

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

**STATEMENT OF** CCOC  
**OPERATION COORDINATOR, DEPARTMENT OF JOBS, PRECINCTS  
& REGIONS**

I, CCOC Operation Coordinator, 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.

## INTRODUCTION

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

3. My usual role within DJPR is as Operation Coordinator. My role involves managing a conference centre, which includes arranging and facilitating meetings for the department and external clients, including by managing bookings, catering and other services that may be required from time to time.

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

4. I commenced working with Global Victoria/DJPR in 2016. Upon commencement, I worked as a Project Officer (International Chamber House). In 2018, I commenced my

-----

current role as Operation Coordinator (Corporate Centre). Prior to my work with Global Victoria/DJPR, I held a number of hospitality roles.

**NTP Question 3: How and when did you come to take up the role of the DJPR Site Manager at Stamford Plaza?**

5. In or around April 2020, I was approached by [Personal Information] Deputy Director - Global Partnerships and Projects, who asked me to take up the role of DJPR Site Manager at Stamford Plaza. I commenced my work in this role on 29 April 2020.

**NTP Question 4: Over what period were you DJPR Site Manager at Stamford Plaza? What were your hours each day?**

6. I was the DJPR Site Manager at Stamford Plaza in the period commencing 29 April 2020 and ending in late June 2020. My role generally required me to work approximately 8 hours on a usual day, however I would work longer hours on days where returned travellers would be arriving or departing from the hotels at which I was Site Manager. Outside of my regular hours, I remained "on call", in that I would be contacted by people whenever they had a particular query or concern that required my attention.

**NTP Question 5: What, if any, arrangements were in place to hand over or debrief to other DJPR Site Manager(s) at Stamford Plaza, when your period as Site Manager ended?**

7. There were no arrangements in place for me to hand over or debrief other DJPR Site Managers at Stamford Plaza when my period as Site Manager ended. My period as Site Manager ended while I was in self-isolation after being tested for COVID-19. It was not feasible in those circumstances for me to hand over or debrief the next Site Manager. That being said, in my view it was not necessary for me to hand over or debrief to the next Site Manager because the person taking over the role was [Ad. Officer] who had been working with me as my deputy during my time as Site Manager at Stamford Plaza and who was intimately aware of the requirements of the role.

**NTP Question 6: Were you a Site Manager at other hotels? If so, please list them and the dates you were Site Manager there.**

8. In addition to my role as the Site Manager at the Stamford Plaza, I was the Site Manager at the Travelodge Docklands from 7 April 2020 to 28 April 2020, and at the Marriot Melbourne from 28 May 2020 to 15 July 2020.

## ROLE OF THE SITE MANAGER

### NTP Question 7: What was the role of the Site Manager at each hotel?

9. The principal responsibilities in my role as Site Manager included:
- (a) managing the arrival and departures of returned travellers from the hotel;
  - (b) acting as a liaison point of contact between the hotels and DJPR;
  - (c) addressing issues raised with me by the hotels concerning the provision of their services (e.g. the provision of meals and rooms);
  - (d) escalating serious or significant issues that arose at my hotels to more senior staff; and
  - (e) answering general queries from hotel or ground staff.

### NTP Question 8: What was your day-to-day role at Stamford Plaza?

10. I have set out my day-to-day responsibilities in my response to NTP Question 7.

### NTP Question 9: Were you physically present at Stamford Plaza while there as Site Manager? If not, by what means did you carry out your duties and functions?

11. Yes, I would attend the Stamford Plaza each day while performing my duties as Site Manager, although the length of time that I would spend on site would change from time to time depending on what was occurring at the hotel. Even when I was not physically present, I was "on call" in that I could be contacted by telephone to deal with any issues that required my attention.

### NTP Question 10: Did you have any staff reporting to you? If so, what were their roles?

12. Ad. Officer reported to me when I was Site Manager at the Stamford Plaza. Her role and responsibilities were similar to mine as Site Manager, save that she operated in accordance with my instructions where necessary.

### NTP Question 11: As Site Manager, who (if anyone) was your point of liaison within the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)?

13. My point of liaison within DHHS was the relevant DHHS Team Leader who was on duty at the Stamford Plaza on any given day. The person who acted as DHHS Team Leader changed on a regular and routine basis.

