

SUPPLEMENTARY WITNESS STATEMENT OF THE HONOURABLE JENNY MIKAKOS MP

Name: the Honourable Jenny Mikakos MP

Address: Level 22, 50 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne VIC 3000

Occupation:

Minister for Health

Minister for Ambulance Services

Minister for the Coordination of Health and Human Services: COVID-19.

Date: 25 September 2020

1. I provided a statement to the Board of Inquiry (**Board**) in response to Notice to Produce NTP-144 (**Notice**) on 17 September 2020 (**First Statement**). I gave evidence before the Board on 24 September 2020.
2. This supplementary statement is based on matters of knowledge, information and belief. Where I refer to matters of which I am aware on the basis of information or belief, I believe those matters to be true and correct.

First awareness of decision to engage security guards in the HQP

3. Question 23 of the Notice asked, "When were you first aware of a decision to engage private security contractors as part of the HQP?". In response to this question, paragraphs 67 and 68 of my First Statement relevantly stated:

I was not part of any decision-making process to use private security contractors as part of the HQP.

*I believe I first became aware of the use of private security guards contracted by DJPR in the HQP after the Rydges outbreak occurred in late May 2020. In particular, at around that time, I was advised by the DHHS public health team that the private security contractors engaged to participate in the HQP had the contractual responsibility to provide personal protective equipment (**PPE**) and infection prevention and control training to their staff.*

4. Further, when giving evidence to the Board on 24 September 2020, I gave evidence that:
 - a. I was not involved in the decision to engage private security guards in the Hotel Quarantine Program (**HQP**) (T2068.9);
 - b. I do not know who made the decision to engage private security guards for use in the HQP (T2068.16); and
 - c. To the best of my recollection, the first time that I became aware of the engagement of private security guards in the HQP was after the Rydges Hotel outbreak occurred in late May 2020, because I had no reason to turn my mind to that issue until that time (T2068.22).
5. Against that background, it was put to me by Counsel Assisting that (T2068.26):

Through that period of almost two months since the establishment of the Hotel Quarantine Program, the fact that private security guards had been engaged as the first line of compliance, if you like, did not come to your attention in any form?

6. I responded (T2068.32):

That is correct, because as you know, Mr Ihle, it was in fact DJPR that was the Department [t]hat had all the contracts with security contractors.

7. The contents of my First Statement and the evidence that I gave to the Board on 24 September 2020 was, to the best of my knowledge, true and correct at the time that it was given by me.
8. Since giving evidence to the Board on 24 September 2020, I have become aware of media reports today suggesting that there may have been opportunities for me to become aware of the use of security guards in the HQP prior to the Rydges outbreak in late May 2020. In particular, it is reported that at a media conference on 29 March 2020, Minister Pakula mentioned the use of security guards in the HQP, and further, that I may have received a briefing note sent to caucus by the Premier's office on or about 8 April 2020.
9. Consistent with the evidence that I have given the Board, I do not recall becoming aware of (and had no reason to turn my mind to) the use of security guards in the HQP on these or any other occasions prior to the Rydges outbreak in late May 2020.
10. At the time of giving evidence to the Board, both by my First Statement and in person on 24 September 2020, I had (and at the time of swearing this supplementary statement, have) no independent recollection of the matters raised in the media today. As I gave evidence to the Board on 24 September 2020, this was not an issue that I specifically turned my mind to (nor did I have reason to do so) prior to the Rydges outbreak in late May 2020.
11. In this regard, I note that there may have been other references to the use of security between the time of commencement of the HQP and late May 2020. However, as I gave evidence to the Board on 24 September 2020, this was not an issue that I specifically turned my mind to (nor did I have reason to do so) prior to the Rydges outbreak in late May 2020.

Signed at Melbourne
in the State of Victoria

on 25 September 2020



The Honourable Jenny Mikakos MP