

IN THE MATTER OF the *Inquiries Act 2014*

AND IN THE MATTER OF a Board of Inquiry into the COVID-19 Hotel Quarantine Program

WITNESS STATEMENT OF ABDUL HAMID (EDDIE) CHAKIK

1. What is your title and role within Ultimate Protective Services Pty Ltd?

My role within Ultimate Protective Services (UPS) is a business/operations manager.

2. What is your relevant professional background and work history?

I have been a licenced security guard for approximately 20 years.

I owned and operated Next-Gen Security from 2010 till 2015.

I am currently employed by Ultimate Protective Services (UPS).

3. When was your business first licensed as a private security business in Victoria?

UPS was first established in 2016 and I have been managing the business since its commencement.

4. What are the usual services provided by your business?

We supply security guards and crowd controllers, usual through subcontractor security services.

5. What is your business' usual client profile?

Owners of venues and corporate entities throughout Victoria.

6. To what extent, prior to the Hotel Quarantine Program, had your business provided security services to the Victorian government, whether directly or via subcontracting or labour hire arrangements?

UPS supplied security manpower to the Australian Open, Formula 1 Grand Prix and Melbourne and Olympic Park trusts and also the Spring Racing Carnival. This was all done via subcontracting agreements.

7. On what basis (employee/contractor/other) do you engage staff to perform security services?

We employ staff on the basis that they have a valid and current Victorian individual security license, as well as completing an interview with UPS management.

8. How many permanent employees did you have as at 27 March 2020?

At the time we had 2 full time staff members and 34 part time staff members.

9. Which office holders within your business themselves hold private security licences?

All staff required to have a valid security license.

10. How do you ordinarily recruit staff?

We advertise where necessary and also rely on referrals through word of mouth.

11. Are staff employed or engaged by your business under any restriction on accepting work from other security businesses?

No, staff can work elsewhere.

12. At which hotels, and for which government security contractor, did your business provide security staff? For each hotel please include details of the time period within which you provided security staff.

UPS supplied guards through MSS security;

- *Holiday Inn (Melbourne Airport)* from Wednesday 8 April 2020 till Thursday 9 July 2020.
- *Stamford Plaza Hotel (Collins St, Melbourne)* from Wednesday 16 July 2020 till Thursday 23 July 2020.
- *Park Royal Hotel (Melbourne Airport)* from Thursday 7 May till Sunday 24 May 2020 and on Friday 26 June 2020.

13. When and how did your business first become aware that there was to be a role for private security companies in the Hotel Quarantine System?

UPS was made aware on Monday the 6 April 2020.

14. When and how did your business first reach an agreement to participate in the provision of security services in the Hotel Quarantine Program?

Agreement was reached via email and telephone on Tuesday 7 April 2020.

15. When was that agreement formalised in writing? If you had agreements with more than one of the government-contracted security companies, give details of all agreements.

We formalized the agreement in writing on 7 April 2020.

16. What precisely were the security services you agreed to provide under each agreement?

To supply static guards and a nightshift supervisor for the role, to supply relievers and fresh air escorts on site.

17. When and how [if at all] were you first provided with the terms of the head contract entered into by the government contractor with whom you had made an agreement to provide security services?

We entered the agreement on 10 June 2020.

18. Did you engage subcontractors or labour hire companies to provide any of the security services you had contracted with the government contractor to provide? If so, give details of –

(a) the firms engaged;

(b) the hotels at which those firms provided services; and

(c) the dates on which those firms provided services.

No

The hotels at which your business provided security services

19. For each hotel at which your business provided security services, please state –

(a) the number of persons rostered to each shift;

- Holiday Inn: from 2 to 25 persons per shift
- Stamford Plaza: from 10 to 50 persons rostered per shift
- Park Royal Hotel: from 5 to 11 persons per shift

(b) the number of shifts per day; and

- Holiday Inn: 2-47 (23 dayshift and 23 night shift)
- Stamford Plaza: details with MSS security
- Park Royal Hotel: details with MSS security

(c) the duties of the staff rostered for each shift.

Holiday Inn:

Supervisor – to overlook the whole shift

Reliever – to give security guards their breaks

Static security guards – to protect emergency exits and lift and lobby areas

Fresh Air Escorts – to escort clients to the fresh air area of the hotel allocated by DHHS

Stamford Plaza:

Reliever – to give security guards their breaks

Static security guards – to protect emergency exits

Park Royal:

Reliever – to give security guards their breaks

Static security guards – to protect emergency exits

20. Did the numbers of persons and shifts or the nature of the duties change over time? If so, please detail the nature of those changes.

Yes, numbers changed and fluctuated due to MSS security bringing in their temporary staff to the hotels, as well as the change in arrivals and departures.

21. How were decisions made about the number of staff to be rostered on?

Number of staff to be rostered on was dependent on the number of arriving passengers allocated to each hotel, this was at MSS discretion and roster.

