are actually doing is actually copying it for us. From what they were talking about, they will actually provide us with a backup of you're the hard drive. So if that's the case, there is no real need to hang onto it is there.

Lawyer: That was my request that you much rather do that.

Gabriel: Otherwise I have to buy an computer, that's ok for a week or two, but

POL1.: We haven't had a chance

Gabriel: and it ended up being for several months or something, I have to figure something out.

POL1: Basically they have said to us their intention was to have a copy made of everything, anything that we think is relevant we will take the copy back to Australia and I would like to think that we would be able to return the majority if not all of the items to yourself. But I cannot give you an ironclad guarantee on

that. I don't want to ring you Friday and say hey look there's a change of plans and you say well hang on you told us on the other day that this was going to happen. I would like to think that's the way it's gonna work and I don't see any problems towards that at this time.

Lawyer: Who at the FBI is it that you are working with?

POL1.: Mr Gorgan (?). He is in charge. As I said to you over the telephone to you yesterday, what we would like to do is ... um... have Gab go through twice personally what occurred on the of the deceased's death ... ahh.. is that still a option at this stage ?

Lawyer: Well, you can have the written statement that was taken, and you got the video tapes that were taken then, I would think it would probably be more productive that if you have any questions from having gone through that statement, anything additional or anything that is in the statement that you can just ask him questions about specific things rather than making him relive this whole episode again.

POL1: Well... I think the process is still going to take Mr Watson back to that incident...

Lawyer: I understand.

POL1.: Neither of us were in those that initial statement taking or that interview and personally, as an investigator, I prefer to hear from the actual person in their own words Umm. Their account of that incident... but obviously if Mr Watson doesn't want, all he's gonna say is no.

Lawyer: Well if he had to answer questions,

POL1: doesn't wish to recount that ...

Lawyer: At what point, what do you say... what is your starting point?

POL1.: Well that morning,..... Or the night before from when Mr Watson got on the boat. I would like to hear about these briefings. How detailed they were. What was involved, who actually gave them. As I said to you on the phone. We get information from numerous different sources. Mike Ball for example could have their own agenda. If that's the case.

Lawyer: What if they do ?

POL1: Then they do. Just because.....

Lawyer: your just trying to cover everything no matter what.. cause that's ya know bad for business.

POL1: Whichever way you look at it. As I said we get information from different sources. I just don't believe that everything Mike Ball's told me as gospel. For a better word.

Lawyer: Now you gonna just let him tell the story or yo'all recording it ?

POL1: Just gotta tell the story.

Lawyer: You just gonna make notes, not gonna tape record it? Are you gonna interrupt him?

POL1.: No I'm not. I would outline Mr Watson's rights to him though. As I said to you yesterday on the phone. He is the only person who was with the deceased at the time and you did ask me is he a suspect, and yes he is. So it is a requirement by our law to just like I believe it is here, to outline a persona rights in any investigation.

Lawyer: Is Mike Ball operation a suspect in any regard.

POL1: Well they are suspect because they have already been charged and the matter is before the Court. So, yeh you can say they are suspect. In actual fact,....

Lawyer: Their a criminal suspect ?

POL1.: Their a defendant. Before the Australian Courts as we speak. Let me just outline your rights ok and if you should make any comment that be would fine. Um. Now I warn you that you do not have to make any further statements or answer any further question as anything you state or statement you do make is recorded by us and can be later used as evidence in any Court proceeding to either one convict you of any offence, or two, acquit you of any offence. Do you understand that ?

Watson: Yes.

POL1: Do you understand that you are also entitled to access legal representation. If I understand it correctly, Mr Austin is here. You have had an opportunity to speak with Mr Austin before speaking with us.

Watson: Yes.

Lawyer: Hold on second. You gonna be taking notes?

POL1: That's correct.

Lawyer: And your saying that what you write down could be used against him,?

POL1: That's correct.

Lawyer: No.

POL1: No?

Lawyer: If you have a statement if you want to write it out so that he saying that, signing that saying that, but something you wrote down recording what he said, we're not gonna agree that any of your notes could be used against him because there is no way that to the accuracy of the

POL2: He is given the opportunity to read through our notes and adopt those notes.

Lawyer: That's what I'm saying. Is there is gonna be a statement written out as to what you say he said?

POL2: If we make notes about conversations, he is given that opportunity to adopt those conversations to sign those as being true and accurate or they are not true and accurate. There is that opportunity.

Lawyer: So he is gonna have to read your notes and he is gonna have to read your notes.

POL2: Well the one's that we are going to be relying on that would be correct.

Lawyer: Well I assume that your gonna be relying on all of them. It seems a little convoluted. I

POL1: We are just complying with our legislative requirement.

Lawyer: Well then I saying that if you have something written down for him to read over and sign, I would agree with that. But you know.... With just your notes of what he is taking down ... I mean what your taking down, interpreting what he say....

POL2: Well as I said, he is given an opportunity to read through them, it's his choice where he wants to adopt those as being true and correct or not. If he wants to say they are not a correct record well that's fine. That's his opportunity. As you said, we are predominantly relying upon what we have got written in that statement. We basically want to hear from his lips that this is an interpretation of the Police officers interpretation of what was being said as being converted into a type written statement.

Lawyer: Right, if he read that at his leisure and what is there is correct..... Well what is he gonna say that you got your little notebook there you got this, he is gonna sign at the bottom of your notes....

POL2: He is given the opportunity to do that if wants to do so ... yes.

Lawyer: And if he says I'll talk to you but I'm not gonna sign your notes

POL2: That's fine. That's his opportunity. If he doesn't want to sign them, he's got no obligation to sign them.

Lawyer: Ok. Yo'all do things a little bit different and that's why we're not sure.

POL2: But it can still be used against him.

Lawyer: No it can't be used against him if he doesn't sign them.

POL2: These are our notes as to what our recollections are so we can use these notes. If he declined to sign those....

Lawyer: You can say that he told you that

POL2: that's right...

Lawyer: But then it's your word against his as to whether or not he said that.

POL2: That's right. As I said he is given the opportunity to have a look through to see how accurate

Lawyer: Given that we haven't seen your hand writing I'm, not sure how that would

POL2: See how we go then.

Lawyer: Yo'all have some questions you wanna ask him

POL2: Well does he want to provide a statement as from the night before how

Lawyer: If you want ask him specific questions about what happened... go ahead.
..... we want to co-operate with you but let's do it in the best and fairest way possible for both sides.

POL2: Sure.

Lawyer: As far as this goes I think statement saying this is what if I gave you a again, this is what I would say.

POL2: Have you already signed a copy of that?

Watson: Yeh. Well I have (ringing)..... yesterday.

POL2: The police would have kept a signed copy?
..... Greg signing again

Watson: Yeh. There were two copies kept one and I kept one.
..... indeterminable.....the original they kept

Watson: Then he gave me a copy of the one

POL1: So the one you got is signed as well ?

Watson: Well it's a copy with the notary republic's signature on it.... But that what's

POL2: That would be in town there I suggest
..... indeterminable.....

POL2: So if we go back down to when you board the boat that night, it was evening that you board the boat ?

Watson: Yes.

POL2: Can you just go through from there what briefings were ever said to you from that point.

Watson: Once we were on the boat?

POL2: Yes.

Watson: How he actually addressed us?

POL2: The actual process of once you boarded the boat – since you got on board the boat. So were there any briefing given when you first got on the boat ?

Watson: So far as diving ?

POL2: Any briefings at all.

Watson: Yeh – there was a just general overview of when we got on the boat, how and I think we went upstairs and they told us what cabins we were in whatever to go to the room make sure our luggage was there and then everybody met back up at the dive the main room up top.

POL2: Yep.

Watson: Everybody hung out there. Wade? The Ship Director on those last nights. He came in just kind of did the here, blah blah blah put a video on to show how the this that the other that were only on the Great Barrier reef and then kinda went around the room about the Dan Insurance and passed out those forms. Everybody who didn't have a current Dan Membership, they had a 30 day trip membership so those forms were filled out. Basically other than overview of this is your crew, this is your captain ... that was pretty much a welcome aboard greeting.

POL3: Nothing specifically related about to diving ?

POL2: Allrighty.

..... indeterminable.....

POL2: There was nothing specifically in relation to the diving in that first ...

Watson: Nothing other than just general overview

POL2: Luggage in cabins, glad you're here, DAN Insurance is done, identification of crew....

Watson: Yeh. Those were dive conditions still specific

..... indeterminable.....

POL2: briefing about any diving related activity that occurred?

Watson: the only dive brief that we had was the next morning after breakfast when we went out the backdeck where all the dive equipment was.

POL2: Now is that the diving deck off

Watson: Yeh the dive deck. They showed us were all the equipment was and everything and everybody made sure all their stuff was there, that was when Wade brought out his little chalkboard picture of the dive and did his dive

POL2: Wade, theCrew Captain ?

Watson: Yes.

POL2: Did you have Or was it actually a chalkboard.

Watson: I don't know. Maybe it was black with what looked like chalk drawing, but it may have been a I don't know, I didn't go and touch it or anything.

POL2: What did he address in that briefing specifically.

Watson: Oh he told us that you know the Yongala's I want to say he said 300 feet long but I don't think that's right. But you it's so many feet long,

POL2; He gives you a description of what the

Watson: He gives you a description of the wreck and there was all the drawings of the wreck there were various fish and he was pointing out you know if you went across the top of the boat you would see I think they were clown fish, you know and that they had names, and he so he was pointing that and then across the bottom of in the distance he makes this sharks that circle or whatever somewhere along the wreck and I don't know where it was there was some moray eel that hung out there....

POL2: The points of interest ...

Watson: Yeh yeh kind of. And basically said that you had two options. That you could drop down to the top of the wreck, you can drop all the way to the bottom and go along the bottom of the wreck and come back up to the top and depending on where your air level was you could either surface and they come get you or you could then go back to the front of the wreck. So you would go to the bottom first go down and then go back to the front.

POL2: Which end would you come in off? The Stern or the Bow of the Yongala ?

Watson: I don't have any idea.

POL2: Okay. You progress one end to the other

POL3: At neither one or the other

POL2: Or exactly as you say go to the lower one and then back up ?

Watson: Oh.... I think he said that if you were going to go down then back then obviously you go to the bottom first and then come back you know the people are certified go 100 feet you'll cross the top.

Lawyer: question or a bigger notebook

..... indeterminable.....

POL2: You could return or even surface.

Watson: That is correct.

POL2: just to collect

Watson: Yeh, They had the zodiac boats.

POL2: Did he mention any specifically terrain under the water at all. What the bottom of the ocean was going to be like. The depth of the bottom.

Watson: Yeh. He told us that it was around 100 feet.

POL2: Did he show what the bottom consisted of ?

