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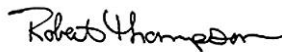
December 10, 1999

Dear Member Hammerschmidt.

During the Amphibious Passenger Vessel Safety Forum held on December 8th and 9th in Memphis, TN. I made a comment on the testing of the dewatering (Higgins) pump that was incorrect. More specifically, I made the comment that filling the hull of the DUKW with 6-10 inches of water would damage the welded seams of the vessel. This observation was incorrect. I meant to bring to the attention of the panel the same concerns present during the raising of the Miss Majestic from Lake Hamilton with the hull full of water, an entirely different situation. The concerns at that time were more directed at avoiding damage to the driveshaft seals by placing internal water pressure on them from the hull filled with water. I am convinced that I presented the picture of an inherently weak hull, which is not the case of the DUKW. I request that my answer be removed from the recorded transcript of the case. Furthermore, I would encourage the method recommended by Mr. McDowell for the use of a known body of water to be pumped by the dewatering pump for the purpose of testing the satisfactory operation and certifying the amount of dewatering capability of the aforementioned pump.

I apologize for any confusion or misconception I may have caused by my answer.

Sincerely,



R.J. Thompson