

IN THE MATTER OF
THE BOARD OF INQUIRY INTO
THE HOTEL QUARANTINE PROGRAM

STATEMENT OF UNNI MENON
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, AVIATION STRATEGY AND SERVICES,
DEPARTMENT OF JOBS, PRECINCTS & REGIONS

I, **UNNI MENON**, Executive Director, Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (**DJPR**), say as follows in response to the Notice to Produce a Witness Statement issued by the Board and dated 17 August 2020 (**NTP**):

1. I set out below my responses addressing the questions asked of me in the NTP.
2. In providing this statement, I have sought to the best of my ability to answer the questions that the Board of Inquiry has asked of me. In many instances, in order to provide detailed responses, I have informed myself of matters by reviewing documents made available to me, all of which I understand have been produced to the Board of Inquiry.

NTP Question 1: What is your title and role within the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (DJPR)?

3. My title within DJPR is "*Executive Director Aviation Strategy and Services*".
4. My role involves acting as the Departmental lead on all matters concerning aviation, including strategy development, investment attraction, route development and aviation policy.

NTP Question 2: What is your relevant professional background and work history?

5. I commenced working in the public service in December 2015.

6. Between December 2015 to April 2019, I was the Regional Director Barwon South West, Regional Development Victoria, Department of Economic Development Jobs Transport and Resources, which involved me acting as the regional state lead on economic development, investment attraction and regional policy development role for regional and rural Victoria.
7. From April 2019 to the end of March 2020, I was the Project Director for the Federation Square Review. My role involved me acting as the whole of government lead on the re-structure of the financial, operational, legal and governance arrangements of Federation Square.
8. From 1 January 2020, I assumed my current role as Executive Director of Aviation Strategy and Services with concurrent responsibilities to complete the Federation Square Review project. In late March I temporarily left the aviation portfolio when I was invited by Simon Phemister, Secretary DJPR, to lead the procuring and contracting of accommodation providers as part of the Hotel Quarantine Program (**Program**) and the Hotel for Heroes initiative.

NTP Question 3: Prior to your involvement in the Hotel Quarantine Program, what experience had you had in –

(a) contracting arrangements generally

(b) contracting on behalf of the Victorian government

(c) contracting for the provision of accommodation services?

9. Prior to my involvement in the Program, I had significant experience in contracting specialist third-party service providers, including consultants on economic impact assessment, business case development, major capital project related contracting and cost benefit analysis. I have contracted these third-party service providers both on behalf of private companies and on behalf of the State government.
10. My previous experience in contracting accommodation comprised of contracting accommodation providers in relation to staff-related travel and accommodation.

NTP Question 4: Did you have any personal or professional connection with any representative of the hotels engaged to provide accommodation services to the Hotel Quarantine Program? If so, what was that connection?

11. I did not, and do not, have any personal or professional connection with any representative of the hotels engaged to provide accommodation services as part of the Program.

INITIAL INVOLVEMENT

NTP Question 5: When and how did you first become aware that a program for hotel quarantine for returned international travellers was to be established in Victoria?

12. I first became aware that a program for hotel quarantine for returned international travellers was to be established in Victoria when I received a telephone call from Mr Phemister at around midday on 27 March 2020 informing me that such a program was likely to be implemented and asking me to ascertain which hotels would be available to provide accommodation as part of the program (including their capacity to provide meals, security and cleaning services).

NTP Question 6: Prior to that time, what contact had you had with hotels regarding the potential use of hotels as locations for isolation or quarantine for persons infected with or at risk of COVID-19?

13. On or around 22 March 2020, I was invited by Mr Phemister to lead the Department in assisting the Department of Health and Human Services (**DHHS**) to identify and secure a suite of hotels to accommodate those who may be vulnerable and requiring accommodation for self-isolation including by reason of having tested positive for COVID-19, or having been exposed to COVID-19, or having to leave their homes in urgent circumstances. At this time, I was also working with DHHS to secure a short list of potential suppliers to facilitate and implement a real time dynamic booking engine and call centre that would automate the accommodation booking task.
14. Accordingly, my team and I were already engaging comprehensively with the hotel and accommodation sector prior to becoming aware of the potential use of hotels as locations for isolation or quarantine for persons infected with, or at risk of, COVID-19. This engagement was facilitated through discussions with the Victorian Tourism Industry Council and the key peak accommodation bodies (e.g. the Australian Hotel Association and the Accommodation Association of Australia), in order to identify

potential accommodation providers. As part of this process, I had secured the support of the Victorian Tourism Industry Council, the Australian Hotel Association and the Accommodation Association of Australia to run an Expression of Interest (EOI) process to identify a suite of accommodation inventory in the Melbourne CBD, Greater Melbourne and Regional Victoria.