Watson: What way?

POL2: Coral, rocks,.....

Watson: No. no. He didn't say anything about that I remember about bottom composition. My understanding was that the Yongala was not on a reef that it was just out in the open ocean so I Heaps of sand.

POL2: Can you remember if he told you it was sand or not ?

Watson: No I don't. No I don't. I assumption would be that it was because it was open ocean but I never actually went to the bottom so, you know, I don't have any first hand knowledge of what the bottom was.

POL2: Did he say how you would be getting to the entry points, obviously the exit points were going to be zodiac.

Watson: Yeh. The same zodiac.

POL2: Did he mention currents at all ?

Watson: Oh. Yeh he did say that you could go down oh somewhere where you were going across the bottom. He said that you could go to the bottom and you could swim or you could just drift with the current. But he offers his comment that when you come back up you could turn and go back to the butt of the wreck. My assumption was that's not what I would consider current compared to Cosmill Mexico because Comill you got to basically stick to the ground to keep to going with the current to stop. My assumption was the way he described go up and if you got enough air, swim back up. Well obviously if your swimming against the current and it's a basic current then it's just a non issue. That was my first impression of what this current was supposed to be like.

POL2: He didn't specify what the current was but your assumption was it was fairly light because he said you could come down - correct?

Watson: He said if he openly says to everybody you can swim against that's not much of a current.

POL2: Do you have much experience in diving ? How much do you have in diving?

Watson: Oh I don't know, you guys have got all my stuff. I think I got certified like in the late 90's. I believe.

POL2: How much of a current do you think you could swim against.

Watson: I have no idea.

POL2: What would you think ...

Watson: I mean, I don't know anything about currents but you can ... I just I don't know.

POL2: for any mention ? Must have been fairly light because you were saying you could come back.

Watson: Correct.

Watson: My assumption of the current based off his description was basically he was telling us that if you made yourself neutral you would drift one way or another. And that was basically my assumption that you wouldn't just stay in place, that you would drift.

POL2: You did mention that you could either swim along and when you say the bottom you mean the wreck?

Watson: Yeh the bottom of the wreck.

POL2: You swim along the wreck or drift with the current?

Watson: I 'm assuming that's what he meant by how much air you had that if you drifted you wouldn't use up much air and you go up, but if you swim you get down fast enough to go down to go up to go back.

POL2: Yep. Ok.

POL2: Did mention along the wreck.

POL2: So did you and Tina decided on which you were going to do it ?

Watson: Well, she was she was going to swim though using one of those recreational under which is the top was at 50 55 feet so that was

POL2: Either one run down.

Watson: we we're's just gonna go I mean I took my camera but I didn't take my cam corder so the first time we were just kinda gonna see what it was like to see if I wanted the next time to come back and used the cam corder.

POL2: You had more than one dive on that wreck

Watson: We were gonna be there all day. They were gonna do a night dive. Which, that night, which is the dive that Tina was told that she need to go with Wade on because of her certain chest(?) problem.

POL2: When was she told that ?

Watson: The night before.

POL2: So the night before ?

Watson: She talked to, she told, I think Wade about an advance party..... something like that and it was like \$75.00 or something like real cheap to get your advance and since we there, her and John the other guy from Chicago they were going to do the advance class and when there was mention of doing a night dive the following day, Wade said well you know you guys will go with us you know on the night dive.

POL2: Ok. So she actually booked in for an advanced class.

Watson: Well she had not actually

POL2: the offer ?

Watson: She had, they were, her John and couple of the other people were talking about doing it.

POL2: And that was discussed the night before you left port sort of thing ?

Watson: yeh... the night before. After they did the welcome aboard, and the video and all that,. Everybody kinda stood around and mingled and stuff and I don't know who brought up the subject of the advance class, but I know her, and John were talking about doing it and talked to Wade about it and I mention the night dive was and he said that tomorrow night we were gonna do the night dive and yo'all.....

POL2: Did your wife mention that on that night ?

Watson: Yeh on the night before.

POL2: Tina. just Tina would have to accompany him or was there any others that would have to ?

Watson: That I don't know... but he was talking to her when he said something about the night dive that if she when on it she would go with him. I don't know if he was going to talk with John at the same time or not I don't know.

POL2: So was it ever discussed her level of experience and level of expertise ?

Watson: What do you mean discussed ?

POL2: Did anyone discuss with you and her, obviously you don't mention that they didn't think she was not experienced enough for the night dive ? But they never discussed as to what her level of experience was ?

Watson: Well we filled out the DAN form and it had your experience level on.

POL2: Yep.

Watson: So... as far as that...

POL2: So cause he read that he mentioned the night dive? Would that be right ?

Watson: He mentioned something about, or someone mentioned something about the advanced class, so she asked about the advanced class. And that was then he said well if you want to do it we're doing a night dive tomorrow night but you will need to go with me on the orientation dive because she was a beginner. So he knew she was a beginner you know whether he knew, cause she was asking about the advanced. Obviously advances beginner so

POL2: So he did mention that she would have to be on an orientation die anyway.

Watson: She would go on an orientation dive for the night dive.

POL2: For the night dive?

Watson: Yeh. Just for the night dive.

POL2: Did mention any other dives that she could go on ?

Watson: No. That's how Mike Balls gotten away saying we were all on an orientation dive because Wade offered it for the night dive the next night. We were never offered an orientation dive, we're told that we needed on or anything to that effect for the morning dive. The only orientation dive ever mentioned to either one of us was for the night dive to take place the following night.

..... indeterminable.....

POL2: So your briefings at the Yongala what the Yongala was likeyou take any When you dive? So you always caught the zodiac across ?

Watson: Yes.

POL2: Had you tested your gear ? Had Tina tested her gear before your boarded the zodiac ?

Watson: On deck ?

POL2: On deck.

Watson: What do you mean by tested it?

POL2: Turn the air on.. check the both of you ?

Watson: She was going through the motions. I mean everybody on deck was basically going through it at the same time and just.... set your gear up, oh, everybody

was checking the weights to make sure that and everybody was doing the same thing at the same time.

POL2: Had she ever died in salt water before ?

Watson: I think she has.

POL2: So you tested the reg to see if he reg was working ? Both of them.

Watson: Yeh.... I tested my equipment.

POL2: Check the computer ?

Watson: What ?

POL2: Check the computer ?

Watson: After the wrist mounted..... It don't do anything until it's under the water it turns off – it turns off and you hit a button and it flashes and it won't activate until it's under the water.

POL2: So you hit the button and it flashed ?

Watson: It will flash for 2 hours until you go in the water and then it beeps and then its active.

POL2: And that's when your in the water ?

Watson: yes.

POL2: So you turned on before you left ?

Watson: When we were on the boat?

POL2: Yes.

Watson: yes.

POL2; Had Tina turned her's on?

Watson: I think her was automatic because her was not wireless like you wear on your wrist. Her's was connected to the regulator and I think it just automatically on.

POL2: So she doesn't have a button that you can remember.

Watson: Not that I'm aware of. I don't.... she bought all of her equipment when went through her certification.

POL2: Had you checked Tina's gear at all ?

Watson: AS far as what ?

POL2; Reg's working... any of the .

Watson: I didn't check the reg.

POL2: Do you know how much experience she had before that day? How many dives she had done ?

Watson: I think about a dozen.

POL2: Do you know where they were ? What actually training course were they ? Were they in a training pool ?

Watson: Some were training dives in blue water before we left Australia, we had gone out there at least once or twice

POL2: to bluewater ?

Watson: Yeh. And did a handful of dives just cause I didn't want to get there and have to do the first dive together... so we had done some dives up there. So

POL2: Is that bluewater or saltwater or

Watson: It's freshwater. It's a rock water.

POL2: So she had done a couple of dives or thereabouts?

Watson: Yep. Roughly that.

POL2: So you boarded the zodiac to actual drop point. Where the boats moored, where the Spoilsport was moored, halfway between the entry and set down first exit point?

Watson: I don't know. I figured it was when we woke up in the morning it was already moored there, because they went to the Yongala because they had those commercial divers there, they don't normally do the Yongala first.

POL2: Oh ok.

Watson: So they went there first so that the commercial divers could whatever they were doing before everybody got there.

POL2: Cause it was moored where the Spoilsport..... Could you see the entry and exit points? Let me explain by a buoy ?

Watson: I don't know. I don't see where we going because you get on the boat this way and your on the back and divers..... and the Spoilsport it's not like the boat You know.. and I obviously been there so I had no idea

POL2: So you board the zodiac with Tina. Did they go forward of the boat or backward?

Watson: They move off of the right side...

POL2: So where you enter the water is ? Basically in front of the Spoilsport was moored?

Watson: yeh yeh. Somewhere out tot eh front on the right side of the boat.

POL2: So on the starboard side of the boat?

Watson: Yeh. Well yeh. We got all the zodiac's here and point this direction.

POL2: You with some others in that boat /in the zodiac ?

Watson: yes.

POL2: Do you know who they were ?

Watson: Wader and two other guys. I had not met them the night before.

POL1: This the time you actually diving ? That you

Watson: No.

POL1: There was one other one before that ?

Watson: No. The first time we went out it was we were on of the first couple boats that went out. And so it went out to drop us off and I I believe that it was not really sure we been on the boat maybe 12 hours..... dropped off and went to the anchor rope and as soon as I got down 2 or 3 feet that's when my computer beeped that it wasn't registering so that's when I went back up and went back to the boat.

POL2: So how many were in the zodiac when you went down the first time.

Watson: 5 or 6 they wouldn't hold more than 6 I don't think. There was the driver, and either 5 or 6 people.

POL1: Wasn't actually a dive.

Watson: No. Well according to Mike Balls' called it our second time in the water cause the media had interpreted it as a second dive.

POL1: Driver plus 5 or 6.

Watson: Yes Driver plus 5 or 6 people cause I was towards he front sitting up here, Tina was my left, I don't know if there was somebody to her left in the back.

POL2: So you entered to the water?

Watson: Everybody did the backflip of the zodiac.

POL2: Okay.

POL1: So when you were sitting was Tina in front of you or to one of your sides.

Watson: She was to the left.

POL1: You say you went in the water and your computer beeped ?

Watson: Once we got to the I think they call the drag line, it's a buoy that's floating and you place the hand over fist to main mooring, so then you go hand over fist out to the wreck, once, as I say my computer kicks on at 2 or 3 feet. Once I got down to that depth it started beeping and that's when I realised it wasn't working. So that's when we started head back up and got back in the boat and went back. We got back in the zodiac and went back.

POL1: Even if it was activated it was beeping. It doesn't normally beep ?

Watson: No. it's water drive.

POL1: Was it a continuous beep was it ?

Watson: Yes. Beep....Beep...

POL1: Okay but what every second or something like that ?

