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STATUTORY DECLARATION
EVIDENCE ACT 1906

I, Reginald F. Lander of Unit 126, 250 Baltimore Parade, Royal Australian Air Force Association Estate, Merriwa in the State of Western Australia do solemnly and sincerely declare that:-

1. As a qualified licensed radio operator technician I joined Civil Aviation Department in 1940 and was stationed at Rose Bay, Sydney, New South Wales, which was the flying boat base for QANTAS Empire Airways. At this time Civil Aviation in conjunction with Amalgamated Wireless Australia (AWA) was providing transmission at Mascot and reception facilities at the Army Remount Depot at Ingleburn, Liverpool, Sydney. This communication centre was connected with Rose Bay by remote control, but the actual receivers were out at the Liverpool Holsworthy Army Remount Depot. At this particular time AWA were installing high frequency direction finding equipment, so that I was working on a familiarisation programme of working at Rose Bay and also at the Liverpool installation centre where they had the receivers and high frequency direction finding equipment.
2. So I was working between the two places. I was a civilian, at that time, working for the Civil Aviation Department which at that particular time was controlled by the Post Master General (PMG). I was engaged in this facility with employees from AWA and Civil Aviation Department, testing the high frequency direction finding equipment and calibrating it, testing the remote control system between Holsworthy Remount Depot and Rose Bay. I was backward and forward between the two bases at all times.
3. It was at this point we were told by the Officer in Charge, John Christie the radio chief stationed at Mascot Aerodrome, that there was a German raider on the West coast operating outside Fremantle and moving up and down the coast, or so they thought, transmitting on a certain frequency each night making a rendezvous with Danzig radio.
4. The HF/DF was not operating on a 24 hour basis, as we were in an experimental mode because the facility wasn't finished, it was experimental, we were developing it in other words, but we were told that these signals were coming through at midnight and we were rostered to listen for them and notify Holsworthy; I presume so that they could take a bearing. The HF/DF, not being all set up at that time, hadn't been given the 'all clear' by AWA and was still in the testing mode.
5. At this point I, with three or four people working with me on the base, was rostered to listen at midnight for this coded signal to Danzig from the raider. People doing the actual tracking were to take a bearing on the intercepted signal if they could, which wasn't easy, I might add, I'm talking about 1941. It was to be in conjunction with the HF/DF installed at Pearce Royal Australian Air Force Station, so that a cross bearing could be obtained. In actual practice, when this raider's signal was picked up Pearce took a bearing somewhere between 180 and 360 degrees. Liverpool then took a bearing around about 270 degrees to give as close to a right angle cut. The plotting was not done in Liverpool. Those bearings were given to Post Office (PMG) who would pass it on to the Navy or the Air Force or the War Office. I imagine the actual plotting was done at Pearce; unless, they took our bearing and the Pearce bearing and passed them both on to the Navy.
6. The Germans had to send messages back to their home base, which was in turn retransferring them to their supply ships and the submarines.

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This is how he was making his rendezvous around the world. He was send his position back to Danzig and Danzig was retransferring it to the supply ship. They were letting each other know where they were. It was the only way they could do it. They couldn't do it by radar, they would not have been able to reach that far. So we're talking about entirely different pieces of equipment. We're talking about High Frequency Direction Finding.

