

A large orange and white offshore supply vessel, the MMA Crystal, is shown at sea. The vessel has a white superstructure and a large white crane on the deck. It is surrounded by blue shipping containers and other equipment. In the background, several offshore wind turbines are visible on the horizon. The text "MMA CRYSTAL" and "RESCUE" are visible on the side of the vessel.

Preparation is a Safety Control Lessons from the SAS

Troy Simmonds: About me

- I joined the Army in 1991 (discharged in late 2012)-22 years
- 1RAR (Infantry) then 16 years with Special Air Service Regiment (SAS) 96-2012
- Operational Service included- Somalia, East Timor x 3, Iraq x 2, Afghanistan x 6
- Wounded in action three times 2008
- Post Army- Wheatstone Project, Seawest Marine Services, Jetwave Marine Services, Neptune Marine Services, MMA Offshore
- Currently- Senior HSEQ Advisor (Subsea) Cyan Renewables
- National Vice Chairman Australian SAS Association



Surviving an Offshore Helicopter Crash

What Happened:

- Late 2006 Australia military deployed to Fiji waters on standby during military coup (potential rescue of Australian Nationals)
- 29 November 2006- SAS troops on HMAS Kanimbla conducting training (fast roping) with Blackhawk helicopters
- Blackhawk 221 crash landed on deck and bounced into sea. Onboard were 6 SAS Soldiers and 4 aircrew.
- Aircraft sank quickly in deep water. Pilot Mark Bingley and one SAS Trooper Josh Porter died and remaining eight survived.



What went wrong:

- Excessive speed on landing. Pilot did not reduce speed enough for successful landing
- Communication issues: SAS team not warned that pilot intended to land
- Congestion in aircraft- SAS Troopers were wearing body armour, weapons/live ammo, grenades etc and had 90m fast rope and other equipment.
- Buoyancy on aircraft did not prevent rapid sinking
- Soldiers were wearing PFD and CA EBS, but not enough buoyancy in PFD to lift the loads they were carrying.
- Had to remove PFD to discard weight
- Slow recovery of persons in water.
- The Pilot was recovered on surface. Josh Porter went down with wreckage was not recovered until March 2007.

CCTV Footage



Accident is not a single mistake, but multiple controls that failed simultaneously

Classic Swiss
cheese of
failures

Failures of
planning and
communication

Unverified
Assumptions

Complacency

Excessive
speed

Unmanaged
change

Emergency
response lack
of readiness
and agility

Poor post
event well
being care

What was successful?

- Training- Survivability under Stress and Trauma (HUET/BOSIET)
- Human factors- Adaptability, mutual support, resilience

Takeaways- Who Prepares Wins



6 P's (Proper
Planning Prevents
P*** Poor
Performance



Planning is a
control, but must
include all parties



Communication is
critical



Any Change Must
be managed, risk
assessed and
communicated



Rehearsals
exposes
weakness safely



Questions reduce
uncertainty and
risk



Understanding
must be verified



Teams succeed
when everyone
contributes and
has a collective
ownership of the
plan.

