

P.M.O. NATIONAL REPORT

SOUTH AFRICAN

LONDON 23 - 25 JULY 2003

GOOD DAY.

AS I HAVE MENTIONED BEFORE, MY NAME IS SYDNEY MARAIS AND I AM THE P.M.O. BASED IN CAPE TOWN. WE HAVE ANOTHER P.M.O. OPERATING OUT OF DURBAN. HIS NAME IS GUS MCKAY.

MY AREA OF OPERATION STARTS IN SIMONSTOWN IN THE SOUTH OF THE PENINSULA UP TO SALDANHA BAY ON THE WEST COAST OF THE SW CAPE. A TOTAL AREA OF 150 KILOMETERS APART. GUS OPERATES IN DURBAN AND UP THE EAST COAST TO RICHARDS BAY WHERE ALL THE BULK CARRIERS CALL IN.

MY ACTIVITIES ARE MAINLY TO MAINTAIN A HEALTHY FLEET OF VOS VESSELS. UNFORTUNATELY THIS FLEET HAS DRAMATICALLY CHANGED OVER THE LAST COUPLE OF YEARS, MAINLY DUE TO ALL THE MAJOR CHANGES THAT HAPPENED WITHIN MY BIGGEST FLEET, NAMELY SAFMARINE. OUT OF A TOTAL OF 18 VESSELS THAT I USED TO HAVE, I NOW HAVE ONLY 4 VESSELS, IN THIS FLEET, PARTICIPATING IN THE PROGRAM. THIS IS DUE TO THE SELLING OFF OF THEIR VESSELS AND THE MERGING WITH OTHER COMPANIES, IN THIS CASE MAERSK.

I HAVE BEEN IN CONTACT WITH THE OPERATIONS MANAGER OF THIS COMPANY TO TRY AND FIND OUT WHAT HAPPENED TO THE VESSELS, WHICH WERE MAINLY BULK CARRIERS AND TO TRY AND FIND OUT WHETHER THEY ARE STILL REPORTING, MAYBE UNDER A NEW CALL SIGN, BUT UNFORTUNATELY I HAD NO LUCK, NOT EVEN IN TRYING TO RETRIEVE MY INSTRUMENTS.

MY TOTAL NUMBER OF VESSELS DROPPED FROM 30 TO 15.

THIS IS MADE UP OF A FEW MERCHANT VESSELS, SOME NAVAL VESSELS, FISHING TRAWLERS, A PRODUCTION PLATFORM AND AN OIL RIG.

UNFORTUNATELY THE FISHING VESSELS THAT I MENTION HERE CANNOT BE REGARDED AS RELIABLE BECAUSE I FOUND THAT SOME OF THEM ARE TOO LAZY TO DO AN OBSERVATION AND FIND IT EASIER TO CALL UP ANOTHER VESSEL CLOSE BY AND GET THEIR READINGS.

WITH REGARD TO THE SECRECY AROUND GIVING AWAY THEIR POSITION TO RIVAL COMPANIES, WHO ARE ALSO ON THE LOOKOUT FOR RICH FISHING AREAS, AS WAS MENTIONED BY ARGENTINA, WE BYPASSED THAT.

WE GAVE A CERTAIN NUMBER TO GRID OF LAT. AND LON. POSITION IN WHICH THEY OPERATE AND THE COMPUTER WOULD COME UP WITH THE RIGHT LAT. AND LON. POSITION FOR THE VESSEL ON THE PLOTTING PROGRAM.

SHIPS THAT DO PARTICIPATE, ARE VISITED REGULARLY. BAROMETERS ARE CHECKED, LOGS SHEETS PICKED UP AND STATIONERY CHECKED. TWICE A YEAR A GENERAL INSPECTION IS CARRIED OUT, EG CHECK FOR AIR BUBBLES IN

THE THERMOMETERS, WIND SPEED AND DIRECTION IS CHECKED AGAINST AN ELECTRONIC MODEL AND THE CONDITION OF THE SCREEN. LOGS ARE BEING CHECKED BY MYSELF FOR OBVIOUS ERRORS WHERE AFTER IT IS ENTERED ONTO A COMPUTOR AND SUBMITTED TO THE DATABASE. OTHER INSTITUTIONS MAKE USE OF THIS DATABASE AS WELL, EG, VARIOUS OCEANOGRAPHIC DEPTS. AS WELL AS SHIPPING COMPANIES FOR LEGAL CASES.