NTP Question 7: As part of that earlier work, what discussion if any had you had with hotels regarding

- (a) number of rooms;
- (b) rates;
- (c) infection control measures including cleaning; and
- (d) any other special requirements arising from the use of hotels for persons infected with or at risk of COVID-19?

15. As part of the EOI process to which I refer in response to NTP Question 6, Personal Informa
Personal Inform my deputy, the DHHS Representative (Personal Information) and I had discussions with hotels concerning the number of rooms that they had available, the fixing of rates for accommodation and the terms upon which hotels would enter into formal agreements with DJPR. The information that was obtained through the EOI process formed the basis upon which we identified suitable accommodation providers upon becoming aware of the Program. As such, the EOI process that had been conducted in order to identify potential accommodation sources for community segments that were vulnerable to potential COVID infection was deployed for the purposes of quarantine as part of the Program.
16. There were no formal written instructions issued to, or discussions held with, hotels on applicable infection control requirements at the time that they entered into formal agreements with DJPR. However, I did receive an email from Personal Information from the Accommodation Association of Australia dated 24 March advising me that hotels had received a COVID-19 leaflet from the Commonwealth Department of Health outlining details of how the virus is likely to spread and what cleaning practices and self-hygiene measures should be adopted. I had also sent an email to hotels concerning the issue of cleaning when I was seeking to gauge the interests of hotels in providing accommodation. My email to the hotels stated:¹

¹ [DJP.104.004.8157](#) attaching [DJP.104.004.8159](#) and [DJP.104.004.8165](#).

Please note while we expect that cleaning of the rooms will be the responsibility of the hotel (in accordance with the Agreement), if there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 in of any of the guests nominated by the department, the department will organise for cleaners to provide an industrial clean of the relevant rooms upon the departure of that guest. The cost of these additional cleaners will be paid for by the department.

17. Further information and instructions concerning infection control measures (including cleaning) and other special requirements arising from the use of hotels for persons infected with or at risk of COVID-19 were outlined in the terms of supplier (or hotel) obligations in each of the formal agreements that were executed with hotels as part of the Program.
18. The relevant requirements in the formal agreements included the following:
- (a) Clause 2.1(d), which provided that the relevant hotel must:
- subject to clause 2.1(e), ensure that each Room is thoroughly cleaned and disinfected at minimum:*
- (i) prior to the commencement of each Department's Nominee's stay; and*
- (ii) as soon as practicable following the conclusion of each Department Nominee's stay,*
- to a standard consistent with the most recent recommended public health standards in respect of COVID-19;*
- (b) Clause 2.1(e), which provided that the relevant hotel must: *"if there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 in any of the Department's Nominees, allow the Department's representatives to enter the Supplier's premises in order to undertake specialised cleaning of the relevant Room. For the avoidance of doubt, these specialised cleaning services will be at the cost of the Department"*;
- (c) Clause 2.1(f), which provided that the relevant hotel must: *"provide cleaning products for each Room, on request, so that the Department's Nominee is able to clean the Room themselves during their occupation of the Room"*;
- (d) Clause 2.1(h), which provided that the relevant hotel must:
- be responsible for, ensuring that before its officers, employees, agents, contractors and sub-contractors perform the Services, they receive:*

...