7. Our interception of the raider's traffic was done over a period of about 8 to 10 days and every night there was something there. This ship was moving up the coast. I didn't know then that it was KORMORAN. This ship was followed along the coast for about 8 to 10 days until one day we received news that the SYDNEY had been sunk. Now, this was unbelievable because we were also told that the SYDNEY was coming down from Dutch East Indies, as it was called in those days. It was coming down from the North to meet the raider and we thought - "Well, everybody knows about this. The SYDNEY knows it's there, they're coming headon." This is what we were told by our Officer in Charge, John Christie. Now, all of a sudden we heard that the SYDNEY had been sunk and we just couldn't believe it, that this ship that knew it was going to intercept a raider had been sunk. We just couldn't believe that this ship that knew it was going to meet a raider would sail straight into it, would get blown up, we just couldn't believe it. This is the story as I know it. This is exactly how it happened.
8. The Civil Aviation Department radio station at Rose Bay, Sydney, consisted of a brick building just to the left of the embarkation jetty for the 'C' Class flying boats. It contained a communications room and a meteorological office. The radio room had only remote control panels for transmission and reception. The transmitters were at Mascot and the receivers were at Holsworthy Army Remount Depot, Ingleburn. The connection to the various facilities was by PMG telephone lines. Rose Bay (2RB) was also equipped with a teleprinter connection to the PMG head office in Martin Place, Sydney. Also a direct 'phone, as well as a PMG telegraph Key Line. There were four remote control panels and patching control panels for the various facilities. Messages came through in code on the teleprinter and transmitted mostly to the coastal radio station in New Zealand (ZLF). The receiving and HF/DF equipment was not operated or controlled by us.
9. I can only remember the names of three personnel who worked at the station with me. The Officer in Charge was a Mister John Christie who stationed at Mascot. He oversaw the operations at Mascot and Rose Bay. Mr Bullivant, a telegraphist seconded from the PMG, and a Mr John Smith who was discharged from the RAAF to join Civil Aviation Department. He subsequently recalled to the RAAF and later joined a Sunderland Squadron in England.
10. The whole exercise in Rose Bay was most unsatisfactory and inefficient and after the sinking of the KORMORAN was abandoned some months later. What happened at Ingleburn, I can only hazard a guess. Our working group was split up and we were transferred to points far apart from each other. I was sent to the aerial radio station at Kurumba at mouth of the Norman River in Gulf of Carpentaria. The siting of the receiving and the HF/DF direction finder equipment is significant because it was on Commonwealth Defence Department property at Holsworthy Army Remount Depot, it was remote, it was elevated and interference-free. HF/DF stations were installed at Thursday Island, Townsville, Kurumba, Groote Eylandt, Darwin and Pearce, Western Australia. They operated on, to best of my memory, 6.540 Megacycles. A lot of these stations were not manned 24 hours a day and operated only on request for bearings, but

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that did not apply to the HF/DF at Ingleburn. There was a full-time technician on duty on the remote receivers and he activated the HF/DF which was only a short distance away. The installation of Aeradio equipment and HF/DF was done by AWA and its technicians.

11 Following transfer to Kurumba, I later rejoined QANTAS and was posted to Western Australia from where I served as a radio officer flying in Catalinas of Western Operations in the Indian Ocean aerial link between Western Australia, Ceylon and India.

Active service included my flying in Liberator aircraft and, also, crewing back to Australia the Lancastrian - civil variation of the Lancastrian bomber.

Service assignments included my being sent to the United States to draw up the radio equipment Manual for Constellation aircraft for QANTAS.

12 And I make this solemn Declaration believing the same to be true and by virtue of the Evidence Act 1906.

Declared at KALLAROO)

in the State of Western Australia

on the 30TH day of APRIL 1997) *R. Lander*

before me Mwai R. Imbull)

~~Justice of the Peace~~ / Commissioner for Declaration

APP. CAV'B

C.A.V. Bourne
86 Wattle Street
Tuart Hill 6060
Western Australia

Ms Joanne Towner

Secretary: Defence Sub-Committee
Inquiry into the Circumstances of
Sinking of HMAS SYDNEY
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Secretary,

Please accept this as my authority to John Doohan, Convenor of 'End Secrecy on SYDNEY' Group ['ES-O-S'] to submit on my behalf my attached Statutory Declaration of 30th January, 1995 as attachment to his public submission on loss of HMAS SYDNEY and her entire Company, in expectation that all the circumstances will be openly and fully examined at forthcoming Inquiry.

Faithfully,

Bourne

[C.A.V. Bourne]

Date: 22nd January 1998