

**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 STEPHEN FERRIGNO

I make this witness statement in response to the request received by me from the Board of Inquiry into the COVID-19 Hotel Quarantine program dated 10 August 2020.

References in this witness statement to document IDs are references to documents produced to the inquiry by Four Points by Sheraton in response to Notices to Produce issued by the Board of Inquiry.

1. What is your title and role at Four Points by Sheraton Melbourne?

My job title and role is General Manager of the Four Points by Sheraton Melbourne hotel.

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

I first worked in the hospitality industry in 1992, where I worked as a porter. I then worked in various other positions in various hotels, including in the rooms division, as a guest service agent, as a duty manager, as a front office manager, as a rooms division manager and as a hotel manager before becoming a General Manager in 2006. Since then, I have worked in that role at a number of different hotels in Melbourne, Sydney and Noosa.

3. To whom do you report?

I report to [REDACTED] Area Vice President – Australia, New Zealand & Pacific, Marriott International.

Involvement of Four Points by Sheraton Melbourne in the Hotel Quarantine Program

4. To what extent, prior to the hotel quarantine program, had your hotel (or any entity in its corporate group) provided services to the Victorian government?

As far as I am aware, the hotel has not previously provided any services to the Victorian Government which are not related to general lodging and food and beverage or other hotel services.

I am unable to definitively confirm that the hotel has not previously provided lodging or food and beverage facilities to representatives of the Victorian Government, as it would be impossible to, in the time provided for me to prepare my witness statement, check all previous sales agreements pertaining to the hotel (to the extent records of those agreements have been retained). In any event, such a task would be highly burdensome. Of course, the hotel's records would not necessarily confirm whether or not guests worked for the Victorian Government.

5. When and how did your hotel or its corporate group first become aware that there was to be a role for hotels in accommodating returned travellers in quarantine?

On 24 March 2020 via email from [REDACTED] General Manager, Tourism Accommodation Australia (Hotel Industry Representative body) ("TAA (Vic) Advice - DHHS requirement for inventory of Victorian hotel accommodation" [SHER.0005.0001.0060](#) and "TAA (Vic) Request for Expressions of Interest - DHHS inventory of available Victorian hotel accommodation" [SHER.0005.0001.0062](#)).

6. When did your hotel enter into an agreement with the Victorian Government to provide services as part of the hotel quarantine program?

During telephone conversations with [REDACTED] (Senior Advisor, Officer of the Secretary, Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions) on the evening of Friday, 27 March 2020, a verbal agreement was reached between the hotel and the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (DJPR).

7. When was the agreement formalised in writing?

The agreement was dated and signed on Saturday, 28 March 2020, 6:17 PM (see "Re: Accommodation Agreement" [SHER.0002.0001.0469](#)).

8. Prior to any agreement being reached with the Victorian government, was there any discussion or negotiation regarding –

(a) infection control,

I discussed infection control and personal protective equipment over the telephone with [REDACTED]. My notes to my team of this call reference, among other things, these matters (see "UPDATE #1 MELFP - Government housed internationals into MELFP 100-250 rooms per night" [SHER.0005.0001.0064](#)).

(b) personal protective equipment and

See above

(c) specialised training for hotel staff who would be involved in the hotel quarantine program?

I do not recall any discussion of specialized training prior to entering into the agreement referred to at paragraph 7 above. I have provided further information in relation to relevant training undertaken by Hotel staff.

9. Was the agreement changed or varied over time? if so, give details.

Yes, it was changed and varied over time. Please see the following emails for details -

- "Accommodation Agreement" [SHER.0002.0001.0054](#);
- "Countersigned Accommodation Agreement"; "Countersigned Accommodation Agreement" [SHER.0002.0001.0081](#);
- "Renewal of Agreement for the Provision of Accommodation - Four Points by Sheraton" [SHER.0002.0001.0439](#);
- "Provision of International Arrivals Accommodation" [SHER.0002.0001.0431](#);
- "Renewal and Variation of Agreement for the Provision of Accommodation - Four Points by Sheraton" [SHER.0002.0001.0432](#);
- "Renewal and Variation of Agreement for the Provision of Accommodation - Four Points by Sheraton" [SHER.0002.0001.0436](#);
- "Cleaning Procedure for Quarantine Hotels" [SHER.0002.0001.0066](#);
- "Renewal of Agreement for the Provision of Accommodation - Four Points Sheraton" [SHER.0002.0001.0443](#);
- "Countersigned Agreement for the Provision of Accommodation - Four Points Sheraton" [SHER.0002.0001.0090](#).