PART OF MY WORK ALSO INVOLVES ASSISTING OTHER COUNTRIES IN THAT I KEEP A SMALL SUPPLY OF INSTRUMENTS AND STATIONERY ON HAND WHENEVER ONE OF THEIR RECRUITED VESSELS VISITS MY PORT AND NEEDS SOMETHING. EG. THE NETHERLANDS AND THE UK.

MY OFFICE HAS ALSO BECOME A STORAGE PLACE OVER THE LAST FEW YEARS FOR DRIFTERS FROM NOAA., AUSTRALIA AND METEO FRANCE. THESE DRIFTERS ARE PUT ON SOOP VESSELS AND DEPLOYED AT POSITIONS AS DETERMINED BY THE OWNERS.

ANOTHER DUTY OF MINE IS ALSO TO RECRUIT VESSELS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE SEAS PROGRAM FOR NOAA. FOR THIS REASON I ALSO KEEP A LARGE SUPPLY OF XBT,s IN MY STOREROOM.

FOR A SHORT PERIOD OF TIME I HAD 2 SAFMARINE VESSELS DOING THERMOSALINOGRAPH READINGS ALONG THE WEST COAST OF AFRICA FOR MY COLLEAGUES AT METEO FRANCE. THE DATA WERE USUALLY COLLECTED AT LE HAVRE.

LATELY I HAVE ALSO BEEN INVOLVED IN ASSISTING COLLEAGUES FROM NOAA IN THEIR HIGH DENSITY XBT PROGRAM. THEY HAVE A GOOD RELATIONSHIP WITH THE LYKES SHIPS. A SHIP WOULD NORMALLY BE LOADED IN NEW YORK ON HER SOUTHBOUND TRACK AND THE SHIP RIDER WOULD FLY OUT TO CAPE TO JOIN THE VESSEL BACK HOME.

THIS ENTAILS SOMETIMES STORING PALACE FLOATS AND EXTRA XBT,s FOR THIS PARTICULAR VOYAGE.

I ALSO KEEP A SEPARATE SET OF HARDWARE FOR THIS KIND OF OPERATION IN MY STOREROOM FOR THE TRAJECT BETWEEN SOUTH AFRICA AND SOUTH AMERICA, WHERE NOAA MAKES USE OF A NAVAL OFFICER FROM THE ARGETINIAN HYDROGRAPHIC OFFICE, ARIEL TROISE, TO DO THE RUN FOR THEM.

AT THE TIME OF COMING TO THE MEETING, I DID NOT HAVE ANY FIGURES AS TO HOW MANY VOS REPORTS WERE RECEIVED OVER THE LAST YEAR, OR HOW MANY WERE SENT TO THE DIFFERENT CENTRES. ALL I KNOW IS THAT WE REGULARLY DEPLOY ANYTHING UP TO 30 BOUYS A YEAR, MAINLY FROM OUR OWN RESEARCH VESSEL, SA AGULHAS. THIS FIGURE IS MADE UP OF 15 FOR RSA, 2 FOR BOM AND THE REST FOR NOAA.

I AM ALSO RESPONSIBLE FOR MAINTAINING THE WEATHER OFFICE ON BOARD THE SA AGULHAS AND ALSO FOR THE TRAINING OF PERSONNEL THAT DOES THE OVER WINTERING ON THE ISLAND AND AT ANTARCTICA. I MONITOR ALL THE OBSERVATIONS COMING FROM THIS VESSEL AND AS MENTIONED PREVIOUSLY, WHENEVER I GET A

**REPORT FROM BRACKNELL ABOUT FAULTY/
WRONG MESSAGE I CONTACT THE SHIP AND
CORRECT THE MISTAKE.**

THAT'S ALL LADIES AND GENTLEMEN.

THANK YOU.

**SYDNEY MARAIS
P.M.O. CAPE TOWN**