

# Salty *Sea* Dog

## *We Deserve to Know*

What can we learn from the sinking of Yogi?

I cannot help but feel a sense of disappointment reading the report into the sinking of the 62 metre discovery yacht Yogi. It has now been published by the French Marine Accident Investigation Office, BEAmer (Bureau d'enquêtes sur les événements de mer) and is available as a download from their Web site.

My disappointment stems not from the fact that the report lays no blame but comes because having read it I have learned nothing from it.

Now no-one expects a Marine Investigation Report to point a finger or flag up a person responsible for an accident but most of us would I suspect seek to learn from the mistakes of others if only because we are professional people who want to make sure we run our yachts safely.

This report was not published until 12 months after the sinking. I had assumed the reason it was delayed so much was because it was going to be so comprehensive in its teachings. Yet the document is somewhat sparse on facts and findings and appears to fall far short of the edifying document that the super yacht industry was hoping to read and learn from.

It gives little away that was not already known and in places, appears to directly contradict evidence given by the crew to the Greek authorities made just hours after the sinking.

### Voice Data Recording Devices

The reporting organisation recommends that in future yachts should be fitted with voice Voyage Data Recording Devices (VDR) on the bridge. But rather than do so from an educational point of view it seems to suggest, to this reader at least, that they believe it would have been good to have verifiable evidence that backed up the testimony of the crew who it suggests have demonstrably told them an account that differs dramatically with what they allegedly first told the Greek Authorities at the time of their rescue. Perhaps having read the report I might suggest that there is good reason for yachts to carry devices that record the conversations on the bridge.

What must come as a huge relief to all the employees at the Turkish shipyard that built her, is that nowhere in the report are they found to be at fault.



However, as published, the report still leaves many questions unanswered and because it does so, it raises many more that should have been addressed, especially when it comes to impartiality.

### Hours of Work

Why for example was the safe manning document never referred to? This is a yacht that normally carries a crew of 15, she was sailing in deplorable weather conditions yet was doing so, somewhat shorthanded with just one female and seven male crew-members on board. Why is the subject of crew fatigue not looked into by the report? Super yacht crews often work long and hard hours and some stronger words of recommendation from BEAmer would I think have been helpful to the entire industry.

We know that the crew had been at work all day in the shipyard while preparing Yogi for sea. We know she took on bunkers after leaving the shipyard and simple mathematics, when applied to the practise of running of a large yacht, indicate that the guidelines for crew hours of rest may have well been breached. Why was this not mentioned in the report?

Forgive me for pointing this out but here we have a French report into the sinking of a French owned super yacht sailing under a French flag, managed by a French yacht management company, who employed a French DPA, carried a French crew and French insurance.

Perhaps this is the reason why the report is from my point of view both inconclusive and taught me nothing.