- (i) *adequate training in security, workplace health and safety, customer service and risk management; and*
 - (ii) *are provided with personal protective equipment in accordance with the relevant public health standard, including but not limited to in relation to COVID-19;*
- (e) Clause 2.1(j), which provided that the relevant hotel must “*cooperate with and regularly liaise with the Department including but not limited to ... immediately notifying the Department of any issues in relation to the provision of the Rooms and/or Services, including but not limited to anything which may create a risk that the accommodation service will cease to be provided such as ... known exposure or infection of COVID-19*”; and
- (f) Clause 2.1(k), which provided that the relevant hotel must “*have a business continuity plan that includes ... consideration of occupational and safety for staff, agents, contractors and sub-contractors if there is exposure or infection of COVID-19*”.

NTP Question 8: What was your role in the Hotel Quarantine Program?

19. I was responsible for procuring a suite of accommodation (i.e. hotels and rooms) for the purposes of accommodating international travellers that were obliged to quarantine upon their return as well as accommodation stock in order to support the Hotels for Heroes initiative. The Hotel for Heroes initiative provides emergency accommodation for frontline health workers required to quarantine or self-isolate but are unable to do so in their home.

NTP Question 9: To whom were you accountable in your role?

20. In my role I was initially accountable to Mr Phemister. Following the implementation of the Operation Soteria Team within DJPR, I was accountable, first, to Claire Febey, and, then, to Rachaele May in her capacity as DJPR Support Agency Commander for Operation Soteria.

SELECTING HOTELS

NTP Question 10: Which hotels were engaged to provide hotel services (the Hotels)?

21. As part of the Program, DJPR entered into formal agreements with 29 hotels.
22. Now shown to me and marked **Annexure UM-01** is a list of the hotels that had entered into written agreements with DJPR.
23. Of these 29 hotels:
 - (a) four hotels were not ultimately used to provide any services (Zagame's House, Novotel Glen Waverley, Rendezvous and the Victoria Hotel);
 - (b) three hotels were initially used to provide services but ultimately discontinued (Travelodge Docklands, Travelodge Southbank and the Crowne Plaza); and
 - (c) five hotels were re-purposed to accommodate persons as part of the Hotel for Heroes initiative (Mid-City Hotel Ballarat, Bell Tower Inn, Rydges Geelong, All Seasons Resort Bendigo and Vibe Hotel Marysville).

NTP Question 11: How were the Hotels identified as potential providers of accommodation services to the Hotel Quarantine Program?

24. As set out above in my responses to NTP Question 6 and NTP Question 7, at the time that I was required to identify hotels as potential providers of accommodation services to the Program, I had already obtained a significant volume of information about hotels across Victoria, as part of the EOI process that I had previously undertaken. The potential pool of accommodation providers that had been obtained through the EOI process comprised almost 500 properties, with more than 29,700 available rooms.
25. Upon being requested by Mr Phemister to ascertain which hotels would be available to provide accommodation as part of the program (including their capacity to provide meals, security and cleaning services), my team and I reviewed the information obtained from various hotels as part of the EOI process in order to identify appropriate accommodation providers for me to approach. My recollection is that at this point in time I had been told that it was the preference of the State Control Centre that accommodation services be procured from hotels located in the Melbourne CBD for the purposes of ensuring proximity to major testing centres and hospitals.
26. As part of this process, on 27 March 2020 Personal Information and I contacted various hotels located in the Melbourne CBD and ascertained the security, cleaning and

catering requirements for each hotel. To record this information, I maintained a spreadsheet which set out each hotel's availability, capacity and had three columns titled "*Requires Security Arrangements from State*", "*Requires Cleaning Arrangements from State*" and "*Requires Catering Arrangements from State*".² I circulated this spreadsheet in the morning of 28 March 2020.³

27. During this time, the template for the contractual agreement for the provision of accommodation was completed and provided to me and my team for completion.⁴ I had previously been informed that Mr Phemister was happy to arrange a delegation to ensure that the hotels were engaged in a timely fashion.⁵ Accordingly, it was recommended that I send an email to Mr Phemister seeking approval.⁶ A solicitor within DJPR prepared a draft email for me to use for this purpose.⁷
28. In the late morning of 28 March 2020, I sent Mr Phemister an email requesting his authorisation to permit me to execute contracts with hotels, and to send those hotels emails attaching the relevant contracts.⁸ I had attached the draft contractual documents and a spreadsheet setting out the hotels that I proposed to approach and their rates to my email. The authorisation that I sought from Mr Phemister was to enable me to:
- (a) send emails on Mr Phemister's behalf to the hotels listed in the attached spreadsheet confirming that the department wishes to book the number of rooms identified in the attached spreadsheet, at the agreed rates (as specified in the spreadsheet) subject to the department's terms and conditions;
 - (b) agree/sign the contract and any associated documents to confirm the above bookings; and
 - (c) make payments in accordance with these arrangements.
29. I received Mr Phemister's approval for the authorisation that I had sought in the afternoon on 28 March 2020.⁹ Following this, I executed formal agreements with hotels on behalf of DJPR for the purposes of the hotel quarantine.¹⁰