POL1: And Tina was with you as you were going down ? She hadn't separated from you ?

Watson: No. No she was right there.

POL2: The beeping you looked at the computer ?

Watson: Yep. It just beeps and then the screen just flashes ?

POL2: Oh so the screen just flashes. So then you pop back up and

Watson: No. Cause this is when we went in cause they basically said drop in swim straight for the line, we dropped in, went over the boat and it was beeping. So we got to the line, basically I don't even think our tanks were under the water.

POL2: Oh okay.

Watson: I mean it wasn't like we were halfway down to the So basically enough to get our hair wet, motions pop up, my computer is messed up, so we got back on the boat, on the little zodiac, it was either him or another one, I'm not clear.

POL1: Back to the main vessel?

Watson: Yes.

POL1: Did you see anyone when you got back to the main vessel ? Or talk to you when you got back there ?

Watson: I talked to It was an odd name.... I'm almost positive it was

POL1: What did you tell

Watson: I asked him, I asked him for quarter. I like I need a coin cause the way my battery is you stick a coin in and turn the battery off and I said that I need something to get the off.

POL1: Did you think it was the battery playing up?

Watson: Well that's all it could be other than that computer so if it weren't the battery that's all I can do. So I popped the battery off turn around the other way and quit flashing. So the battery was just in there reverse.

END TAPE 1.

Tape 2

CORONIAL HEARING

DEATH OF CHRISTINA MAE WATSON

**RECORDING OF INTERVIEW ON 24/04/2007 OF DAVID GABRIEL WATSON &
ROBERT AUSTIN (LAWYER)**

Which were ... *crackling*

And it was red or white?

.. it was like one of those cell batteries?

It's stopped working

Pol.Off: Did any one else talk to you and sort of ???

Watson: Somebody came over and took the tanks off. The air back to the tanks,
and I don't know if they ? from those tanks, or whatever but by the time
I got back al the equipment was ? and I know that the air was pretty
? and the tanks were changed when we came back. I don't know who did it
because we were only on there for a couple of minutes.

Pol.Off: *crackle* Did anyone say "check that. Are you alright to do again?"

Watson: I don't think so. I think basically I said..... Check the battery
..... to see if working ...

Pol.Off: *crackle*

Watson:???????? So my assumption was that ...???.....there was also
no way to know

Pol.Off: okay - there was also no way to know Going out back in the water.....

Pol.Off: ????? was there a flash?

Watson: there's 2 button on it, you press the first one and the computer comes on.

Pol.Off: Yep

Watson: then until you're get in the water, It's supposed to register but ...

Pol.Off: how do you mean?

Watson: it supposed to know you're - it's like a little transmitter. It's zipped into the regulator, not the regulator, but the second stage... it's supposed to register your psi but they never do. Never have. My dive instructor I bought mine because he had the same thing, his never did, so we just you know basically you never knew if your would call if it ?? activated when it got in the water. For some reason it was something to do with the way the signal was sent, but it set better in water than it did in air. So you obviously had no way to know ??

Pol.Off: So how long would you have been on board .??

Watson: it was when we came, we took our BC's off, suited down. I went over to Tina, either Oozie made ??? anyway I talked to Oozie, he got me a coin to fix it, I went back, basically getting our gear back on so 5 minutes at the most for the gear, ..?? we didn't go back and lounge around or , we basically went back and I fixed it and then we got back on the next boat and headed out.

Pol.Off: Did you.....?? have any dramas or anything like that.

Watson: What?

Pol.Off: Any dramas? Or problems?

Watson: No. not that I am aware of.

Pol.Off: did she mention anything that you can remember?

Watson: ?? basically we got on the boat and I went to Oozie, she was on the other side of the boat so ...

Pol.Off: ??

Watson: yeah. We went to the back ???? we felt there was nothing

Pol.Off: So you guys were ??? got straight back in the boat here?

Watson: Yeah. The next one was there.

Pol.Off: Obviously ????

Watson: We had a couple .. I don't know how many they had but it's an open
crackle

Pol.Off: ??? so you would come and go, if that's right, you could come and go – like
if you got straight back on, jump in the rubber and go again.

Watson: Yeah, I believe so. We were one of the first groups to go so we came back
and I had ...??? there were still people not even been in yet.

Pol.Off: okay. Now ..

Crackle

Pol.Off: So you just jumped in the line.

Watson: yeah.

Watson: ??? there were 2 younger guys, ???

Pol.Off: 2 young guys?

Watson: Yeah, I don't have any idea what their names were but I know that from after
.?? they ride in the back after everything had happened, back to Townsville
and going upstairs and talking I know one of them at least ???

The 2 of us

[few minutes of loud crackling]

Pol.Off: So you then went back out to the ? buoy?

Watson: yeh, I guess so. I don't know. I have no idea who was around then. We were ..?? back to the wreck. I had no idea.....

Pol.Off: so you can't see the divers at all?

So you arrived at the buoy, um, were you guys first in? or ?

Watson: basically ????

It was back flip. You just rolled

Pol.Off: Where was Tina on your ride out? That time?

Watson: I think she was on the left. I'm pretty sure it was Wade and those 2 other guys in front of us.

Crackle

Pol.Off: so who went back into the water? .. ????

Watson: Pretty much the same as first time. I just started to swim for the ?

Pol.Off: So you swam on the surface, or did you always swim on the surface, or do you actually go under the water ?

Watson: you can do either. I mean what you do when you roll off you usually you just, your under water so you just stay, and so we basically roll off to the wreck or where we were going, I believe it was the opposite side of the boat again, so we went under the boat. And then basically you know? so we actually went straight for the line and then started going down.

Pol.Off: Okay. Fair enough. And when you say under the water ?

Watson: About 5 feet at the most, I mean you've got to go under enough to get under the boat. But ... we were under the boat

started beeping again, so it wouldn't have been no more than 5 feet under or thereabouts.

Pol.Off: [crackle]

So Tina's to your left or to your right?

Watson: crackle - left

Pol.Off: And then you swam to the line, you've gone down the line ?

Watson: Yeah. The line is the line tied on to the main anchor rope where we spoke of ... you go down at an angle but I tend to think that it maybe at some other time you can swim >?? The line.

Pol.Off: So when you say the ?? that's the one that anchored to the wreck?

Watson: Yeah. That's the one -I don't know if it's on the wreck but that's the one that ? obviously nobody attaches to the wreck. They could have ?? dive boats to and that where I think those commercial divers were working on that morning.

Pol.Off: Okay. ??? I didn't even know commercial divers were there until after everything had happened and John came back, and said that the reason we ? the Yongala was because it had ?? up.

Pol.Off: Who told you that there was a reason why ? ??

Watson: John.

Pol.Off: okay.

[few minutes of loud crackling]

Pol.Off: Okay, so as your going down the line, is it hand over hand? Going down, or you are just descending?

Watson: I mean just pulling yourself down. ????

Pol.Off: ??

Watson: To that one she was ?? kind of pulling on the side sort of thing. ??
she was still on my left at this point. We were both on the same side of the rope.

Pol.Off: okay.

[crackle]

?? did you see them coming down with you?

Watson: They were behind us. We were in front of them because we basically went straight to the line and they were behind us, I don't know whether they were 10 feet behind us, or 30. Pretty hard..... they were behind us.

Pol.Off: Did anyone, Wade ever mention to you the previous night that you must have function on the boat, doing orientation dives or something like that?

Watson: yes. ??? doing the orientation dive or ???

Pol.Off:

Watson: Yeh – they told me afterwards.

Pol.Off: that's what they told you?

Watson: yeh. They told them to go with ?

Pol.Off: okay. You think one of those was from Louisiana?

Watson: I'm pretty sure.

Pol.Off: ok

Watson: But I have no clue what there names are.

Pol.Off: ok.

[crackle]

Pol.Off: did any of guys have ? cameras or anything like that that you can remember?

Watson:

Pol.Off: ??? going down to the wreck level?

Watson: No we'd come to where the drag line started, or ?

Pol.Off: So the ? line is actually ?

Watson: Well, I don't know if it is on the seabed or if its ? to the nose of the boat.

Pol.Off: so – you've got the water level. ?? be at an angle, so it comes down ?

Watson: yeh – this ? this is the buoy line, this is the Yongala, there's another line you know it's may 15 feet that drags back to the surface. The boats drop you off here and hand over fist on that one, as you go down that one

Pol.Off: ?? so this buoy line takes you down to the wreck.

Watson: yeh.

Pol.Off: so how long would ??

Watson: ? ? you use the buoy like that ? it's got a buoy on it.

Pol.Off: If we call this the buoy line, it takes you to the main ?

Watson: ?????????????????????? like a mooring or the anchor line, I've always called this the drag line. I don't know if that's the proper term but that's ...

Pol.Off: ?? the drag line?

Watson: yeh. That's what I've always called it. ??

Pol.Off: So you guys ????????????????// scuba diving

Pol.Off: 2 I've never scuba dived in my life.

Pol.Off: The dragline takes you to the mooring line and that takes you to the wreck.

Watson: Correct.

Crackle

Few minutes crackle

Pol.Off: did you see anyone else on ? the wreck?

Watson: No. I mean we'd basically got there and then it started.

Pol.Off: So you ? going down the wreck?

Watson: Yeh. Down I don't know.....cracker

Pol.Off: so what side of the vessel were you on?

Watson: The wreck was on my right side. I mean I was almost on top of the wreck when ?? cup off a little bit, and we you know the wrecks here and we're kind of facing it this way, this part here is on my left, so my right arm would have been closest to the wreck.

Pol.Off: Yeh. So you're on the deck side of the boat, or ?

Pol.Off: 2 The boat's got a straight bottom on it

Watson: Yeh but we're at the top, because of the visibility there was no way, I mean you couldn't see the bottom so I've no idea. I don't know which way the wreck was,

Pol.Off: What sort of super structure on the boat? Like were there cabins or gantries and stuff down the side of the boat?

Pol.Off: do you know which side which side?

Watson: No. because we were never far enough to see any super structure or anything like that.

Pol.Off: But you were actually on the vessel?

Watson: yeh. We were at it, at either the nose or the back, whichever.

Pol.Off: You could grab it?

Watson: If I'd swam over, we were maybe here to the wall to it, it wasn't like on top of it. We were out from it and it was - my right hand was the closest to it.

Pol.Off: yep. What was the visibility like?

Watson: Oh. It was ??? we went down the main anchor line as soon as I could see the top of the wreck I looked at my computer to see what the depth was. Someone had told me it was a good way to always figure out the visibility when you can see something that you know, you figure out how - the top of the wreck was in ? 55 feet and we were roughly 25 feet, so I it would be whatever.

