

20 July 2014, 16:30 CDT - 09:30 NZT

Mr. Keith Manch, Director  
MARITIME NEW ZEALAND  
Level 11  
1 Grey Street  
Wellington, New Zealand 6011

011+  
via Fax: +64 4 494 1263

2 pages

Dear Mr. Manch,

Please find attached to this email and also via FAX, our response to the Final Report of the Independent Review of the SAR Operation for the SV NINA, dated June 2014, which we found from the RCCNZ/MaritimeNZ internet web link below:

<http://www.maritimenz.govt.nz/news/media-releases-2014/20140717a.asp>

We will be releasing our response and also other information to the international press and to the public at 11:30 am on Monday 21 July 2014 (NZ Standard Time).

Kind regards,

Family Members of the Crew of the S/V Nina

# The Families of Crew On Board The Missing Sailing Vessel Nina

Mr. Keith Manch, Director  
Maritime New Zealand  
1 Grey Street  
Wellington, New Zealand July 20, 2014

July 20, 2014

We have received the Independent Report of the search and rescue (SAR) for the Nina and her crew. We respectfully send our sincere thanks to the Rescue Coordination Centre New Zealand (RCCNZ) for all their efforts in this lengthy and complex effort.

Our wish is that if the crewmembers have indeed died, their deaths and all the extraordinary effort that went into finding them will not have been in vain. We hope to save others the same anguish.

In this spirit, we offer the opinion that several aspects of the report are not adequately addressed and warrant further inquiry. We remain particularly concerned about the delay in launching the search and the initial selection of search coordinates. Questions about what was known from the Iridium satellite phone data, how the information was used in the first crucial days, and whether that data should have been used at all are raised by the report itself:

*"analysis raises deep suspicion on the reliability of the Iridium positions". (page 36)*

Also questionable is changing the ETA in Australia. Scheduled arrival was June 10; extending that to June 25<sup>th</sup> may have been harmful. Regarding use of radar data, some research shows that small wooden vessels cannot be detected over 20 miles. Additional serious, documented concerns remain; we would be pleased to work directly with you if you are inclined to address them.

A constant concern throughout this episode has been that there was an underlying, counterproductive undercurrent of contention between us – that is, between RCCNZ and Texas EquuSearch (TES) working with associated volunteers on our behalf. Author David Baird notes:

*"The relationship between TES and RCCNZ did not start well; they did not appear to share the same objective". (page 56)*

The report goes on to state various criticisms of TES actions, ignoring in spirit the tireless effort of people bound together by faith, determination, and courage. This is unfair, contrary to an overall attitude of fortitude and common purpose, and this attitude dominates the report.

We cannot, however, overlook the admirable traditions of professionalism and dedication that continue to distinguish the RCCNZ. We can grow closer in our mutual goals. For example, perhaps we can exchange thoughts on expanding partnerships with private companies, as suggested by Diane Hockenberry of Iridium Communications Inc, McClean, Virginia, and DigitalGlobe, Inc., which re-tasked satellites to assist us.

We know that in the final analysis you join with us and the mariners of the world in embracing the words of Psalm 107, forever in our hearts:

*Those who go down to the sea in ships . . . they cried to the Lord in their trouble, and He brought them out of their distresses.*

\* \* \*