² [DJP.102.007.9907](#).

³ [DJP.102.007.9895](#) attaching [DJP.102.007.9907](#).

⁴ [DJP.104.001.5070](#) attaching [DJP.104.001.5072](#); [DJP.104.001.5077](#).

⁵ [DJP.104.001.4348](#).

⁶ [DJP.104.005.9138](#) attaching [DJP.104.005.9140](#); [DJP.104.005.9142](#).

⁷ [DJP.104.005.9138](#) attaching [DJP.104.005.9140](#); [DJP.104.005.9142](#).

⁸ [DJP.101.001.7180](#) attaching [DJP.101.001.7182](#); [DJP.101.001.7184](#); [DJP.101.001.7189](#).

⁹ [DJP.101.004.5136](#).

¹⁰ [DJP.102.009.3461](#).

NTP Question 12: What process was followed in selecting each of those Hotels?

30. I have set out the process that was followed in selecting hotels in my response to NTP Question 11.
31. When it was necessary to renew hotel contracts or identify new hotels, I would convene a meeting with key officers within DJPR (Ms Febey, Ms May and Ms Serbest) and DHHS (Pam Williams, the DHHS COVID 19 Commander and Merrin Bamert). At this meeting, we would evaluate and discuss each hotel in terms of its ongoing suitability. The views that were expressed by DHHS's representatives were critical and would ultimately determine whether we would stand up a new hotel or renew a particular hotel's contract.

NTP Question 13: What factors were taken into account in selecting those Hotels?

32. In selecting which hotel to stand up, or determining whether a hotel's contract would be renewed, my team and I would rely upon the specific requirements and preferences expressed by DHHS's representatives as well as any feedback that we had received from relevant officers from DJPR personnel. This feedback may, depending on the hotel, comprise feedback on the relevant hotel's operational layout, the suitability of the room configurations, the quality of food, whether there were any issues concerning the ingress and egress of returned travellers, the availability of controlled recreational areas, balconies or windows and feedback concerning the level of care being given to returned travellers. In addition, there were on-ground operational teams (comprising representatives from DHHS, DJPR, Victoria Police and SkyBus) that would conduct a pre-engagement reconnaissance of each property contracted in order to determine which of the hotels would be suitable to be "*activated or stood up*" for quarantine purposes.

NTP Question 14: Who approved the engagement of each of those Hotels?

33. As I set out in my response to NTP Question 11, Mr Phemister approved the initial engagement of hotels.
34. On or around 9 April 2020, I was appointed as Emergency Controller with the delegated power to procure hotel accommodation.¹¹ My delegation authorised me to

¹¹ [DJP.012.001.0001](#)

enter into contracts with hotels provided that the value of the contract did not exceed \$10 million. Following this delegation, I was responsible for approving the procurement of hotels but, on each occasion that I exercised my delegation, I ensured that I informed Mr Phemister of my intention to do so.

35. Although I was responsible for the formal engagement of hotels from 9 April 2020, as I have discussed above, the selection of hotels to be engaged was determined following discussion between representatives of both DJPR and DHHS, with DHHS's views ultimately being determinative of which hotel would be engaged.

NTP Question 15: Were you party to any discussion about whether DJPR was the appropriate department to be entering into and managing contracts relating to the Hotel Quarantine Program? If so, what were those discussions?

36. From my recollection, I was not a party to any discussion about whether DJPR was the appropriate department to be entering into and managing contracts relating to the Program.

NTP Question 16: Did responsibility for selecting and contracting hotels remain with DJPR? If not, to whom was it transferred and when?