10. Is the involvement of your hotel in the hotel quarantine program ongoing? If not, state the date of last involvement and the reason why your hotel is no longer involved.

Yes, the term of the agreement is drafted so as to continue until 10 September 2020, unless terminated earlier than that date or renewed in accordance with the agreement.

Total quarantine guests at your hotel

11. When did the first guests arrive as part of the hotel quarantine program?

Tuesday, 7 April 2020.

12. How many guests stayed at your hotel as part of the hotel quarantine program?

To date, 1,608 guests have stayed at the hotel pursuant to the hotel quarantine program.

13. How many guests tested positive for COVID-19?

The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) was responsible for informing the hotel of positive test results.

I am aware of 19 guests of the hotel as having tested positive for COVID-19.

14. Were different arrangements in place at your hotel for guests who were positive for COVID-19 or displaying symptoms of COVID-19?

Yes, there were two systems used to handle guests who were confirmed positive for COVID-19. The first arrangement was in place for the first 4-6 weeks of the hotel quarantine program and this saw DHHS advise the Hotel of positive COVID-19 guests who would then be relocated within the Hotel from their original room to a room located on a specific floor (known as a Red Flag Floor) that was reserved for COVID-19 positive cases.

In cases where there were two occupants to a room, DHHS would advise if only the positive person or both persons were to be relocated to the Red Flag Floor.

Sometime in May 2020, DHHS advised the Hotel that confirmed positive cases would be relocated to another hotel within 24 hours of their positive test coming back.

In addition, for the purpose of infection control and cleaning planning within the Hotel's control, where a guest was confirmed positive for COVID-19 the hotel would re-program the electronic door lock of the room so that it was not accessible except by the key held by the Duty Manager.

Any guests displaying symptoms were required to advise the DHHS team or the Nurses who were responsible for their wellbeing.

The physical environment of the hotel

15. Please briefly describe the physical layout of your hotel and provide floor plans.

The physical layout of the parts of the Hotel used for the hotel quarantine program are set out in document "Floor Plans" [SHER.0007.0001.0001](#). I have highlighted and noted up (by hand) certain parts of the floor plans to indicate what areas within the Hotel were used for the program, and for what purpose.

The Hotel opened in March 2017 as a 4-star, select serve business of 273 guest rooms managed under the Four Points by Sheraton brand. The building is part of a mixed-use site with Marina Towers and the Four Points by Sheraton Hotel sharing some common areas of the site including the pool on level 7 and the private car park and loading dock.

Under the Agreement to house guests the total room commitment was 250 rooms of the 273 available rooms.

The Hotel has separate entrance and exit points and there is no access from the Apartments into the Hotel and vice-versa.

All restaurant and bar areas were closed during the Agreement.

The ground floor was the main thoroughfare for all incoming and departing quarantine guests, who would then travel via the elevator up to their room.

The 1st floor hosted the Government Departments in the Docklands 1, 2 and 3 Function Rooms and the Security guards occupied the Bolte 1 and 2 Function rooms. These clients all shared the restrooms on level 1.

Levels 3, 4, 5 and 6 share a common room layout and floor plan.

Level 7 is unique in its floor plan and layout.

Levels 8 to 15 inclusive share a common room layout and floor plan.

16. Which areas of your hotel were used as part of the hotel quarantine program? Please indicate these areas on the floor plans that you provide.

All areas highlighted on the floor plans, including entrances, elevators, corridors and rooms and function rooms used for exercise and for government and contractor administration of the program. Members of the public were not permitted access as the Hotel was exclusively used by the Government to accommodate guests under the hotel quarantine program.

17. How was each relevant area of your hotel used?

Ground floor

- Entrance and lobby were used for arrival and departure days and receiving packages and food deliveries.
- Restaurant and bar were used by hotel staff to prepare and dispatch food and beverages.
- Kitchen was used by the Hotel staff to prepare meals.
- Restrooms were used by guests on arrival and/or departure. The restrooms were used to the minimum extent possible, for example those who needed to urgently access the bathroom, those who were pregnant and the elderly. Where guests would not be using these restrooms, the Government and its contractors would use the restrooms.

