

# Corolita skipper faces probe

Citizen

20 FEB 1992

DURBAN.— Police are investigating four charges against the skipper of the Corolita, the yacht which was successfully stolen from Maputo harbour after Mozambican authorities impounded the vessel last month.

Police spokesman Capt Bala Naidoo said yester-

day a dossier had been opened and investigations against skipper Allen Ubsdell were under way.

The charges being investigated against Mr Ubsdell are: leaving South African territorial waters without permission, operating a commercial business without

a licence, not possessing a skipper's licence, and non-registration of the Corolita.

Capt Naidoo said the charges were being investigated against Mr Ubsdell alone and not against any of the others who accompanied him.

The dossier would be forwarded to the Attorney-General for a decision on possible prosecution once investigations had been completed, Capt Naidoo said.

Mr Ubsdell and two other crew members slipped away from their guards in Maputo harbour and made their way to Richards Bay on the Natal north coast last Wednesday night.

This followed after Mozambican authorities found a party of divers on the Corolita guilty of looting shipwrecks off Inhaca Island. Mr Ubsdell was heavily fined and the Corolita impounded.

Hoping to contest the

fines imposed on him and the impounding of the yacht, Mr Ubsdell and two other crew members stayed on the Corolita until their escape. The other members of the party were earlier allowed to return to South Africa.

Mr Ubsdell has said in media interviews that the party went to Mozambique purely for diving. The allegations of looting the wrecks were not true, he maintained.

He decided on an escape attempt believing it to be his only hope of keeping the yacht Sapa.