37. DJPR was initially responsible for contracting the required hotels for the Program. The one exception to this was when the Brady Hotel was selected to replace Rydges and to accommodate returned travellers that had tested positive for COVID-19. DHHS independently selected and contracted with the Brady Hotel. DJPR had no involvement (contractual or otherwise) with the Brady Hotel. From 1 July 2020, DHHS assumed responsibility for both selecting and contracting all hotels.

PREPARING CONTRACTS FOR THE HOTELS

NTP Question 17: What instructions were you given, if any, about the specific terms which those contracts should include, regarding:

- (a) **responsibility for ensuring hotel staff received (prior to performing the services) in relation to COVID-19 –**
- (i) **adequate training including in relation to security and risk management;**
 - (ii) **personal protective equipment (PPE) in accordance with the relevant public health standards;**

(b) the requirement for Hotels to provide notifications and reports to DJPR and or to DHHS?

38. I do not recall receiving specific instructions as to the terms that the contracts with hotels should include regarding training, PPE and the provision of notifications and reports. The template agreements were prepared on the same day that DJPR was first informed of the Program and in circumstances where it was expected that hotels would be procured and ready to provide accommodation services on or around 29 March 2020. Despite the absence of formal instructions, my team and I nonetheless ensured that each of the hotel contracts included specific references to the hotel's obligations in relation to the provision of training and PPE, and the circumstances in which notifications and reports were to be provided by the hotels.
39. I have set out the relevant clauses of the hotel contracts in my response to NTP Question 7 above including, in particular, clauses 2.1(h) and 2.1(j).

NTP Question 18: Were all hotels engaged on the same terms and conditions? To the extent there were any variation between the Hotels, why were those variations in place?

40. The hotels were generally engaged on the same terms and conditions. To the extent that there were variations, these related predominantly to commercial matters and variations to the terms of contract.

NTP Question 19: Were bookings made for whole hotels or only for certain numbers of rooms or floors? If whole hotels were not reserved, why?

41. Bookings were made both for the entire hotel and, where appropriate, only for a certain number of rooms or floors.
42. The decision whether an entire hotel would be booked or whether only certain rooms or floors would be booked depended on a number of factors including:
- (a) what the hotel was prepared to offer in terms of inventory for contracting purposes;
 - (b) the changing dynamic of the incoming demographics of returning travellers, including ensuring that there was an appropriate mix of room types to reflect the different needs of returning travellers;
 - (c) projected or anticipated demand in terms of room stock; and
 - (d) any other concerns that DHHS may have had in relation to specific properties.

NTP Question 20: Who decided which of the Hotels would commence operating in the Hotel Quarantine Program when they did?

43. Initially, my team and I were responsible for deciding which hotels would commence operating in the Program given the short period of time between DJPR becoming aware of the Program and the time by which hotels needed to be ready to accept and accommodate returning travellers. Our decision was based upon the feedback that we had been received from the State Control Centre, on the views of key personnel within DJPR and our discussions with the various hotels that were located within the Melbourne CBD. As set out above, from in or around early April 2020, DHHS assumed ultimate responsibility for determining which hotels would commence operating in the Program and the point at time at which this would occur.

NTP Question 21: What factors determined when they would be ‘activated’?

44. Once selected, a hotel would be “*activated*” once the demand for additional rooms justified its activation. As set out in my responses to NTP Question 12 and NTP Question 19 above, there were a range of factors that would determine which hotels should be selected and prepared to be activated although DHHS was ultimately responsible for determining which hotel would be activated (and the point in time at which this would occur). There were on-ground operational teams (comprising representatives from DHHS, DJPR, Victoria Police and SkyBus) that would conduct a pre-engagement reconnaissance of each property contracted in order to determine which of the hotels would be suitable to be “*activated or stood up*” for quarantine purposes.

NTP Question 22: Were hotel rooms paid for only when they were occupied?

45. DJPR paid for all rooms contracted regardless of whether those rooms were ultimately occupied.

Contract Management

NTP Question 23: Who in DJPR had day-to-day management of the contracts with each of the Hotels?