Level 1

- Function Rooms "Docklands 1", "Docklands 2" and "Docklands 3" were used by DHHS staff, staff of the Dubai National Air Transport Association (DNATA), Nurses, Authorised Officer staff and Doctors.
- Function Rooms "Bolte 1" and "Bolte 2" were used by staff of MSS Security.
- The restrooms located on level 1 were used by those who used the facilities on level 1.

Level 7

- One accommodation room was used for nurses to rest overnight.
- The Sky Lounge was used for fresh air walks. Fresh air walks were to allow guests access to fresh air for exercise, mental health reasons or cigarette breaks and were arranged by DHHS in consultation with Nurses, security and Authorised Officers.
- The outdoor area adjacent to the hotel gym was also used for fresh air walks.
- Persons who had access to level 7 were the guests, security guards, Hotel food delivery staff, nurses, Authorised Officers, DHHS staff, doctors and cleaning staff.

Accommodation floors

- Levels 3 to 15 were used to accommodate guests, who were required to remain in their allocated rooms for 14 days. The only exception to the requirement for guests to remain in their allocated rooms was in the case of emergency, or as directed by an authorized person (for example, police, an Authorised Officer, fire brigade or nurses).

Guest Elevators

- Three elevators were used to transport guests and hotel staff up/down the building.
- Persons who had access to the elevators were the guests, security guards, Hotel food delivery staff, nurses, Authorised Officers, DHHS staff, doctors and cleaning staff.

18. What were the restrictions and requirements (if any) on people entering and leaving each of those areas?

The Hotel did not actively set conditions of use of these areas. The Hotel's role was to provide access to those areas. Initially DJPR and then DHHS set in place the conditions for use of these areas.

For the ground floor, access was controlled by security guards who were assigned to control the entry / exit points to ensure only authorized persons and packages entered the building. Government staff entering the hotel for their shifts were required to pass by the security guards and confirm their identity.

Once inside the building, the ground floor, level 1 and level 7 could be accessed freely.

All accommodation floors, excluding level 7, were electronically controlled using authorised electronic keys to enable access to the assigned floor. Only people with a programmed key could access some areas (as defined by the key programming).

For quarantine guests, on the day of their arrival their room key was programmed to give them access to their floor via the elevator. The key was programmed so that the guest would only be able to use it once to travel to and access their room, following which the key would no longer be active.

To perform their roles other persons, including Hotel food delivery staff, DNATA staff, Security staff, DHHS staff, Nurses and Authorised Officers also had access to restricted floors and were provided with programmed electronic keys to enable them to access those floors.

On 5 June 2020, the Hotel implemented an electronic based access system, "SinePro", which captured the identity details of all Government staff and contractors on arrival and departure. Documents "DM log 5th June" [SHER.0006.0001.0001](#) and "DM Handover 05.06.20 ON Shift" [SHER.0006.0001.0002](#) record this step and confirm that security staff were trained in this aspect.

On 22 June 2020, DHHS provided new procedural documents for arrival at the Hotel, which required temperature screening of guests upon arrival (refer to document "FW: Heads Up - Screening & Symptom Check Process Grand Chancellor" [SHER.0006.0001.0058](#), " Hotel quarantine staff screening job description" [SHER.006.0001.0061](#) and " Hotel Quarantine Staff Screening guide" [SHER.0006.0001.0062](#)).

Communication and information sharing

19. What lines of communication were in place between your hotel and government departments?

Email, telephone and daily face to face meetings.

20. What information did you receive about the persons being quarantined at your hotel?

An arrivals manifest would be provided to the Hotel between 4 and 24 hours prior to the arrival of incoming guests. The manifest would contain information about the guests who were due to arrive at the Hotel. The level of detail and accuracy provided in the manifest varied with each arrival.

The Hotel would also be sent information regarding dietary requirements and preferences of guests, as well as any operational issues such as mental health concerns, threats of self-harm and other personal information concerning guests.