Pol.Off: I'm not a very good artist here. As it lies say on the sand, ?? one side of the vessel lies on its side, one side of the vessel has like cargo holds, gantry crane, cabins that sort of thing. The other side ??? in the water s it ? I know you were saying that can you tell me what side you were on, whether it was the super structure side or the hull?

Watson: I can only guess because I never saw any super structure stuff.

Pol.Off: So you think you were on the ?

Watson: I . if we can't get through those, it could have been 50 feet where there is nothing but just a flat deck.

Pol.Off: but you would know if it was flat or if it was curved like the hull?

Watson: I wouldn't know. I mean I think... I didn't see any super structure stuff so I just ?? all I could do was just make an educated guess on which side we were on. I mean if I was going to guess I would say on the hull side. Because only because I didn't see any super structure stuff. But like I said if we came in at the nose of boat there was nothing there so you know, we wouldn't really know.

Pol.Off: What were the currents like?

Watson: Oh. As soon as we got off the anchor line,

Pol.Off: That's this one?

Watson: Yeh the ? line, and started to go down to the wreck we were looking over at the top of it and that's the reason I don't know because your looking at the side of it, you know, I don't know so we were looking at the side of it but as we started to go I noticed on ? blowing like the grass down in a strong wind, and I noticed that we were moving out from it a little bit like this is the wreck and the current's not going straight across but its kind of down and out so its just down and actually away from the wreck...

Pol.Off: So it's not directly down the wreck, it's off the wreck?

Watson: yes.

Pol.Off: At what angle ? off the wreck?

Watson: Not a 45 degree angle, less than 45 degrees but it wasn't going directly with the wreck.

Crackle

Pol.Off: What was the speed like?

Watson: oh. I mean it wasn't as strong as I experienced at Cozumel. I mean, I couldn't even guess of the speed. It was, to me it was every bit as strong as at Cozumel.

Pol.Off: would you call it a strong current?

Watson: Yeh. It was equally as strong as Cozumel's -before that it was the strongest current I have ever been in. This was equal to Cozumel.

Pol.Off: And with the .. What were you diving on there? Coral? Or a wreck? Or

Watson: Cozumel is - all you do is drift out. Cozumel is a little island off the coast of Mexico and there's a space between the 2 current ? 200, 300 foot visibility - you can see your ? so as soon as you hit the water you can see the

bottom. You may go down 100 feet or even more, but you just float and the dive boat is up top and you watch as you are drifting and the dive . there were 5 or 6 others most of the time and there was a divemaster with us, and I think he had with him a little thing to make it easier to get up off the sea and just basically when the ? kind of motion everybody just ?? clear of the boat.

Pol.Off: So would you have had to have ? during that time?

Watson: Would you have had to? Yeh.

Pol.Off: Would you have stopped to have a look at something?

Watson: Well that's what ? you .. stick you hand in the sand. You could swim, even with it, wear yourself out. Cozumel's just a drift

Pol.Off: How long would you hang on there.

Pol.Off: 2 would you have to put your hands in the sand? ... the strength of the current.

Watson: yeh. I don't .. have any idea of how to guestimate other than...

Pol.Off: so the same thing, trying to swim against the current you would wear yourself out.

Watson: yeh.

Pol.Off: so what was... over the wreck when Tina started experiencing?

Watson: yeh. We had just left the anchor rope and she swam, floated out a little bit and ... side of the anchor rope, we weren't ... it probably would have been our first 10 or 15 feet. I kind of looked at her and she looks at me and she gives me one of these motioned back to the rope, so we turned and I grabbed her hand and we started swimming and we were just like staying... because we're not going anywhere.

We were insight of the anchor rope. At a max of 25 feet or just.

Pol.Off: okay ??? crackle the anchor rope ????????????????? Tina

Watson: This is correct. She motioned back towards the drop in? ???

Pol.Off: ??

Watson: I ? her left hand into my right hand. *Crackle*

Pol.Off: Were you good at using ? (?)

Watson: ... no we never requested it..... I mean they had a charge for it. You could request ?

Pol.Off: right.

[Few minutes crackling]

Pol.Off: ... um still at roughly the same depth?

Watson: Yep.

Pol.Off: do you ? ??? start swimming back against the current.

Watson: yeh. We were facing into the current and basically trying to swim back to the anchor rope.

Pol.Off: but you weren't getting anywhere

Watson: ??

Pol.Off: okay. So what's happened at that point there?

Watson: Basically I had to realise that we weren't going anywhere. I turned to her, motioned up – she me, ?? shoulder to shoulder and started to grab my BC, squeeze the button a few times, I indicating to her what to do,

?? we times and then she looked back and she did that, like she couldn't go up or it wasn't working or something. I don't know.

Pol.Off: and you squeezed yours a couple of times?

Watson: Well, I didn't .. I motioned and said yeh, I motioned to squeeze it.

Pol.Off: ??? inflator button.

Watson: yeh.

Pol.Off: and you saw her squeeze hers ?????

Watson: yes

Crackle

Pol.Off: okay what happened then?

Watson: When I realised she couldn't go up, at that point I was starting really get worried, so I grabbed a hold of a strap of her BC, grabbed her with my right hand, kind of pulled her in and basically swam as hard as I could back to ??

Pol.Off: ?

Watson: Yeh. I think it was her left.

Pol.Off: Were you making any headway?

Watson: oh. Basically I started to swim that way. It didn't seem we were moving that fast. I remember turning my head back and trying to yellow, you've got to swim. And then turned back and >? A few seconds later was when I felt the ? on the side of my head, she knocked the mask and regulator, my regulator off.

Pol.Off: So when you were swimming back ?? your right hand. Her left side?

Watson: yeh.

Watson: no when I pulled in she's just started to ...

Pol.Off: dragging you.

Watson: she was probably close to ?

Pol.Off: okay

You were swimming?

Watson: at that point I realised something serious was going on. Get her you know back to the anchor line as fast as I could.

Crackle

Pol.Off: So when you said you broke your regulator off, was it actually broken off, or pulled down?

Watson: well, either her hand or head or something hit me across the face, my mask came floating off, the first thing I did was let go and then grabbed my mask before it went missing because I obviously would not see. So I pulled my mask on, cleared the air, took a breath, realised that my regulator's not there, so I grabbed, I have a spare....? So its to me trouble. ...?? Obviously without my regulator. So I reached out and grabbed my inflator hose that's got the regulator button, it's got a button to clear water out and I remember thinking that if I get caught ... I'm dead and so I pressed the button that I thought was the right one and it started squirting air out so I put it get it back in my mouth and it ..?? breath and I turned around and that's when she's you know, 5 or so feet down below me.

Pol.Off: Ok - *crackle for a few minute*

Pol.Off: what do you mean when you said you pressed the wrong button.

Watson: It's got one button to press to ?? inflated, it's got another button you press because all regulators have them, I think it's called a purge valve. You press it and it forces air out. We used ?? you just grab it and press that button and you don't have to exert any ? because it activates on you sucking in, or if you've lost your breath, put .?? and the air ? already dealt .? so I grabbed that goes for salt water and I was out of breath. I just ? if my ?? I got to breath - I was sucking in more water and you know it was just kinda what was going on.

Pol.Off: ??

Watson: yeh. Because I didn't know my regulator was? My mouth piece was still in,

Pol.Off: oh okay

Watson: and I didn't realise that until after basically we got back home and it wasn't attached, so the mouth piece was there, ?? and then when I cleared my mouth ? mask through the mouth piece came out.

Pol.Off:2 ?? mouth piece?

Watson: ?? I don't know.

Crackle

Pol.Off: So at this time you were still above the wreck?

Watson: Yeh. At this time I'm still around the top of the wreck.

Pol.Off: so you had gone back to the side where ?????????????????? how far away you were from the ?

Watson: about 25 feet or so, because?

Pol.Off: So you could still see it?

Watson: yeh. When I turned I could see the anchor rope – I actually saw somebody hauling it.

Pol.Off: okay

Watson: there was somebody wearing a yellow tank, or a yellow wetsuit. I know I saw yellow when I turned.

Pol.Off: So you've seen Tina below you that's when you turned ..

Watson: when I turned back and located her. I upended myself and ... down and realised she was going down almost as fast as I was and you know at that point where And it was 100 feet so I figured I am half way to the bottom so I either have to go to the bottom and try and sit there and try find somebody to ? forward or turn around and go back up. I decided I would get to the top as fast I could.

Pol.Off: ok. Roughly how many people were ?

Watson: no. there was just a few short ? ??? there was stuff

Crackle

Pol.Off: and you actually saw ? you saw just a single diver? On ??

Watson: I don't know a single diver. When I turned to go back I just saw something yellow and that was the direction I headed. So I just headed that way.

Pol.Off: were you headed back to the line?

Watson: I basically took a 45 degree angle because I had to get there fast and I knew I had to swim. I obviously couldn't have taken the time , ? the safest way to get up there fast was at a 45 degree angle. I just you know hoped I would get there ???

Crackle

Pol.Off: So this yellow, ?? diver did you see?

Watson: Yeh. Because I swam to it and grabbed him by the shoulder and I was shaking him. I was yelling "Tina, Tina Tina" and pointing and hoping it was somebody from the boat, maybe it was someone who would understand what I was saying and pointed and looked that way – keep a visual on where she was or whatever

Pol.Off: Okay. So it was a yellow wet suit or tank.

Watson: yeh. It was something yellow.

... one person left.

Watson: I saw the yellow. I went to the yellow. It was a person, looked at me – this person would know it was me. I shook him, I pointed back in the direction I had just came from. It was saying Tina's name, he just kind of looked at me and at that point I just ??? there was somewhere in the neighbourhood of where the other drag line is. So . I just lost it for the time.

Pol.Off: ?????/

Watson: Yeh I think so.

Pol.Off:

Watson: Yeh. I don't know if hey were actually ? they were all beneath her at a depth of 25 feet. They weren't on the wreck and they weren't out floating above it. So they were all on the anchor line.

Pol.Off: ?? at that point 45

Watson: Once I left that person I went straight up. Because they obviously didn't know what I was trying to get across to them or anything, so ...

Pol.Off: So you broke the surface – what was ?

Watson: I only remember basically I went to the surface and then just started yelling help, then somebody... the only thing that I remember seeing was ..?? somebody came over and wanted to borrow a hose. I don't remember seeing anybody ??

Pol.Off: do you know how far away from the buoy you were when you broke the surface?

Watson: no.

Pol.Off: you don't remember seeing it?

Watson: no – I mean I just went up and just started yelling - the boat - I remember he came to me and I went to him. ??? to the boat And we went back to the Spoilsport.

Pol.Off: Were you far off when you saw him?

Watson: I don't know how far it was. I mean I came over and started yelling and then yelled. He obviously heard me and was headed in my direction. I don't know whether he was 10 feet away, or how far ... I just remember him coming up and slowing down near me.