46. My team was responsible for managing the contracts with hotels.
47. This function did not include and is to be distinguished from the daily operational oversight and associated management responsibilities of the hotels, which was the

responsibility of the DHHS and DJPR representatives on the ground at each of the hotels. Rather, my team's role in managing the hotel contracts on a daily basis involved reconciling any inconsistencies or complications in relation to commercial terms (including accounts payable and invoicing), clarifying future plans for contracting any given property, and ensuring that we had available a good communication channel between the hotel and DJPR should there be a need to resolve or communicate any contractually related matter.

For example, traveller complaints regarding dietary preferences, menu selection options, PPE availability and/or cleaning/health related inquiries would in the first instance be managed on the ground between the hotel and the DHHS/DJPR representatives. If there is a misunderstanding of supplier (or hotel related obligations) as it relates to the contractual matters and it cannot be resolved "*on the ground*" then it will likely be forwarded via the DJPR Agency Support Commander to my hotel team for actioning by my team.

NTP Question 24: How was that day-to-day management carried out?

48. In NTP Question 23 I have clarified my team's responsibilities in relation to the day to day management of the hotel contracts.
49. To the extent that my team was responsible for managing the contracts we adopted a "*portfolio approach*" whereby each team member had responsibility for a group of hotels. As part of their role (and in addition to fulfilling the functions set out in response to NTP Question 23), each member acted as a conduit to engage with each of their respective hotels on a regular basis (i.e. once or twice per week) to ascertain if there were any issues requiring facilitation, support or clarification and also relay information where required or requested by the broader Operation Soteria team within DJPR.

NTP Question 25: Who in DJPR was responsible for giving directions to the Hotels?

50. My team and I would have discussions with the hotels which generally concerned contract administration issues or other matters as described in NTP Questions 23 and 24. My team did not provide directions or directives to the hotels except for the circumstance where we were instructed by DHHS to provide directions to hotels concerning cleaning as set out in my response to NTP Question 29 below. I am not aware of which DJPR personnel were responsible for the provision of directions to hotels more generally.

NTP Question 26: What, if any, directions were given to the Hotels and when?

51. I am unable to respond to this question for the reason I have set out in my response to NTP Question 25.

NTP Question 27: How was compliance with those directions monitored?

52. As set out in my response to NTP Question 29, on the occasion that my team directed the hotels to ensure that they complied with the cleaning requirements conveyed by DHHS, we required each hotel to confirm that they had received and complied with this direction. Each hotel provided this information. Beyond this specific direction, I am unable to respond to this question for the reason I have set out in my response to NTP Question 25.

NTP Question 28: How, if at all, did DJPR monitor compliance with the requirement that Hotels ensured its officers received adequate training and were provided with the required PPE?

53. The response to this question is already dealt with in NTP Question 27. I am not aware of any issue of non-compliance that we were asked as a team to resolve. All operational matters were dealt with by the on-ground teams.

NTP Question 29: What, if any, information was given to the Hotels as to how to clean and disinfect each room in accordance with the contracts? Who gave that information?

54. We clearly identified the responsibilities of each supplier (or hotel) in relation to cleaning and disinfection requirements in the contracts. Please refer to my response to NTP Question 7.
55. Importantly the suppliers had a clear responsibility under the provisions of the contract to ensure that the cleaning and disinfection was to a standard consistent with the most recent recommended public health standards in respect of COVID-19.
56. As part of the first contract renewal correspondence on or around 22 April 2020, I took the opportunity to communicate to all hotels the cleaning related feedback we sought from DHHS. The variation or contract renewal letters included a paragraph which stated that *"the latest health advice is to wash linen and towels etc., on the hottest wash possible for rooms where guests have been in quarantine"*.

57. DHHS made my team aware of a Commonwealth Department of Health produced leaflet titled Corona Virus Disease (COVID19) Information for Hotels and Hotel Staff which outlined in a highline sense the virus epidemiology personal hygiene practices to mitigate the impact of the virus.
58. We chose to not forward the leaflet since the advice and feedback from the hotel association (Accommodation Association of Australia) indicated that hotels were already in receipt of the same information.
59. We only received clarity and detail with regards to required cleaning and disinfection procedures from DHHS in mid-June (titled Procedure for Cleaning Quarantine and Quarantine Red Hotels -16 June 2020). We took immediate steps to circulate this document from 17 June 2020 to all contracted hotels. All hotels responded confirming receipt and compliance. A few hotels had questions which my team subsequently passed on to DHHS for clarification.