21. How did you receive that information?

Via email from the DJPR site manager, via email from the DHHS Team Leader on shift or from the Security Shift Supervisor at face to face meetings

22. What reports were you required to make to government departments about the persons being quarantined at your hotel?

The Hotel was required to prepare dietary summary reports from the DHHS issued Dietary Preferences sheet (refer to document reference "DHHS Dietary Form example" [SHER.0001.0001.0024](#)). The Dietary Preferences sheet was issued by an Authorised Officer at the airport and then completed and handed to clinicians and DNATA by guests upon arrival, who would then provide the sheet to the Hotel for its use.

From the Dietary Preferences sheet, the Hotel would produce an excel file containing consolidated information in relation to the guests. This was then shared with the nurses and DHHS. Various manifests and consolidated excel files are documents:

- "Four Points Reports requested" [SHER.0005.0001.0001](#);
- "Dietary Traces 14.04.20 Four Points" [SHER.0005.0001.0002](#);
- "Guest List by Name 14.04.20 Four Points" [SHER.0005.0001.0006](#);
- "Guest List by Room 14.04.20 Four Points" [SHER.0005.0001.0016](#);
- "Summary of Inventory for DJPR 14.04.20 Four Points" [SHER.0005.0001.0034](#);
- "FW: QF6036 Manifest - ETA 0730 on 20/05/2020 [DLM=Sensitive]" [SHER.0005.0001.0035](#);
- "QF6036 - 20 May 2020 @ ETA 0730" [SHER.0005.0001.0036](#);
- "Hotel Dietary for Manifest QF10 - 06JUN2020" [SHER.0005.0001.0038](#);
- "Hotel Dietary for Manifest QF10 - 06JUN2020" [SHER.0005.0001.0039](#);
- "Hotel dietary for Manifest QF6032 arrived 6.6.20" [SHER.0005.0001.0040](#);
- "Hotel dietary for Manifest QF6032 arrived 6.6.20" [SHER.0005.0001.0041](#);
- "Number of pax.....and manifests.....RE: Arrivals for Friday 26th June 2020" [SHER.0005.0001.0042](#);
- "Manifest SQ217 26JUN2020" [SHER.0005.0001.0043](#);
- "Manifest QR904 26JUN2020" [SHER.0005.0001.0044](#);
- "Manifest EY460 26JUN2020" [SHER.0005.0001.0045](#).

Direction and Decision Making

23. Who was/is your contact(s) at the Department of Health and Human Services?

The Hotel's point of contact was the rostered DHHS Team Leader in the Hotel. There were approximately five or six regular Team Leaders and the occasional ad hoc person who acted in this role.

I also had telephone contact with [REDACTED], Deputy Commander, Strategy and Planning (Operation Soteria - Emergency Operations Centre) of the DHHS who was seconded to work at the Department of Justice and Community Safety (DJCS).

24. What directions and requests have been given to you by Department of Health and Human Services, in relation to the quarantine program, and specifically by whom in the Department of Health and Human Services were those directions and/or requests made?

The first record I have of a procedural direction issued by the DHHS was on 8 April 2020, which concerned deliveries to the Hotel (see "FW: Hotel policy" [SHER.0006.0001.0065](#) and "hotel delivery policy" [SHER.0006.0001.0067](#)).

Various other documents were provided to the Hotel by email or physically obtained from DHHS personnel on shift (see "UPDATE #1 MELFP - Government housed internationals into MELFP 100-250 rooms per night" [SHER.0005.0001.0064](#)).

Daily operational requests concerning the guests' requests and preferences were routinely discussed and presented to the Hotel by various personnel from the DHHS for action. Those requests related to processes that the DHHS requested the Hotel implement, including food preference related information, requests to procure equipment and items associated with improving the experience of the guests or changes to the quarantine program. Please refer to document "FW: OFFICIAL: Dietary notes for room 1103" [SHER.0002.0001.0373](#) by way of example.

The DHHS provided the Hotel with specific procedures for the cleaning of quarantine hotels ("RE: Four Points Hotel | Request for information re: Spotless cleaning procedures on hotel site" [SHER.0002.0001.0549](#)).

25. Did the directions and requests given to you by Department of Health and Human Services change over time? If so, please provide details.