Pol.Off: off the Spoilsport?

Watson: yeh.

Pol.Off: did you see Tina being brought to the surface at all?

Watson: no.

Pol.Off: They told me later that ... the only time I saw him was when they called me to the bridge to ask about her medical history whatever. And there was a boat out in the distance somewhere and I saw them doing CPR. They told me she was okay. She was dehydrating and they had an IV in her.

Pol.Off: so did you see the .. arrive on the dive site, were there any other boats?

Watson: we were asleep – they left Townsville at night, everybody went to their beds and..

Pol.Off: when you jumped in the Zodiac for your dive, do you remember if there were any other boats in the area?

Watson: I don't remember seeing any.

Pol.Off: okay. So this other boat, you don't remember that being there or arriving.

Watson: no – I don't remember seeing it.

Pol.Off: *crackle*

Pol.Off: was there anything wrong medically with Tina because she had had a heart operation.

Watson: When she had that we'd just left, I remember she came in on a Friday, instead of doing heart surgery she was????? So I don't know anything about it...

Pol.Off: what

Watson: no. we were friends for years. She was ...

Pol.Off: I was just trying to work out what the operation, about 99.

Watson: I don't even know – they said it was something that was. it was like ... I had never had a conversation ? We had been in classes off and on before we even knew each other.

Pol.Off: and you are a rescue diver?

Watson: oh. Search and recovery or whatever it is called.

Pol.Off: what do you actually get trained to do?

Watson: ah. They do all kinds of stuff, like underwater navigation, like search patterns and stuff, lift back, and he told us to fix it if somebody is on the surface like

unconscious – he told us how to swim somebody back to the boat, and how to get their equipment off and give CPR while your still on the surface.

END OF TAPE 2

Tape 3

CORONIAL HEARING

DEATH OF CHRISTINA MAE WATSON

**RECORDING OF INTERVIEW ON 24/04/2007 OF DAVID GABRIEL WATSON &
ROBERT AUSTIN (LAWYER)**

Continued from tape 2

Pol.Off: Do you know what the guys from search and recovery.

Watson: Because we did the search patterns and then we did the lift back and the ?
whenever somebody surfaces

Pol.Off: okay – so had you thought at all about ? Tina's weight belt at all?

Watson: Yeh.

Pol.Off: Any reason why that wasn't?

Watson: because she ...?? She was a beginner and I remember ?? the
rescue thing when they told us how to do the free ascent, you take the
and you take ?????????????????? on the way up. Those you take a
breathe and you take several more on the way up. Those first things crossed
my mind but obviously we cant call her she didn't go up – there was
nothing wrong with her. To me it seemed foolish to put her in that kind of
jeopardy. Because if I had done that and she ... you guys wanted be sitting
.... So I mean..

Pol.Off: so are you saying there that free ascent

Watson: We did that in Advanced or Rescue I don't know which. I think it was

Pol.Off: so was she breathing then when you the mask of her.

Pol.Off: 2 did she seemed exhausted

Watson: as far as I know, I mean turned from what

Pol.Off: were there bubbles?

Watson: there were bubbles. I cant tell you if they were just coming out of the mask, or if she was breathing through her bubbles. I mean that's ...

I don't have any idea. That all??? By the time I got my mask on until the time I was it was about 5 seconds or so.

Crackle

Pol.Off: Did you think to, or were you in a position to go down after her, just before?

Watson: Like I said, I mean I could have gone down but I would have just had to sit there. And if I'm at 50 feet I can obviously get to the surface a lot quicker to find somebody who is you know trained at .. I would not even know how to bring her up if she couldn't go up, like if she was unconscious or whatever so my thinking was well if I go to the bottom, I'm at 100 feet if something major is wrong and I have to go and get somebody to help, it's going to take me a lot longer to get to the surface. Just because of you know the nitrogen build-up and all that, so I would have had to go up a hell of a lot slower than I could, you know, at 50 feet without myself getting to the surface and you know.

Pol.Off: Do you know how long you had been under the water?

Watson: they told me about, my dive computer had I think about 11 minutes on it.

Pol.Off: you watch. Do you use those dive tables.

Watson: that's what we had at our school here.

Pol.Off: did you have dive tables in your training?

Watson: when I did it we did all ours on the late computer change until they basically just called the dive tables as like history of diving. We didn't actually do any diving where we actually worked off the tables or anything like that.

Pol.Off: so they did teach you how to use those tables at all?

Watson: No they just walked through it like back in the old days guys would use a stop watch and this that and the other but my instructor had a computer so he was big on the computers. So when I got certified me and a buddy of mine, he got certified when I did, we both held computers because he said you can dive a whole lot longer on a computer than on dive tables and it works out the same so we didn't barely even touch the dive tables. It was basically just use the computers for what people use them for and that was that.

Pol.Off: do you know how long you are going to be under the water at 30 feet before you have to worry about decompression?

Watson: no

Pol.Off: Did you consider the option of getting hold of Tina and bringing her back up with you? . When she went to the bottom, just before you separated did you go down and grab her.

Watson: Well that's what I did but I couldn't catch her so I realised that we were going to the bottom.

Pol.Off: how fast was she sinking?

Watson: about as fast as I was swimming down. It appeared that I was going down and my perception of what was going on was that I'm not going to catch her to we get to the bottom and once we get there, all I could do was sit there, and I don't know, if somebody came by try to flag them down or something, so my instinct was to get to the surface to find somebody that was trained to handle that kind of stuff.

Pol.Off: It couldn't have been an option even if you dropped to the ocean floor and she was there to bring her back up with you.

Watson: She couldn't go up before, so that was part of the thinking was when I tried to get her to do the BC and she And nothing happened, so at that time it

proved to me that there was a problem with her going up whether it was with her equipment or whatever, so if I had of thought if I could pull her weights at 50 feet, she would be probably had an embolism or something going up so that would probably just be causing more harm because she was still, we were still looking, she was able to make motions and understand what I was asking her to do, so she was still coherent and she was still conscious, so to me at that point dropping away towards a place where a greater harm than it what may have been going on at that time. So anything else I thought of, if I fallen with her that again would have been the only option that I would have known to do would be to pull her weights and then she would be going up from 100 feet.

Pol.Off: What if she had ? from the ocean fall and dropping your weights or inflating your vest?

Pol.Off: 2 ... inflate your vest you would have a more controlled ascent.

Watson: No . ? my weights and inflate my vest? That would?

Pol.Off: 2 either option, either dropping your weights or inflating your vest?

Watson: Well that's what I did when I was at 50 something feet, I went to the surface. That's what I say, I could either have gone down to try and figure what was going on and then going to the surface to get somebody, and then to come back.

Pol.Off: 2 I'm not second guessing you. All I am saying is did you consider it as an option if you had of followed her to the ocean floor? Could you hang on to her and operate, inflate your vest and/or drop your weights at that point?

Watson: I would never have done anything like that. I mean that's what I'm saying, in my decision to go up at that point and not go to the bottom was there was

nothing that I have ever done or practised doing that I would have had any knowledge of how to get somebody up, you know from 100 feet.

Pol.Off: I just want to clarify it, I' not having a go at you. That wasn't an option that was in your consideration? Because you weren't trained for that, or something like that.

Watson: Well, I guess that's partially correct - When she started to sink the first thing that was running through my head was to go down after her, then the only way I could explain to friends was like I don't know how to saying anything that it seemed like a rolodex was flipping in my head of thinks that I have learnt and the next thing that came to mind was go get somebody who knows what to do because you are of no use to her if you incapacitate yourself going to the bottom, or if I'd gone to the bottom and then you know, if I got to the bottom and she wasn't breathing obviously I would have panicked and probably shot to the surface and then you guys would be investigating Mike Ball for the death of 2 people, so all that stuff ran though my head and basically I just went with what to me seemed to be the safest and the most efficient way to get somebody to get to her, and then know how to bring her up without causing greater harm.

Pol.Off: 2 You are saying that was the best option for you at the time?

Watson: yeh.

Pol.Off: When you guys separate, and she knocked the mask off your face and the regulator out, and you separated so you corrected yourself – you said you turned and tried to go back after her. Did you ever make contact with her again?

Watson: no

Pol.Off: You didn't even get hold of her or anything like that.

Watson: No when I saw her, she was sinking down and I can still remember today like it was yesterday.

Pol.Off: her eyes were wide open?

Watson: yep. Her hands were like this and upended.

Pol.Off: Take your time.

[Conversation undecipherable] ,

Pol.Off: 2 Do you have an email address on your business card? Because I don't

Lawyer; I'll put it on

Pol.Off: We are just about finished and won't be here much longer and we'll get out of here. Not too much longer. Only a couple of more things.

Traffic noises

Conversation: - they are scattered throughout the world, including Korea. It is unfortunate that it's taken as long as what it has, but it is just a matter of trying to track all these people down. Because obviously our aim is to
Sorry about that Gabe.

Pol.Off:2 I'll quickly touch on that briefly. As she was going away, did you ever come back down to her and actually reach her?

Undecipherable

Obviously I know about the, cant think of the right word, I guess conflict between you and the Thomas family. Obviously we do know about it. I know there is not a real happy relationship because....

Watson: you mean that I?? ???

Pol.Off: you mean that Tina was having some problems there as well?

Watson: yeh.

Lawyer: To give you a little bit of background while Gabe was still over there, they wanted him to sign a Power of Attorney to let them control the funeral arrangements. They got the mother to talk to him and I think But she off the wall, Tina was still seeing a psychologist or psychiatric services to deal with the personal relationship or lack of relationship with her mother.

Pol.Off: Was there a journal she was keeping at all?

Lawyer: ????? before I told you this. Before I got back to Australia, they had gone to where Tina worked at ? and ? weren't supposed to let them in but they let them in and they took all her stuff. Tina had to have a number code to get into the offices. She kept all her stuff that she never wanted any of her parents to ever find up there, because when she went into her apartment this was before we got engaged, she had basically split up with her Mom, she moved into her apartment and she made this little old lady at the place to sign a note to say that she would never under any circumstances even if somebody had died in the street, allow her mother to get into her apartment, because she said her Mom would go and lie to this lady or whatever to get access into her apartment and then steal stuff or whatever. She actually had a that she would have the County Sheriff come and arrest her because her Mom wanted ??

Pol.Off: to arrest Tina?

Lawyer Yes to arrest Tina because she wanted the dog. It was Tina's.

If there was a journal that she wanted to keep hidden it would have been with that stuff. I have not come across anything like that.

Pol.Off: okay.

Lawyer: I had to write a strong letter just to get the wedding gifts. They were given to her and Gabe. Under the circumstances it is a bad situation no matter what.