NTP Question 30: What processes were in place for each hotel to notify DJPR of issues in relation to the provision of rooms and/or services?

60. From my recollection, there were multiple levels at which hotels could notify DJPR of issues in relation to the provision of rooms and/or services. Where the issues were operational in nature or concerned matters of risk, hotels would generally notify these issues by communicating with the DHHS or DJPR personnel that were on the ground at the relevant hotel. Where necessary and relevant, this would then be escalated to the Operation Soteria team within DJPR for discussion and resolution.
61. Where the issue concerning the provision of rooms and/or services was commercial in nature (e.g. where it concerned the need to reduce or expand room stock, or the payment of room rates), or raised issues concerning compliance with the contract, these issues would be raised directly with me or my team.

NTP Question 31: How often did DJPR request each Hotel to provide a report to it, pursuant to its contracts with each Hotel?

62. As set out in my response to NTP Question 7 above, the hotels were obliged under their contracts to immediately notify DJPR of any issues in relation to the provision of the rooms and/or services, including but not limited to anything which may create a risk that the accommodation service will cease to be provided such as known exposure or infection of COVID-19. The hotels also had an obligation to provide reports to DJPR when requested or required by DJPR.

63. My team and I periodically sought feedback or information from the hotels on various matters, including matters concerning the provision of rooms and/or services. In my experience, the hotels have always been co-operative in providing this feedback or information when sought. If there was an issue concerning the provision of rooms and/or services that was operational or urgent in its nature, my understanding is that this would have been raised by the hotels in the first instance and immediately with DHHS and DJPR personnel on the ground and, in most instances, resolved through those channels

NTP Question 32: What reports were received pursuant to the contracts with each hotel?

64. My team did not receive any formal reports pursuant to the contracts with each hotel and is consistent with my responses to NTP Questions 30 and 31. This reflects the fact that my team generally only requested information from hotels when it was necessary to clarify issues of contract administration or when asked to raise issues or irregularities by other personnel within DJPR.

INVOLVEMENT OF DHHS

NTP Question 33: What contact, and with whom, did you have with DHHS regarding the terms on which hotels would be engaged?

65. I would generally have contact with Ms Williams in particular and Ms Bamert regarding the terms on which hotels would be engaged. I have set out in my response to NTP Question 12 the general circumstances in which this contact would occur. In addition to what is there set out, I would also have informal discussions with Ms Williams in particular and Ms Bamert from time to time, including in relation to whether a particular hotel was appropriate or suitable for selection and the provision of accommodation.

sign here




*print
name*

Unni Menon

date

24 August 2020

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ANNEXURE UM-01

	Hotel Name
1.	Rydges On Swanston
2.	Zagame's House
3.	Batmans Hill on Collins
4.	Crown Resorts - Metropol
5.	Crown Resorts - Promenade
6.	Crowne Plaza Melbourne
7.	Four Point by Sheraton, Melbourne Docklands
8.	Holiday Inn Melbourne Airport
9.	Melbourne Marriott Hotel
10.	Mercure Welcome Melbourne
11.	Novotel Melbourne Glen Waverley
12.	Novotel Melbourne on Collins
13.	Pan Pacific Melbourne
14.	Parkroyal Melbourne Airport
15.	Travelodge Hotel Melbourne Docklands
16.	Travelodge Hotel Melbourne Southbank
17.	Rendezvous Hotel Melbourne
18.	The Victoria Hotel
19.	Novotel Melbourne South Wharf
20.	Stamford Plaza Hotel
21.	Grand Chancellor Melbourne
22.	Holiday Inn Melbourne on Flinders
23.	Comfort Inn Richmond Henty
24.	Pullman Melbourne on Swanston
25.	Mid City Hotel Ballarat
26.	Bell Tower Inn
27.	Rydges Geelong
28.	All Seasons Resort Hotel Bendigo
29.	Vibe Hotel Marysville

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