Yes, procedures evolved over time including, for example, how food preferences were managed and handled ("FW: Feedback Food Safety Questionnaire" [SHER.0002.0001.0348](#); "RE: Food safety auditor visit on Thursday - Four Points by Sheraton" [SHER.0002.0001.0530](#); "FW: Food safety auditor visit - Quarantine" [SHER.0006.0001.0036](#); "Procedure for provision of food to guests with food allergies V2" [SHER.0006.0001.0039](#)) and how people arrived at the Hotel premises (see my previous explanation concerning SinePro and temperature testing).

I recall that, in a telephone conversation with [REDACTED] on 3 July 2020 [REDACTED] used a phrase to describe the evolving nature of the program - "...we are building the plane as we are flying it...".

26. Who was/is your contact(s) at Department of Jobs Precincts and Regions?

[REDACTED] Operations Coordinator, International Chamber House of the DJPR.

27. What directions and requests were given to you by the Department of Jobs Precincts and Regions, in relation to the hotel quarantine program, and specifically by whom in the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions were those directions and/or requests made?

The key DJPR site contact who communicated with the Hotel was [REDACTED]

Almost every request from [REDACTED] was a verbal request. These requests related to specific operational matters for me to assist with.

The requests often involved feedback concerning the food provided to guests - in particular, the management of guests' preferences and any complaints. Another key type of request was in relation to the guests' rooms - in particular requests for larger or superior rooms and any complaints. The requests also concerned bedding and laundry and dry cleaning services.

28. Did the directions and requests given to you by the Department of Jobs Precincts and Regions change over time? If so, please provide details.

Generally speaking, they did not change.

On 29 June 2020, the change to the relevant governmental contracting entity was communicated ("OFFICIAL: Operation Soteria - Hotel Quarantine Update - 29 July 2020" [SHER.0005.0001.0046](#)).

29. Were directions, information or requests given to you by any other government department or agency? If so, please provide details.

No.

Involvement of Hotel Staff

30. Who of your staff have been involved in the quarantine program?

Key personnel involved were myself, along with [REDACTED] Culinary and Beverage Manager, and [REDACTED] Director of Finance, who assisted with relevant contracting. The Hotel's front-line staff would then execute our instructions on the delivery of services.

31. What were the roles and responsibilities of staff involved in the quarantine program?

My role was the overall co-ordination of hotel operations and as the key communication point between the Hotel and various personnel at DJPR, DHHS, DNATA, MSS Security, Authorized Officers and other visitors including doctors and nurses.

[REDACTED] is responsible for all food and beverage services and the management of kitchens, guest meals and dietary requirements.

[REDACTED] is responsible for assisting in contracting needs and the financial relationship with the Victorian Government.

Hotel staff executed the delivery of services including check-in/out, deliveries, telephone assistance and other hotel related service and requests.

The Hotel Housekeeping Contractor was responsible for cleaning public areas and rooms. External staff, being Government personnel and their contracting partners, delivered all other services required by guests in quarantine.

Hotel staff were not required to carry out duties relating to security, the management of guest well-being, the management of guest physical or mental needs, or the detention of guests. As far as I recall, the Hotel would handle all requests relating to Hotel services and would refer on all other requests to the various other entities involved, including DHHS, DJPR, MSS Security, nurses and/or DNATA as appropriate.

32. As far as you are aware, have any hotel staff involved in the quarantine program tested positive for COVID-19?

Two Hotel staff tested positive (12 and 20 July 2020).

All guests had departed the Hotel by Friday 10 July 2020, two days prior to the first of the two positive tests.

Since that time, WorkSafe has communicated with the Hotel in relation to the two staff. WorkSafe has advised the Hotel that the two staff who tested positive have been classed as instances of community transmission as those staff are likely to have become infected with COVID-19 through a close contact in their domestic arrangements or their neighbor.

Both staff were not working at the Hotel at the time that they became aware of their positive test and have been managed accordingly.

33. To your knowledge, were any hotel staff rostered to work at quarantine hotels also working at other locations?

As far as I am aware, they were not.

Training and Supervision

34. What (if any) training was provided to your staff by any government department regarding COVID- 19 and how to work in a safe manner?

None.

35. What (if any) training was provided to your staff by your organisation regarding COVID-19 and how to work in a safe manner?