Lawyer: This is something that Gabe, I think he know, and she would know that she was returning gifts to ? She actually created a wedding registry, where all the items that she knew we already had on the second registry so it would match and then returned those items to the store and Macys is obviously not in business. The only people who have control over the wedding registry is the bride, the groom and the bride's mother.

Watson: I mean she is.... She is got to be if not the most despicable person I have ever met. To me just the fact that she would go to that much trouble just to not allow me to send out thank note and also the signing book from the funeral went missing.

Pol.Off: If Tina had one of those copies we are looking for,

Pol.Off: this journal? You weren't warned that a search warrant for ?

Lawyer: I don't know what ... but there would be stuff that they would have.

Pol.Off: and again, I'm going to ask this, where this problem is coming from. Um. The insurance on Tina's life, what was the go with that?

Watson: *undecipherable*

Lawyer there is no life insurance.

Pol.Off: There was something where her Dad was the beneficiary.

Watson: There was basically a minimal burial policy, I don't know the amount. We called Ca.. because I had to call up there to find it because they had a It's like a company retirement plan and I had to call up there because we were doing the estate. So there was not a beneficiary on the Plan then it would go to the estate, well when I called the girl said, she obviously didn't have a form 1K cos lot of people our age, don't have that kind of stuff and I said somebody told me that C ? just gives everybody just like a basic insurance policy, and she said 'well yeh' and I said could you check and she said her Dad has already got that as he is the beneficiary. All the amount were \$1500, you know \$6500, \$4500.

Pol.Off: What we have heard is that Tina went and saw work, I think it was at work, about increasing that life insurance policy ??? both way. And that you had asked her to go and do that and then transfer it to yourself.

Watson: I told the guys in Australia that one of the first things the guy asked me, ?? increase in the ?

Pol.Off: What we have heard is that Gabe had asked Tina to increase her life insurance policy 5-fold and make him the beneficiary and that she had actually then approached, I think it was Parisians about increasing that policy and changing the beneficiary.

Watson: She was doing that. ? So far as insurance when we bought the house a month or 2 before we got married, I don't remember the exact date. Our realtors said yesterday they have what they call Mortgage Insurance which basically if something happens to one of the others, the mortgage is covered, so she was started to pay to work on that. I had talked to my insurance guy

who went to college together, and was talking about my insurances this, that and the other and Tina's insurance.

Anyway we paid \$189,000 for the house, so my discussion was somewhere between \$200,000 and \$250,000 life insurance because we were 26 at the time and you can get 30 year term insurance. Well if we got that it would cover us to 55 or 56 which, you know, if all goes well, would be a great retirement age. That way if anything ever happened, once recoverable I'd talk to Mark and we had some calls on this that and other but we had to get a physical so by the time we had to buy the house, we moved and with the wedding and all that we were just going to do it when we get back. So he gave me the papers and they are sitting on my kitchen table after we got back we were going to make a decision, do the physical and basically sign it and mail it and then basically a week after I got back we got the paper work for the mortgage insurance we'd asked about, that we would have signed and mailed off.

Pol.Off: so the only insurance was you were looking at life insurance through Hughes,

Watson: Correct.

Pol.Off: ?? basically when we bought the house – it was one of things where I guess as a guy I was thinking if I do something stupid or if something happens to me, she can either pay off the house and keep working, or stay in the house and she don't have to work for .. and that was why we were thinking \$200,00 - \$250,000 because we had covered the house, or give somebody the ?

Pol.Off: The papers were delivered but you still had to see the doctors.

Watson: Yeh. I mean yeh, that was the very early preliminary early stuff.

Pol.Off: and there was the mortgage insurance which would have come with the loan.

Watson: It was offered as like an extra and they say well do you want it, and I her the real estate agent, well yeh we might want to look at it so she did whatever to get the paper work sent, I remember I called Dad a week after the funeral, the paperwork shows up and he says, you know: "Gabe and Tina Watson, we are so glad you are interested in our insurance blah blah" we sign and enclose the first payment and.... It was along the same lines as the life insurance stuff. How you deal with this stuff, it was in the works that we were planning on getting done after we returned.

Pol.Off: And that was to be done on return.

Pol.Off: And then this Parisians? There was no suggestion about increasing that.

Watson: there was no talk – there was no discussion with me.

Pol.Off: no talk to increase ?

Watson: Right, because we were talking about the other stuff and I didn't know until we get back that..... because they gave everything to ..

Pol.Off: Did you go and see somebody, at Parisians?

Watson: yeh, after we got back, after the funeral, one of the ladies that works with her, and her name is Debbie something, I don't even know if she still works there, I talked to her and she's the one who told me that her parents had already been there and took everything.

I went to talk to her while I there and started asking certain, did she have ? this that and the other, and she was the one who checked it all that stuff for me and she's the one that said, well she had the basic the basic like

Parisians' life insurance policy that they give everybody and she said that her Dad was the beneficiary and that was kind of the end of that.

Pol.Off: so you went to ?

? It was Debbie Barnes you were talking about at?

But when we were cleaning out Tina's stuff, do you know if any of the staff were present for that.

Watson: Somebody had to have been because, her sister was there also. But Tina was in management, her sister was a cashier person and they had a code, like punch in a number code to get into where all their offices were. Her sister didn't know the code and Tina never told her the code because she never wanted her to mess with her stuff. So somebody at > management or above would allowed her . they told me they went in at closing time or shortly thereafter, I'm just trying to think of somebody that might have seen them.

Lawyer but I don't know whether someone would have been there while they were actually taking....

Pol.Off: I thought it might have been a staff member who saw the journal there, that's all.

Watson: My guess would have been her Mom went up there, and they just let em in and that was that.

Pol.Off: I mean anyone would have done that.

Pol.Off: ?? to her father.

Lawyer: Now according to this, I understand ...

Pol.Off: I am told Parisians is like a big supermarket, is that correct?

Lawyer: Clothing store. My wife buys

Parisians is just clothes.

Pol.Off: What suburb is this in?

Lawyer: At a galleria, a big Mall, they are the anchor tenant there.

Undecipherable conversation for a few minutes

Watson: I don't know if he still works there but there was a guy Caesar, he was like the head Parisian guy and I talked to him a couple of times too and he was one of the ones who also said, well the Thomas's took everything but I've talked to them and I'm sure they will return everything. And you know nothing ever happened there.

Lawyer and someone said, you will have to take that up with our Legal Department.

He had knowledge of it so he may.

Pol.Off: Now this psychiatrist?

Watson: the company is Alabama Psychiatric Services APS. I have no idea, Actually I bet it's in that box, somewhere in the material they took, they took a box about, it had a bunch of documents.....\

There was a book in there about newspaper articles, a folder on Australia dives, all the contacts, it's a grey coloured folder. Well I think in that box there's a letter that came to the house a month or so after I came back from Australia informing her that this lady was now in a different position, and she is no longer in that position but for her to call her and she would refer her to somebody else. But I never.

Lawyer: here it is, Alabama Psychiatric Services, 4806 Acton Road, Meophelia(?) zip code is 35243, telephone number is 9688 400.

Pol.Off: 07688 4000

Lawyer: Correct.

Indecipherable chat

... reimbursed Gabe for ...

There was trip insurance.

Pol.Off: for your vacation?

Watson: yeh. Basically they call it trip cancellation insurance, and then there was the ? paid basically for her repatriation from, you know the expenses related to Tina's death over there to the Birmingham Airport. So ? paid that. The ? insurance, the claim I filed with them was basically for Mike Ball's expenses coming over, filed over there. Mike Ball originally said they would pay for us to stay until we could get home and then they paid for one day and then ? picked up a few and then we got a bill for all the rest. So I submitted that and I submitted the unused portion of the trip which was, there was a dive trip but it was 7 days, so I took the dive course divided by 7 and dropped one of the days off. So I actually didn't even claim

the day we were there. So it was \$10,000 in change which makes it - they had all the receipts were.?

Pol.Off: Okay.

Watson: So this was the one they denied the claim. They said that they didn't diving until I had to get an attorney that sues insurance companies and ? and who knows.

Someone told me Mrs Thomas was furious because she heard somebody told her or she was ? that was like the big insurance policy I had. Dan paid directly to everybody I think \$30,000 or \$40,000. ?? she knew that I had the policy and I think somewhere along the line she just misinterpreted it that the money came to me, or something - ?? she was telling people that I had this massive

Pol.Off: ??? that Tina had asked for it to be increased five-fold and for it to be part of

Watson: I don't know the amount but

Pol.Off: \$3,000 or something

Watson: 5, 4 make it 15 or ..

Pol.Off: No I think it was supposed to be 20 years wages or something.

Pol.Off: Did she ever get that accomplished?

Pol.Off: Do you how much her father collected?

Watson: I don't know how ?? four years wages, yeh that would be ... but it was supposed to be a pay out of a years wages and that payout could be increased five-fold.

Watson: So they were saying \$30,000. ok I got it wrong.

I understood it was 3,000 bucks that her Dad got And that could be

Pol.Off: We could speak to the Parisian people and say well what is the go.

Watson: Yeh. That's news to me. I don't know.

Pol.Off: I'll stand corrected..

Watson: Can I ask a question?

Pol.Off: go ahead

Watson: I didn't see this on the inventory list but in my office there was a plastic bag that had, was stuffed half full with sympathy cards that people had sent me and it was missing. I'm sure it's in there because, and I figure that it could be... .. with notes or something. I just you know. Could you make sure they are there. It was either a bag full of cards.

Pol.Off: Something will be done regardless, just ring Mr Austin on Friday, okay. So we will write all these issues down. If we can address them, we will. At least we can pass on the information, we'll confirm that it is there.

....

Watson: I understand I was I mean had you guys Mike Ball's ... you will have to search them, I guess, just Workplace Safety and there thing when you guys have done it?

Pol.Off: I have seized their material, and myself and other officers have taken statements of everyone of their staff members on that boat.

Watson: ...

Pol.Off: As you said before, Mike Ball Dive, a prosecution has already been commenced against them, they're before the Courts up in Townsville. No Cairns, I'm sorry.

Watson: I thought Workplace Safety or?

Indecipherable, all talking together

Pol.Off: The Coroner, is sought of like a Grand Jury, but it's not really. The Coroner's responsibility is for he or she's sole responsibility is to investigate the death and determine who died, when they died, where they died, was anyone responsible for the death and the cause of death. We act as their investigators as such in that we will, one we have finished here, we will go back, like its going to be some substantial time Report to the Coroner.

Watson:then the Coroner??

Pol.Off: No straight up – what the Coroner will do is, the Coroner will then sit down and basic And it can go one or two ways at that point of time. Say, are we happy with this, we don't need for this to go any further, put it to bed. The only other way it can go is they'll say "Well I think we need to hold an Inquest where we will ask some questions." ..
...

Pol.Off: I would suggest....

