

## FILE NOTES

# NOUEMA DIVING INCIDENT 22 SEPTEMBER 2008 CLI CASE REF 845046052201

- Mobil RARUS 827 is used in place of THB 100 recommended by the compressor manufacturer because the latter is not available locally. He believes most dive operators use the Mobil product.
- 

### Mr & Mrs MATSUMOTO

- Applied over internet for diving lessons while on holiday at Noumea from Kobe, Japan
- Mr. MATSUMOTO was employed as engineer for NESTLE in Kobe, Japan
- Both inexperienced divers
- Filled in questionnaire including health condition (see copy)
- He marked and then struck out the question relating to Nasal problems infection of nasal-sinus cavities. (After Miss KAWAI established that pinching of his nose and blowing could equalise his ear pressure)

### The Dive & Incident

- There were **only two divers for instruction that day**, plus 3 snorkelers
- Miss **KAWAI was assigned to care for and instruct Mr & Mrs MATSUMOTO**
- An onboard briefing was given by Miss KAWAI to Mr. & Mrs MATSUMOTO on way to dive grounds; lasted approximately 10 minutes but not monitored by Mr. MONTHOUEL, or Miss OGAWA, who was also aboard.
- Briefing content is covered by **PADI guidelines and understood by all qualified instructors such as Miss KAWAI** – copy to be provided
- Suited up on board and **everything checked by Miss KAWAI** – Mask, Scuba Cylinder (TANK), Regulator, Inflatable life vest (Buoyancy Compensation Device or BCD), weight belt, diving suit, Personal Dive Computer etc. **No problems brought to attention** of Mr. MONTHOUEL or Miss OKAWA.
- All equipment owned and maintained by Noumea Diving
- Miss KAWAI entered water with Mr. & Mrs MATSUMOTO via the stern boarding platform, learning to breath through the mouthpiece before moving away from stern to free dive in approximately 5 meters of water.
- Trio eventually moved 50 to 80 meters from vessel, while Miss OGAWA separately supervised the group of three snorkelers.
- Dive commenced at 2:30 pm as recorded in the day booking list by Mr. **MONTHOUEL** who was **Master of the dive vessel** and who **stayed aboard** throughout the dive.
- Mr. and Mrs MATSUMOTO were provided with small steel cylinders, as usually given to novice divers due to their better balance and short duration of most dives. Small tanks are considered to be less cumbersome and easier to manage.
- Cylinders are filled prior to dive by Mr. MONTHOUEL using the Noumea Diving compressor (purchased in Australia from A# AIR Dive Equipment)
- **Pressures are checked by Dive instructor** and by the divers themselves **upon entering water**. Usually there is enough air for **about over** 30 minutes, depending on individual diver characteristics
- Each diver was wearing a ~~dive-computer~~ underwater pressure gauge to maintain check on ~~dive-time~~ the air.

RM

NO



## FILE NOTES

### NOUEMA DIVING INCIDENT 22 SEPTEMBER 2008

CLI CASE REF 845046052201

- After about 30 minutes Miss KAWAI surfaced with Mr. & Mrs MATSUMOTO and appeared to be heading back to the dive vessel on the surface. However they all dived again. No indication of any problems at this time.
- About 2 minutes later Miss Kawai resurfaced about 10 metres from the dive vessel and shouted for help and was waving her arms.
- Miss OGAWA immediately went to assist and helped rescue Mrs Matsumoto, who had inflated her BCD. They returned safely to the dive vessel and were helped aboard by others.
- Miss KAWAI again shouted for help and Mr. MONTHOUEL immediately went to assist her with Mr. MATSUMOTO, who was fully submerged. Miss KAWAI was holding onto him or his equipment, but he was stationary and sinking in the water, still with his weight belt attached and BCD uninflated. She was struggling on the surface and he was underneath.
- Mr. MONTHOUEL brought Mr. MASUMOTO to the surface, removed his weight belt, but could not inflate the BCD due to the scuba cylinder being fully exhausted. He effected a rescue back to the vessel.
- Mr. MATSUMOTO was unconscious and turning blue from lack of oxygen. Buddy breathing and heart stimulation was started immediately; Mr. MATSUMOTO coughed up large volumes of food and water during this process.
- After a few minutes, possibly 10, Miss OGAWA was asked to take over the buddy breathing and resuscitation while Mr. MONTHOUEL raised the alarm directly to the local hospital emergency department by mobile telephone.
- The hospital notified the emergency services and a helicopter was despatched to the nearby Isle aux Canards, off which the dive vessel was moored. Medics rowed out to the dive vessel in a small paddleboat and took over the resuscitation efforts, which were continued throughout by Miss OGAWA and Mr. MONTHOUEL until the medics arrived.

MISS KAWAI & MRS MATSUMOTO

#### Presumed cause of accident (as suggested by Mr. MONTHOUEL)

- Failure of Miss KAWAI as the dive instructor to regularly check her students' air supply & pressure
- Her failure to immediately removed the weight belt to allow Mr. MATSUMOTO to float freely to the surface
- She tried to inflate the BCD by mouth, but only succeeded in deflating it further
- She removed her own BCD and tried unsuccessfully to pull Mr. MATSUMOTO onto it

#### Miscellaneous

- Mr. MONTHOUEL advises that he is unable to obtain a copy of the statements he and Miss OGAWA gave to the police until he has been summonsed & charged with an offence. He believes they are investigating whether he is to be charged with Involuntary Homicide, but has not been notified to date.
- If he is charged statements will be provided only to his lawyer Mr. DESWATE of CALAVOCATS law firm – email [jj.deswate@calavocates.net](mailto:jj.deswate@calavocates.net)

AM

NO



## FILE NOTES

### NOUEMA DIVING INCIDENT 22 SEPTEMBER 2008 CLI CASE REF 845046052201

- Mr. MONTHOUEL advises his company has not made any previous liability claims in connection with diving accidents; also and there have no previous accidents, except as follows
- In 2006 a Japanese lady fell on the rear deck and suffered an aneurism upon completing a dive and had to be evacuated to Australia for treatment. No claim was made against him personally or his company Noumea Dive
- Also in 2006 a Japanese male collapsed after a dive and required medical treatment. It was later learned that he had not disclosed on the disclosure form that he suffered from hypertension and heart disease (malformation). Again no claims were made from this event.

→ THE ANEURISM WAS THE CAUSE OF THE FALL

Raoul MONTHOUER



Naoke OGAWA