22. What licences were the staff you engaged or authorised to be engaged required to hold in order to be engaged? What records were kept of those licences?

A current and valid Victorian security individual license was required by each security staff member. All license numbers and expiry dates are recorded on the UPS database and checked for validity via the Victoria Police website

Training and Supervision

23. What if any training was provided to your staff by DHHS, DJPR or any other government department regarding COVID-19 and how to work in a safe manner?

The nurses on site provided a hand hygiene and mask usage video to all guards on commencement of their work.

24. What if any training was provided to your staff by the government contractor that engaged you regarding COVID-19 and how to work in a safe manner?

MSS provided online training for staff, otherwise the site manager was responsible for onsite procedures.

25. What if any training did your business require your own staff to undergo regarding COVID-19 and how to work in a safe manner? In your answer please make any necessary distinction between:

(a) Staff directly engaged by your business; and

Direct information from DHHS and appropriate medical experts on site, as to maintain consistent approach.

(b) Staff engaged by subcontractors and labour hire companies.

N/A

26. What onsite supervision was in place for your business' security staff at each hotel? Was that supervision provided by you or by the government contractor that engaged you?

UPS provided a night shift supervisor as requested by rostering of MSS.

27. In cases where some of the staff on duty at an hotel quarantine site were engaged by your business, and some by the government contractor;

(a) which business or person had responsibility for onsite supervision?

MSS was responsible for onsite supervision.

(b) Which business had responsibility for PPE?

MSS security was responsible for PPE

28. In cases where all of the security staff on duty were engaged by your business, did your business provide onsite supervision?

During the time in which security services were provided at the Holiday Inn, the night supervisor was a UPS guard.

29. If you engaged further subcontractors or labour hire companies, what role did they play in supervision of the staff provided by them?

N/A

Rosters and salary arrangements

30. Who in your business was responsible for the recruiting and rostering of staff?

I was responsible for recruiting and rostering of staff.

31. How were the staff you provided for the quarantine program sourced and recruited?

We secured all staff from UPS staff database.

32. What factors were relevant to how frequently staff were rostered on?

Staff were mainly appointed to tasks based on their experience and availability. Guard rosters for hotels were kept limited due to the risk of cross contamination

33. What records were kept of hours worked?

MSS log book on site log book as well as UPS keeping their daily records.

34. What were the applicable hourly rates of pay for the security staff you provided?

All staff were paid according to the Security Guard Industry Award [MA00016]

35. How were security staff paid?

Staff were paid via EFT and cheque where necessary

36. To your knowledge were any security staff engaged by you at one hotel quarantine site also working at any other hotel quarantine site and/or for other security contractors?

To the best of my knowledge, no.

37. What if any fee or remuneration was paid to your company in addition to the actual salary costs of the staff you provided?

As a private business we do not need to publicly declare this information, with all due respect we decline to answer this question in specifics.

Personal protective equipment

38. What PPE was provided by your business for staff use?

All PPE was provided by DHHS and MSS security

39. What PPE was provided by the government contractor to your business' security staff for use?

Masks , gloves and hand sanitizer were provided by MSS Security

40. What PPE was provided by DHHS or any other government department?

Masks, gloves, hand sanitizer and at some point safety gowns.

41. Were your staff at any time required to provide their own PPE?

No

42. What training was given to your staff regarding the correct use of PPE? Who provided that training?

The initial induction was undertaken by the nurses onsite and also constant daily reminders by security supervisors and management on site.

43. Did your business at any time experience a shortage of PPE? If so, how was that shortage managed?

No

44. What if any arrangements were in place at the hotels for which you had responsibility for temperature checking of security staff? Who instituted and monitored any such arrangement?

None, DHHS were responsible for that role.

Complaints and concerns

45. Who was responsible for identifying and acting on instances of poor or unacceptable conduct by your security staff?

The allocated dayshift and nightshift supervisors through MSS and site management.

46. Who was responsible for identifying and acting on complaints or concerns regarding unsafe work conditions for your security staff?

The allocated dayshift and nightshift supervisors through MSS and site management.

47. Did your business identify or receive notice of poor or unacceptable conduct by any of your security staff? How were those issues dealt with?

None

48. Did you terminate the services of, remove from site, or otherwise take action against any and which of the security personnel you engaged directly for unsatisfactory performance of their duties at quarantine hotels? If yes provide details of

(a) who was so terminated, removed or acted against and when; and

None

(b) the nature of the unsatisfactory behaviour concerned.

N/A

49. Did your business identify or receive notice of unsafe work conditions for your security staff? How were those issues dealt with?

The fresh air escort complained about being cold, so headwear was supplied by UPS to fulfil this request.

50. Did any security staff employed or engaged by your business contract COVID-19 in the course of their work in the Hotel Quarantine Program?

- No

If so, (a) what were the circumstances in which they came to contract it;

(b) how and when did your business become aware of it; and

(c) what steps were taken by your business in response?

Additional information

51. If you wish to include any additional information in your witness statement, please set it out below.