Pol.Off: 2 We would like to see the report to the Coroner within a month or two. From there the Coroner, if he wants further inquiries done ... if he says I now want to have a hearing, he will then contact through us probably, we will contact various people such as yourselves and say 'you have a vested interest in this matter, would you like to have a representative at that hearing'. We would also obviously because of the dive connection, we would say to Mike Ball Dive. We will notify the Thomas family if they wanted to have someone. Don't get me wrong, I'm not saying we are in favour of one or the other but the Coroner requires us to let vested interests know if they want to have a representative. So for example, your Australian liaison

person in law could cross examine the skipper about his procedures, he could cross examine the staff about the briefings and so forth.

Pol.Off: ... may be ask question, so if I identify these witnesses they will be ...

....

Pol.Off: it sounds like a complex process and to some degree it is. It's like for example we could be doing a similar investigation if there was a big riot at the showground and .. same off and someone was killed. We would be doing a similar investigation.

.... To try and prevent situations like this from occurring.

Pol.Off: Your legal representative over there could make certain submissions for example to the Coroner from now on unless someone has a minimum of 20 dives they should not dive on a wreck site of that nature. Or, a red dive site or that orientation is compulsory for people under certain

Watson: I don't know if you guys, And they asked me for suggestions and one of the things was, number 1 that every boat should have a ventilator on it, and especially when out there, we would be gone for a week and I said there were some older people -

They didn't have one on board -

John the guy from Chicago?

Watson: When we came back we met for dinner and he was.. he said his one biggest problem they had incredible ? but not one person trained to use the stuff and that's the one thing that eats at me because you know obviously had we got John and took him over there and he was, somebody's

doing CPR and he said he basically said, I think it was Oozie I don't remember the names at all, he said they basically had to move him off from doing CPR so that he could an F and F and all that other stuff. I think I told the Workplace Safety guy that's ... from what I once said, it's not something that ... it was my first dive in a few months or whatever, it was my first dive of the entire trip. It was not what I would have considered, just like dropping in at 30 feet and putting around on the coral to

Pol.Off: That's one of the questions I did want to ask you – do you think it was appropriate that considering you hadn't been down, did you think it was appropriate that you should have been diving on that site?

Watson: The way they explained it, yeh. But from what I've read since I just don't think I would have been comfortable basically going, getting my feet wet again on that dive. I just think it should have been at the end of the trip, or it should be, or you should go ... some cheesy little dive in the shallow probably would be at the end of the trip.

.....

Watson: there was a guy called Lewis who was a dive operator and all he does is operate on the Yongala and I walked into him in town and we were talking and he said, you know, that he had been screaming that forever.

Pol.Off: he's actually got a website, I can't remember what it is, but...

Watson: it was Lewis, Lewis. He said he had been swimming in the Queensland Dive Association forever, you know, because he said it was a matter of time until someone just happened. He said the Yongala is peaceful and crystal clear one minute and he said when the tides shift, or whatever, he said you know the stuff kicks up and there's current and he said all of sudden you've

gone from ... dive to a pretty scary dive if your not pretty used to what you are doing.

Pol.Off: it's a pretty tough dive site.

Watson: Yeh. And that's why they call it ... dive site because I didn't know anything about the dive site until we bought it over there.

Pol.Off: so you hadn't researched the site at all before you went over?

Watson: No. Just basically what the girl from Mike Ball ... that he knew a really cool wreck dive and I didn't even ask him if Tina is going to be .. enough and she said 'well we'll check everything out and you know if she needs to go with somebody, they'll tell her and if they don't then she's hot.

Pol.Off: Did anyone .. stop Tina from diving.

Watson: We got on their website and that was pretty much what I based it off of and obviously not being there before You see, we go down to the Gulf of Mexico and wreck dives for us are a tug boat that they sunk in 60 feet of water. So it's in the Gulf and the currents aren't that bad. You can always see the wreck but there's..... current so not knowing what the Australians consider dirty water, and what they consider fast currents. You know there's no way to really gauge it and that was just all that they mention and they didn't check everybody out first.

Pol.Off: So that lady wouldn't even give you an indication as to whether Tina was suitable to dive? So if you got on the boat and they said 'no', what was Tina supposed to do for the rest of the dive trip?

Watson: She said that was .. more advanced and there was something about a ??? and it was supposed to be real neat and you know at Cozumel we went down to 160 170 feet, you know - I'll buddy up with somebody and she said well I'll just sit up top and get a sun tan or whatever. So we did talk about

these different dives and she understood that the dive may be above her level and they suggested that she might not want to do this. We feel???? And that's what aggravated Mike Ball and them saying later on at orientation, we were for the night dive. Nothing was ever said about Tina do you think you can do this dive? Do you think she can do this dive? Maybe she does – there was just nothing every said. And that's one of the things that just infuriated me for so long that you know, one that Mike Ball played on words and they never mentioned ? they offered based on doing those dives, they knew one of the girls who worked for Mike Ball had said that a novice should not have been in the water at that point of time. The way the conditions were it should have been advanced or whatever, and done later. Because they said they came back to it at the end of the dive and he said there was no current and it was clear. So I don't know.

Pol.Off: Well back to the question that.... When the Coronial hearing, the public hearing, you guys can have a legal representative there to cross examine Kelly ? you will have the opportunity to cross examine them if you so choose.

Lawyer: At the hearing there's a possibility that the Coroner could call it as far as Mike Ball and not call it as far as Gabe or because the hearing is

Pol.Off: It depends what the coroner is trying to focus on, so he might call it for everybody because he might want to cover Mike Ball, he might want Gabe there to say .. 'this is what I.... these are the problems I had. We are not accusing you of anything.

Watson: then that is a possibility. As a witness not as a focal point.

Pol.Off: Technically, both Mike Ball and Gabe are a focus because they were .. on
the boat, so

END OF TAPE 3

Tape 4

CORONIAL HEARING

DEATH OF CHRISTINA MAE WATSON

**RECORDING OF INTERVIEW ON 24/04/2007 OF DAVID GABRIEL WATSON &
ROBERT AUSTIN (LAWYER)**

Continued from tape 3

Pol.Off: ... Mike Balls a focus because he put all this together.

Pol.Off: Do you mind if I talk to a couple of your friends from the wedding party about the background of the issues with the families.

Watson: you mean, like Mark Grim? and

Pol.Off: Well, we're talking about the bridesmaids so I think it's only fair that .. if you guys got no objections we'll talk to the groomsmen. Everyone's going to have different perspectives. Right.

Austin: you're free to talk to me, I'm his attorney and I also had a couple of ? for him He said he's never seen a mother try to ruin a wedding so hard for her daughter.

Pol.Off: I've spoken to one of the bridesmaids and she said 'yeh, Mrs Thomas was

Austin: did you guys see that
She posted on their comments.....

Pol.Off: Where's that?

Austin: Townsville Bulletin – it's actually, you'll come across it on my computer because I actually saw it.

She posted under the name Mary but her middle name is Mary. So. Mrs Thomas.

Pol.Off: Cindy.

Watson: Yeh. She posted under the name Mary Thomas, so but any there was a post on there, that, and this was after I think it was after, it may have been after one of the articles that was online where Mr Austin.. he never said it but the CD . Cyber Diver News, network. Cdn.info they posted an article and then they kind of wove it into attorney Blanes Dive Company then this post went on the Townsville Bulletin saying "How dare they do that – that dive company did everything they could to save her and all he's done is buy luxuries, vacations and buy big boats" this was this Mary and I think it was like he's had serious vacations, .. My parents have taken me to Florida once a year since Tina died in the spring. Those are the vacations.

.....

Austin (?) So I'm thinking we needed to do to occupy his time, so I sold my ski boat and I gave him the money and he bought his fishing boat. That's the big new, ?? the boat he bought with his life insurance.
There have been several comments like that.

Pol.Off:

Austin: ... shut down his Dad.

Pol.Off: Well, I'm happy to handle communications for your side. That as ?? legal representative.

Watson: I freak out every time you call me.

Pol.Off: No no that's fine. Um – I've got a couple of names of groomsmen. I don't have them here with me I'm sorry to say. If I ring Mr Austin in the morning, if you would have any contact numbers, could we get them off you.

Watson: yeh. I sure do.

I will get in touch. You'll get a call. You wont know them or will I get all and you just call

Pol.Off: Just get them all, and I'll just ring em.

We're not here because of the Thomas's and they didn't pay for our flights or anything like that. Okay. It is a death, it's just the nature of it is that everyone who was on those boats is not in Australia.

Watson: Alright.

Pol.Off: So I'm talking to the bridesmaids and in fairness... alright.

Pol.Off: one more.. from the Townsville Police you said that they were upsetting everybody over here.

Watson: the way we argued.

Pol.Off: Did you mention to separate, granted that we are all in the same Police Department, but I am in a regional office up in Townsville. With every Government Department, separate Departments have to decide who is going to pay for what and who's going to go then we have to go through local government, like over here your State Department, Justice Department and because of procedures that are set in place by the treaties we have to, we just couldn't fly in and talk to ... the Law doesn't ... we have to do everything with the FBI.

It's like in the house they wouldn't let us see certain things but we would let them pick it up, and I think you can confirm that.

???

That's why some things have been seized and you say you can't understand the relevance and by Friday I'm sure some things will probably seem irrelevant to us.

Yesterday, I can tell you

(people talking over all together)

That's why we went and saw him yesterday afternoon to go We need to leave Friday

Pol.Off: Everything we've done would have been done by you as personnel, but as I said it's not a high priority.

And if anything it would have dragged on a lot longer.

Watson: yeh but you never said ...

Pol.Off: /.....from another country and that was 2 ½ years ago and I haven't heard anything back. I'm going to get it but

Pol.Off: I've been up and down the Barrier Reef off Townsville going up to Cairns and maybe even down to Rockhampton, anywhere between 2 and 5 a year.

Austin My impression from this end was that either the Thomas's were in your hip pocket or you were in their hip pocket.

Pol.Off: no

Austin It's reassuring to hear what you said.

Pol.Off: ..Honestly if we hadn't ... in person they still wouldn't get to the Coroner within 3 to 4 years potentially.

We have to send the paperwork back as you can imagine going back through the procedure, ask another 10 questions and send it back through.

Austin:why would someone kill someone if they could ... or not. There's no money there, and this is somebody that you just married 11 days prior. It is certainly senseless

Pol.Off: we're not here to judge. We just get all the information and fundamentally the Coroner is the investigator.

He's a pretty sharp individual but he gives his.... I've spoken to him probably 5 or 6 times – he gives his .. he's not telling me what his thoughts are. Because he receives communications, I think he receives communications from your legal representative as well. Yeh.

Watson: they check in and see what ..