**NTP Question 12: To what extent did your role interact with the DHHS Authorised Officer?**

**(a) What were your respective roles and how did you coordinate them?**

**(b) Was an Authorised Officer present at the hotel at all times?**

14. My role as Site Manager did not require me to interact with the DHHS Authorised Officer. To the extent that I needed to discuss issues with DHHS, or DHHS wished to convey any information to me, this was done by conversations between myself and the relevant DHHS Team Leader.

**COMMUNICATION AND COMPLAINTS**

**NTP Question 13: During your role as Site Manager (both at the Stamford and at any other hotel):**

**(a) to whom did you report within DJPR?**

**(b) to whom (if anyone) did you report within Operation Soteria?**

**(c) what lines of communication were in place between DJPR, DHHS Authorised Officers and other agencies?**

**(d) how did communication occur?**

15. During my role as Site Manager, I reported directly to Personal Information and the Manager – Events and Sponsorships. I did not report to anyone else within Operation Soteria. To the extent that I was involved in communications between DJPR, DHHS and Authorised Officers, these comprised briefings that were held each morning at the Stamford Plaza. The briefings were attended by me, Ad. Officer, DJPR and DHHS on-site staff, the Authorised Officers, and the service supervisors (e.g. security guard supervisor, Dnata supervisor and the hotel supervisor). At these briefings, we would discuss any significant events for the day, as well as a general run-through of the day. People were also able to raise and discuss any issues that they were experiencing.

**NTP Question 14: Did you experience any difficulty in the timely receipt of information that you needed for the performance of your role? If so,**

**(a) what was that difficulty;**

**(b) what impact if any did it have on the performance of your role; and**

**(c) what action was taken to resolve that difficulty?**

16. I did not experience any difficulty in the timely receipt of information that I required for the performance of my role.

**NTP Question 15: What process was in place for the Site Manager receiving and investigating complaints or concerns about -**

**(a) hotels;**

**(b) security companies; and**

**(c) other contractors?**

17. If the hotel staff had, or received, complaints about the security companies or other contractors, they would pass on their complaints to me. I would then communicate these complaints to the relevant contact and request that they take steps to rectify or remedy the issues that had given rise to the complaints. I would also inform my supervisors so that they were aware of the issues that had been raised. For example, if the General Manager of the Stamford Plaza raised with me complaints about the conduct of the security guards, I would communicate these complaints to the relevant Security Manager and request, depending on the circumstances, that they discuss and resolve the complaint with the General Manager.<sup>1</sup> It was then expected that a meeting would take place with the relevant stakeholders and it was more likely than not that steps would be agreed to resolve the various issues.<sup>2</sup>
18. Similarly, when I received complaints from DHHS or DJPR personnel about the hotel, security companies or other contractors, I would raise these complaints directly with the relevant manager.<sup>3</sup> I would request the relevant manager to take steps to rectify or remedy the complaints that had been raised with me.<sup>4</sup> In my experience, the relevant managers would generally be co-operative in taking steps to ensure that the relevant complaint was resolved and that the issue would not arise in the future.<sup>5</sup> I would also inform my supervisors so that they were aware of the issues that had been raised.
19. On some occasions, complaints would be made directly to the hotel, security companies or other contractors. My preference was for complaints to be directed to me because it was my experience that I could most efficiently address and resolve the complaints by reason of the fact that I was on-site.<sup>6</sup> Where a complaint was particularly

<sup>1</sup> See, eg [DJP.124.001.0163](#).

<sup>2</sup> See, eg [DJP.124.001.2460](#).

<sup>3</sup> See, eg [DJP.160.001.0669](#); [DJP.131.002.2568](#).

<sup>4</sup> See, eg [DJP.160.001.0669](#); [DJP.131.002.2568](#).

<sup>5</sup> See, eg [DJP.160.001.0669](#); [DJP.131.002.2568](#).

<sup>6</sup> See, eg [DJP.103.007.3573](#).

serious, it would be raised with the DJPR Accommodation Lead, Rachaele May, Executive Director - Emergency Coordination and Resilience, who may then direct me as to the steps that should be taken to resolve the issues that had been raised.<sup>7</sup>

20. There was also a "Situation Report" that was circulated daily and set out any significant issues at each of the hotels that was accommodating returned travellers at the relevant time. Where possible, the Situation Report would also detail the steps that were being taken to rectify any outstanding issues concerning the hotels, security companies and other contractors.<sup>8</sup> This was a convenient way for all the Site Managers to be aware of what was occurring at the various hotels at which returned travellers were being accommodated.

