

which occurred as a result of the cyclone. The wreck site itself, therefore, has a strong symbolic significance as the place where several people lost their lives in tragic circumstances. It is believed that the remains of up to five crew members may still be on board the ship.

The police are also involved with investigating the wreck site and recovering any material that will assist in identifying the missing crew members. Progress in this regard has been slow, as conditions only allow diving a few days every month, and the work is painstaking. Nevertheless, progress has been made and work is likely to continue until May. Nothing more can be done to the wreck site until the Coroner's office completes its investigation and gives the all clear. In the meantime, my Office of Environment and Heritage is coordinating efforts to make sure that certain work can be undertaken as soon as the all clear has been given. There may still be some fuel on board and this will have to be removed. The wreck also needs to be made diver safe. The wreck site needs to be secured so that these important activities can be undertaken.

To assist the Coroner and the Harbour Master, I recently signed another instrument, placing a further interim conservation order over the site. The first interim conservation order, signed by my predecessor, was due to expire on 31 January 2004. The interim conservation order I have just signed will give a further 90 days protection to the site.

Madam Speaker, no decision has been made as yet about the long-term management strategies for the wreck site, although work on an interim management plan is well under way. I am, of course, aware of the significant community interest in the wreck of the *Booya*. Recreational fishermen, divers, heritage enthusiasts and, of course, the owners of the vessel and relatives of all those who died, will no doubt have strong views on how the wreck site should be managed. These interests need to be taken into account, and the Office of Environment and Heritage is consulting with all interested parties on the interim management plan.

I do not expect I will be considering the options of permanent heritage listing of the wreck site in the short term, given the work that remains to be undertaken. However, in due course, I will receive advice from the Heritage Advisory Council on the heritage value of the wreck site. If this leads to a proposal for permanent heritage listing, then community comment will be sought and I expect the owners, recreational fishermen, divers, the relatives of those who died, and the heritage enthusiasts to be directly consulted. The exact management arrangements for the wreck site will need to be negotiated, but I can give an assurance that

government is committed to a balanced outcome for all interested parties.

Mr BALDWIN (Daly): Madam Speaker, I thank the minister for bringing this issue on. It is a very important issue. When the discovery of the *Booya* was made, obviously family, friends and people connected to those who lost their lives during the cyclone were much relieved in one sense. However, it has thrown up a conundrum for the minister and others to deal with in terms of what you do about protecting the remains of the ship now once the coroner has finished his investigations and what happens if, indeed, the remains of those people who went down with the ship are found, and then the ongoing preservation of that site.

It will be a bit of a conundrum because people will want to have some access. I, for one, from a personal position, would like to see it preserved where it is not tampered with by divers – but that is a personal thing. I can understand that there is heritage value in looking at these things, but it must be protected in some way.

I am glad to see the interim conservation order has been extended. It will be an interesting time to look at the issues as they come up, when people offer submissions. It is a bit like the submarine that is out near Bathurst Island. It is a grave site, after all, and we need to put that first and foremost in our minds. Obviously, fishermen will want to access that area and, as I said, divers also. However, first and foremost, it is a place where people lost their lives in a very significant event in the Territory's history and I certainly would like to see some sort of preservation in that regard.

Ms SCRYMGOUR (Environment and Heritage): Madam Speaker, I thank the member for his response, and he is right. All comments are being called forward at the moment and will come together under the management plan.

Reports noted pursuant to Sessional Order.

RADIATION PROTECTION BILL (Serial 203)

Bill presented and read a first time.

Dr TOYNE (Health): Madam Speaker, I move that the bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of this bill is to create new radiation protection legislation that will provide a consistent regulatory regime, consistent with national legislation to protect people and the environment from harmful effects of ionising and non-ionising radiation.