Pol.Off: he doesn't tell me that communication is, you basically would prefer not to know. Alright, I just get all the information, give it to him and he draws his own conclusions based on what people submit during any hearing, if he decides to hold one. Okay. And there's quite a possibility there that he may review all this material and say, no it's a tragic death and the matter is now final and that's it. Or he may say, no, we'll have hearing and I want to concentrate on Mike Ball or I want to concentrate on Gabe. I don't know what he has been saying. I think he'd say one of a dozen things.

Austin: Is there anything that you could see and corroborated that ... makes you think that he might want some more information from you.

Pol.Off: At this stage, no. I can't think of anything.

Austin *{several voices talking together}* I didn't mean to jump on you like I did. But I don't know what going on or not. It's all of a sudden,

Pol.Off: If you were living in Townsville all you would have seen is myself and Scott turn up one day and knock on your door.

Austin The FBI does,procedure.

Pol.Off: The search warrant is the legal mechanism to get in the door.

Austin: Yeh. I understood that.

Pol.Off: But if this was in Townsville I would have just come and knocked on your door and said "I'd like to talk to you." Okay.

Pol.Off: your country ... work on the idea they told us that they don't take any chances so

I provided information . We didn't even swear to it. We don't have that power. We just give the information to the FBI agent.

Austin The FBI agent is the one that has to squeeze the information.

We don't have to swear an affidavit?

Pol.Off: that's correct.

Austin: So you all know who it was who told him that Ms Thomas has said that there's a lot of interest money that was

Pol.Off: That wasn't it. All that happens is the Coroner said that certain enquiries produced certain information. Obviously some of it is on the insurance claim if I can speak bluntly. We just present all the information to the FBI, alright,

they draw the I think you call it the affidavit, we call it Grounds, for the warrant. They draw that up. Mr Galder goes before the Judge and he decides whether or not to issue or not.

Austin; Just ask for insurance - .? travel and mortgage insurance. If it weren't date ??

Pol.Off: I don't know your procedure. I'm not trying to dodge the question but you are asking me something which I don't have an answer for.

Austin: You make me feel a whole lot better than I did yesterday. When somebody put 30 in that affidavit and that had to come from somebody.

Pol.Off: It would have to have come from us.

?

Austin; Substantial life insurance money, where did you get it from. What was?

Pol.Off: I can't go into too much about what we have said to the FBI. But what I said, what I am going to tell you is we say we have certain information that apparently refers to the insurance policies, how they term that in their paper work I've got no control over. Alright. That's how they phrase it.

The Coroner asked us to make certain enquiries.

Austin: Are you suggesting that the FBI agent may have 'sweetened it up' ?

Pol.Off: I'm not saying that at all. Not at all.

Austin :I was just wondering why they put it under seal.

Pol.Off: I don't know that either. Again, that is a procedure we don't have in Australia.

Austin the FBI ..

Pol.Off: As I was saying to Gabe, we have different procedures and protocols here that we do in Australia.

Austinyou are much more polite.....one FBI guy was – he didn't like the fact that I was signing something without.... Seeing. Like signing something you had taken having

Pol.Off: As I said, I knew you were upset yesterday and you probably don't recall when I spoke to you in the hallway, fundamentally we are just observers in your country. By the law, if we flown in from Australia and came and knocked on your door we're actually breaking American law, because we're not allowed to conduct law enforcement activities on foreign soil without the permission of the US Government and without being under their umbrella of supervision for it.

Austin. What part did the two Helena policeman play inside the house.

Pol.Off: they stood there watching.

Austin They were available because the Police Chief down there had been very vocal in .. and he

Pol.Off: I can tell you, those 2 uniform officers to our knowledge were directed to be there.

Austin: City council.

Pol.Off: Our paperwork directs us to liaise with the Helena Police Department and the FBI and the Justice Department. However, Hoover, ?? so that's why Hoover is there, C is there, you guys are there.

Austin: ... probably contacted the Hoover Police Department. ?????

Pol.Off: ... 10 minutes on the way here. We have a problem probably there's a lot of witnesses at the Cal Airport.

The sister was ... and the dive companies and some like that, we were trying to find out what her training scheme was.

Watson: Oh, oh. Bluewater.

Pol.Off: So that information was relevant. ..

We had just arrived, and a lot of witnesses, so we were using their facilities to take these statements.

We just want to get it down on tape and typed. And they do not sit there and take part in

They do no contribute towards.....

One on one or a scenario like this....but if we do a list at the Helena Station we would do it in their conference room and they wouldn't be coming in and interjecting or whatever.

Austin You got my email

Pol.Off: yes I do.

Austin: the Water Police, they just did there thing and then passed it on down the line.

At what point did they disappear from this?

??

Pol.Off: What happened was, the investigation was with the Water Police initially. So basically without talking detrimentally about them, it just got too complex,

there were too many people spread around the world. I've literally spoken to people from 15 different countries, you know, and my Korean isn't real good either. Neither is my French, and the adjoining places.

25 on our behalf

Norwegian, German, English, Korean, South African, Philippines, Canada, Guatemala,

Watson: see that was my thing, when you guys were saying that you didn't know which country, I could only think of a handful of people that I can remember even being around more than 2 minutes.

Pol.Off: okay....

Indecipherable

Watson: .. everything I have read, everybody, the majority were Americans or Japanese.

Indecipherable – several voices over-talking

Watson: Let's trash Gabe's image and my friends found out about it and started going on their and just.... I don't know why they didn't shut it down -

Pol.Off: It's very hard to walk in there and say shut this thing down, anyone here wouldn't be able to shut somebody's else. Just go in.

Indecipherable

Pol.Off: It is obviously a very ugly situation. The relationship from Cindy to you guys and without trying to sound flippant, a lot of that early stuff is part of what we

are here to investigate. We would still like to talk to ... just to get some run down because there's a lot of that when you first started going out or.... So I'm not trying to be rude either.

Austin: my view was that you guys were making it relevant from her side. That was one of my big concerns and basically once they..... I thought 'Oh lord'

Pol.Off: Look even whatever we type down, or record on tape, it goes to the Coroner and he doesn't know anyone. Alright, he is basically the independent man so even if he I was unduly influenced by someone, this Coroner, he's a very decent man, he's been around a long time, and you know even if Mike Ball is at fault, he doesn't mind stepping on big companies' toes – he's done it before. I remember a case several years ago, he impounded a bulk carrier for Christ sake and kept it in the Townsville port for a week, that's true. You can imagine the people who were screaming about that.

He had no issues about it whatsoever.

Pol.Off: 2 What about the Coroner's files? ???

Pol.Off: The Coroner is actually .. its beyond our control and we apologise for the delay.

Alright. If we didn't come over and do it in person, as I said to your father, it could be another couple of years.

? that's what we got to ask.. for three years..... let's do it

And in reality they could have turned around to us last week and gone well no, you know, it's dealt with under the MAU. America are going to do this for us. But frankly it was through a consensus.

Watson: Do you guys have to go to any other countries now, this is like your last stop.
...?

Pol.Off: no – most of them are done that way. It is never

It is just time consuming getting that secondary statement back saying, no I didn't see anything. No. . and can you comment on the current. Yes I can, they were strong, they were whatever.

Watson: There was somebody there, may be a seal commando kind of guy and they were kind of like you know - like its like diving in a bath tub. But it was....

Pol.Off: And that comes back to training skill level.

Watson: If Tina had gone on an orientation dive and then gone to the bottom, I wondered if the wreck would have blocked.... The reason we had so much difficulty was because it was ripping over the top of the wreck; I obviously had no idea what was going on ... but I sort of wondered that.

Pol.Off: I have never been scuba diving in my life.

I have no intention of scuba diving.

Watson: I know they were assembling the equipment -

?? well the people that she got along to buy the equipment there is ... or the equipment and I explained to the lady what happened, and she said well we want it back.

Pol.Off: Even if I wanted to release it to you I can't – the Coroner says no.

Financial records.

We've looked at the financials.

Watson: I said maybe you have looked at mine?

Pol.Off: No I haven't actually.

The people who do it are the FBI.

Pol.Off: When we go in on Friday we'll be looking at Gabe's paperwork. We'll also be looking at Tina's paperwork. As far as going to other relatives outside, no, I haven't looked at yours and I don't intend to. Alright, unless there's some mysterious \$200,000 cheque.

Pol.Off: : One thing I thought about..... I remember when Tina signed up they - she obviously had heart problems.. you are not supposed to unless your doctor says you can.

Watson: I know she told the ? her doctor said it was okay to dive, have you guys checked with the doctor to make sure ?

Pol.Off: ...

I don't know the man, never met him but somebody I wonder if

Pol.Off: Put yourselves in our position. You've got a death – you go and look for possible causes of death, the training, the background, all that sort of stuff – that's why we are here today.

Watson:

Pol.Off: What is ... and that statement gets handed up to the Coroner.
Alright.

Pol.Off: If you were living in Townsville it would have just been me and Scott knocking on your door – how're going? But that's the procedure you have here and whether we like it or not and I'm not going to comment on that, we don't have any choice and that's what happened yesterday.

I just remember the guy saying well we cover you for our safety and yours and I think it.... All you guys have guns... how could you feel unsafe?

Pol.Off: We would prefer to cuff and we have far less guns than you guys have here. We would prefer to cuff somebody so that we know that they are controllable so they don't have the opportunity to grab at something or we are forced to do something. We are controlling the situation immediately and not giving the opportunity where something may go bad.

Pol.Off: 2 ..let's see, and I have no doubt and it is probably in their defence bit too, they don't know you and you also have to produce a search warrant to look for information in relation to a death. It's just one of those things.

Watson: I was absolutely horrified. I can't remember ever asking, I was like, 'you're positive it's the right address'. There's an Oakley Circle and there's an Oakley Drive and I can't.....

Pol.Off: alright gentlemen, thanks for your time. I apologise again for yesterday. Certain arrangements had already been made by Scott and I did make myself knowledgeable about that and I double-booked, and so the FBI said,

no we basically want you here at this given time, because we're dancing to their tune as well.

Austin If you need anything else, just call me, don't

Pol.Off: I don't want to cause you any addition stress. Alright. I know what it is to lose..... We're talking about a very tough subject obviously and as you have indicated you have had trouble dealing with it as would most people. So I will just confine my communications with Bob if that is alright with the three of your.

Austin I will keep a list of names and numbers so you can talk to them more.

Feel free to give him a ring.

Pol.Off: Hey listen, the Australian guys will be called. Please meet them and assist them in any way they can. That will be appreciated.

Watson: Excuse me just a sec – one of you guys ..

I'm not going to go against your wishes. Whatever you say.

Austin He has been struggling with this thing you know for three years – he says stronger words and things for 3 years.

Pol.Off: If we can avoid that ..

Thank you gentlemen.

End of tape 4