**NTP Question 16: Where issues of safety were raised with you, what process was followed to investigate and resolve those concerns? Please outline the issues raised and how they were resolved.**

21. From my recollection, there were two issues concerning safety that were raised with me:
- (a) the first concerned the quality and standard of the food, including complaints that the food were causing returned travellers to fall ill, at the Travelodge Docklands;<sup>9</sup> and
  - (b) the second concerned an injury suffered by a returned traveller during his exercise break at the Stamford Plaza.<sup>10</sup>
22. These issues were investigated and addressed in accordance with the procedure I have outlined in response to NTP Question 15 above.

**NTP Question 17: What contact did you have with the DJPR Safety Officer or Safety Advisor?**

23. From my recollection, there were two occasions on which I had direct contact with the DJPR Safety Officer or Safety Advisor.
24. The first occasion occurred on or around 21 April 2020 when I was the Site Manager of the Travelodge Docklands. I received an email from someone who was working with the DJPR Safety Advisor seeking further information in relation to an incident concerning a returned traveller that had been throwing containers and food into the

<sup>7</sup> See, eg [DJP.103.007.3573](#).

<sup>8</sup> See, eg [DJP.102.003.0719](#).

<sup>9</sup> [DJP.131.001.9834](#).

<sup>10</sup> [DJP.160.001.1101](#).

corridor.<sup>11</sup> I forwarded this email to the person who was most informed of the incident who then provided the responses that had been sought.

25. The second occasion was on or around 16 June 2020 when I was invited to a meeting by the Regional Safety Advisor to discuss a range of issues concerning the behaviour of security guards and DHHS staff.<sup>12</sup> The agenda for the meeting identified, among the issues to be discussed, the following issues:<sup>13</sup>

***MSS security guards as alleged:***

- *70 in a room, not observing social distancing. Guards, close contact with each other leaving the building*
- *Guards not following PPE, infection control practices, using gloves, bathroom breaks*
- *Inappropriate behaviour by guards, disagreements with DHHS Lead over PPE use practices by guards*
- *Infection control procedures not being followed*

***DHHS staff alleged behaviour issues, to guards, hotel staff***

26. I was unable to attend the meeting because I was unwell but there were minutes of the meeting circulated.<sup>14</sup> There was a second meeting held on 23 June 2020, which I did attend.<sup>15</sup> The minutes of this meeting record that most of the issues were on the way to being resolved.<sup>16</sup> Outstanding issues were required to be resolved by 30 June 2020.<sup>17</sup>

**NTP Question 18: What contact did you have with those within DJPR responsible for management of the contracts for security services?**

27. I had very little contact with those within DJPR that were responsible for management of the contracts for security services.

**TRAINING AND BRIEFINGS AT THE STAMFORD AND ANY OTHER HOTEL WHERE YOU WORKED**

<sup>11</sup> [DJP.111.002.2056.](#)

<sup>12</sup> [DJP.112.003.1824.](#)

<sup>13</sup> [DJP.112.003.1824.](#)

<sup>14</sup> [DJP.112.001.6923.](#)

<sup>15</sup> [DJP.112.001.6923.](#)

<sup>16</sup> [DJP.112.001.7834.](#)

<sup>17</sup> [DJP.112.001.7834.](#)

**NTP Question 19: What role did you play in coordinating training and briefings to security guards and hotel staff?**

28. I did not play any role in coordinating training and briefings to security guards and hotel staff. I am aware that DHHS did organise training which involved nurses training security guards as to the appropriate use of PPE. I was not, however, involved in organising or coordinating this training. I would generally just be made aware of the fact that training would occur.<sup>18</sup>

**NTP Question 20: How often were briefings given and training provided?**

29. As I set out in response to NTP Question 13, there were briefings held on site each day. Further, while I am aware that there was training provided to security guards, I am not aware as to the frequency of these training sessions.

**NTP Question 21: Who monitored attendance at briefings and training for hotel and security staff?**

30. I am not aware of who was responsible for monitoring attendance at briefings and training for hotel and security staff.

**NTP Question 22: Who did you understand was responsible for managing the day-to-day activities of private security guards?**

31. My understanding is that it was the relevant security guard supervisor on site that was responsible for managing the day-to-day activities of the private security guards.

**NTP Question 23: What arrangements were there to oversee the provision of hotel operations, cleaning, security and compliance with directions.**

32. I am not aware of the arrangements that were in place to oversee the provision of hotel operations, cleaning, security and compliance with directions. This was not within the scope of my role as Site Manager.

