



## Boating Officer's Report – 2020 - 2021

Dusty Carr, 11/3/21

The 2020 to 2021 season has been an interesting and also eventful year for the Club vessels. From the much slower dive season of 2019, this past year has seen an increase in extended duration "Away" trips, especially to the Eyre Peninsular and Yorke Peninsular regions. To ensure smooth diving operations, this year saw both boats given their 100 hour servicing of motors as well as improvements to the fuel filtration systems at the start of the summer dive season. This work was done mainly to ensure both vessels were in pristine operational condition for these planned longer trips. Both were actually well within the scheduled servicing requirements due once again to the Covid19 restrictions slowing regular metropolitan dive activities considerably. With the vast distances being covered just to get to some of these country launch sites, considerable attention was given to both trailers and also the tank and equipment stowage systems on both vessels. This included the repacking of bearings, adjustment of trailer support rollers and the careful overhaul of both mechanical braking systems including the replacement of the actuator cable on Vitamin Sea's trailer and the replacement of Stargazer's trailer brake discs. It was a pleasure to see these trips succeed, marred only by a tyre puncture or two. Hopefully such multi-day expeditions to far off, new dive sites will continue as annually repeated events.

My sincere thanks go to the members who attended the Club working bee on the 24<sup>th</sup> of October, 2020, during which a substantial effort was made to tidying up the boat storage area as part of the general "Spring clean" the whole club area underwent. My particular thanks go to members Jade White, Alex MG, Jack Morelli, Michael James, Mark Pedder and Mark Suttcliffe who assisted in the service work conducted on both boats, engines and trailers, making sure the vessels were in prime condition for the summer dive season. This in-house servicing saved the club a considerable amount of money while also providing the opportunity for the Boat Handlers present to learn considerably more about the vessel's mechanical systems than they normally would. This will pay off in the future by having a group of club members more capable of resolving any issues at sea or far from regular mechanical assistance such as during club "Away" trips to country regions. A further smaller working bee was performed on the tank rack holder straps just prior to both boats heading off on trips around the new year.

Sadly one of the most unfortunate incidents to befall the club vessels in all of it's history occurred on the 27th of February, 2021, while both club boats were being operated at Wardang Island in the Spencer Gulf. While underway towards a wreck dive site near the island, Stargazer shipped a considerable quantity of water from two successive waves over the bow and suffered a sudden hull system failure, which resulted in the partial sinking of the vessel. Fortunately due to the clear thinking and decisive action of the skipper, Nathan Morrissey, the sinking vessel was abandoned without injury or loss of life to anyone onboard. Vitamin Sea, operated by Club President Jack Morelli was only a short distance away and able to render immediate aide.

Unfortunately due to the damage sustained during the incident and the long tow back to port, Stargazer is no longer an operational vessel. By the time the semi-submerged boat was towed slowly back to the launch ramp at Port Victoria, the damage sustained to the hull, electrical systems and motor was substantial. The loss of the vessel is now a matter for our insurance company to hopefully promptly resolve.

Other than a small amount of stainless steel work being needed on Vitamin Sea's bow rail following a minor anchor snagging incident on a recent dive out of Edithburgh on the Clan Ranald wreck site, I am pleased to report that boat diving operations can continue with this vessel. The vessel continues to be totally reliable and well equipped. The EPIRBs on both boats were replaced in December, 2020, with GME 406G GPS equipped units with a ten year battery life-span. A new radio unit with automatic GPS position reporting has also been purchased for installation onto Vitamin Sea, to further improve her safety features for offshore and remote operations.

It is with some sadness that I have to report that I am going to step down from the Boating Officer position this AGM at such a time when I should have been handing over two exceptionally well equipped, seaworthy and extremely capable vessels to the next Boating Officer. I don't like leaving a mess for the next person, ever. But timing is never great with anything usually. I decided months ago due to health reasons and future plans that it's time to allow new energy to step into the position. My sincere thanks go out to my fellow Committee and club members who have made my time as Boating Officer an extremely enjoyable and satisfying experience. Once again I'd like to thank the members who have dedicated their time to become future club Boat Handlers or have assisted in even the smallest way in the running of club dive events. The constantly displayed teamwork and dedication by members is what makes this club something very special. It is what has always made it a true joy for me to be part of. My best wishes go to all past, present and future Club members. I look forward to supporting the new Boating Officer, assisting around the club, hopefully running some great dives and being part of the excitement of the new clubrooms and potentially a new boat in the close future.

Richard "Dusty" Carr

Boating Officer 2020 – 2021.