**DEPARTURE OF QUARANTINED PASSENGERS**

---

<sup>18</sup>

[DJP.160.001.0188.](#)



**NTP Question 24: Who was responsible for coordinating the release of quarantined passengers at the conclusion of their quarantine process?**

33. My understanding is that it was the DHHS Team Leader and the DHHS Authorised Officers that were responsible for coordinating the release of quarantined passengers at the conclusion of their quarantine process.

**NTP Question 25: What arrangements, if any, were in place to determine which passengers were able to be released upon the completion of their quarantine period?**

34. As I have set out in my response to NTP Question 24, my understanding is that it was the DHHS Team Leader and DHHS Authorised Officers that were principally responsible for issues concerning the release of returned travellers.

**NTP Question 26: What was the process for releasing passengers who have completed their period of quarantine?**

35. I was not involved in the process for releasing passengers who have completed their period of quarantine. My role, insofar as it concerned departure, was confined to arranging transportation for the returned travellers that were departing the hotel.

**NTP Question 27: Was notice of a passenger exiting the hotel given to any agency; if so, when and to whom?**

36. I would receive a list of the returned travellers that would be departing the hotel approximately 24 hours before their scheduled departure. This list was provided to me by Government Support Service to enable me to arrange transportation in order to transport those departing. I would provide the exit list to the DHHS Team Leader so that we were on the same page insofar as transportation issues were concerned. I am not aware whether any wider notice of a returned traveller exiting the hotel was given to any other agency.

**INFECTIOUS DISEASE OUTBREAK AT STAMFORD PLAZA****NTP Question 28: How did you learn that there were cases of COVID-19 amongst security guards at the Stamford Plaza?**

37. I first learnt that there were cases of COVID-19 amongst security guards at the Stamford Plaza when I was informed by Personal Information on or around 16 June 2020. This was subsequently followed up by an email that I received from Ms May on 17 June

2020, which attached a letter from DHHS informing me that there were cases of COVID-19 amongst security guards at the Stamford Plaza.<sup>19</sup>

**NTP Question 29: Were you required to self isolate?**

38. Yes, I was required to self-isolate for a period of 14 days after undertaking a test for COVID-19 on 18 June 2020.

**NTP Question 30: What information and support did you receive from DHHS and/or DJPR regarding the need to self isolate?**

39. On 17 June 2020, I received an email from Ms May attaching a letter from DHHS.<sup>20</sup> The letter from DHHS stated that:<sup>21</sup>
- (a) any staff who have worked since 1 June 2020 would not be allowed to work at the hotel while the department undertook its investigation; and
  - (b) all staff who had spent 30 minutes or more at the Stamford Plaza on or after 1 June 2020 were to be tested for COVID-19.
40. Also on 17 June 2020, I received an email from Merrin Bamert at DHHS informing me that staff members and contractors who spent 30 minutes or more at the Stamford Plaza on Saturday 13 June and/or Sunday 14 June were advised to quarantine for a period of 14 days.<sup>22</sup> I fell within this category and, as a result, I commenced a period of self-isolation for 14 days from 18 June 2020.

**NTP Question 31: Did you or any other person performing duties for DJPR test positive for COVID-19?**

41. I undertook testing for COVID-19 on 18 June 2020. I received my test results on the same day. My test results were negative, which I conveyed to Ms May who offered me any assistance I required.<sup>23</sup> Accordingly, I did not test positive for COVID-19. I am not aware whether any other person performing duties for DJPR tested positive for COVID-19.

<sup>19</sup> [DJP.103.002.4588.](#)

<sup>20</sup> [DJP.103.002.4588.](#)

<sup>21</sup> [DJP.103.002.4588.](#)

<sup>22</sup> [DJP.404.002.4806.](#)

<sup>23</sup> [DJP.404.001.3127.](#)

sign here 

print name 

date 24 August 2020

CONFIDENTIAL – COPY FOR USE IN THE BOARD OF INQUIRY AND BY THE BOARD AND THE PARTIES WITH STANDING LEAVE ONLY.  
NOT FOR USE FOR ANY OTHER PURPOSE. NOT TO BE PUBLISHED OR PROVIDED TO ANY OTHER PARTY WITHOUT DJPR APPROVAL.  
DJPR RESERVES ITS RIGHTS TO PII, LPP AND/OR PRIVACY CLAIMS