Staff were required to complete the following Marriott Online Training courses:

- Social distancing – 1208169
- Body Language – 1208170
- The Importance of Hand Sanitizing – 1207176
- Personal Protective Equipment – 1208171 (which was delivered in conjunction with the Hotel's PPE Policy - see for example [SHER.0005.0001.0051](#) [SHER.0005.0001.0052](#))
- Public Space Cleanliness – 1207175
- Presumed or Confirmed COVID 19 Case on Property – 1207178
- Entering a Guest Room – 1207177
- Touchless Transactions – 1207174

The Hotel also required all staff to complete the Australian Government Infection Control Online Training course, which is accessible online at <https://www.health.gov.au/resources/apps-and-tools/covid-19-infection-control-training>.

The Hotel was provided with documents regarding the use of PPE by DHHS and DJPR (see "FW: Use of PPE at hotels.docx" [SHER.0006.0001.0103](#); "Use of PPE at hotels.docx" [SHER.0006.0001.0104](#); "FW: PPE Advice" [SHER.0006.0001.0094](#); "PPE Advice for Hotel Security Staff and AOs in Contact with Quarantined Individuals(Inward Facing) (002)" [SHER.0006.0001.0095](#)).

36. What onsite supervision was in place for your staff at your hotel, in relation to the hotel quarantine program?

All managers and shift supervisors employed by the Hotel were involved in supervising the Hotel's participation in the program, including that of its staff.

Personal protective equipment (PPE)

37. What PPE (if any) was provided by your organisation for hotel staff to use?

All staff were provided with masks, gloves and safety glasses by the Hotel at all times (as sourced, paid for and supplied by the Hotel).

38. What PPE (if any) was provided to hotel staff by any government department?

Approximately 4 to 6 weeks after the program commenced, DHHS made PPE available for Hotel staff at the DHHS operational office located at the Hotel.

39. Were hotel staff at any time required to provide their own PPE?

No.

40. What directions (if any) did your organisation give to your staff about when to use PPE?

The Hotel provided online training in relation to PPE. Hotel management staff supervised the use of PPE by staff and assisted with staff Q&A in relation to PPE at staff briefings.

Supervisors and managers supervised compliance with the Hotel's PPE Policy by monitoring the use of the PPE by staff.

41. What training (if any) was given to hotel staff regarding the correct use of PPE? Who provided that training?

In-person training was provided by the Department Manager, Duty Managers and Supervisors as to the correct way to use, wear and dispose of PPE. Signage concerning the correct usage of PPE was also displayed at various key entry/exit points and break areas and also within the Hotel's departments, including Front Office, Food and Beverage Reservations and Sales and Finance.

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

No.

43. Was your organisation ever asked to provide PPE to anyone other than hotel staff? If so, please provide details?

No.

Complaints and concerns

44. Who was responsible for identifying and addressing health and safety risks to hotel staff arising from the quarantine program?

For hotel employees, I carried out a role of identifying and addressing health and safety risks to hotel staff arising from the quarantine program within the Hotel.

45. What risks were identified and when were they identified? What was done (if anything) to mitigate those risks? In your opinion, were those measures adequate and effective?

The Hotel identified that guests would, on occasion, open their doors when they were aware meals were being delivered. For example, guests would seek to speak to staff when they heard knocking at their door (or adjacent doors) notifying of a meal delivery. Staff were advised to not engage with guests and walk away. In my opinion, those measures, when combined with the staff's use of proper PPE, were sufficient to effectively mitigate those risks.

The Hotel also identified a concern over the behavior of security guards contracted by the Victorian Government who were located at the Hotel. In particular, Hotel staff reported that those guards were observed watching content or having conversations on their mobile phones. The Hotel shared its concern as to the conduct of security guards with the DHHS, the Security Guard Supervisor, Authorised Officers and others present at various meetings. On a number of occasions, the Security Guard Supervisor apologized and said that they would address the behavior with the security guards. I formed the opinion that the security guards were not suitably qualified to perform the job at hand and, further, that their supervisors were also inadequate in their supervision and management and in ensuring that the security guards were doing their role correctly.

On 25 June 2020 a guest walked out of their room, down the hallway and straight past a security guard. The guest then proceeded to the elevator and then to the Ground Floor, where he approached me and asked for a walk in the fresh air. I instructed the guest to return to his room. The guest then waited at the elevator on the ground floor until a security guard escorted the guest back to his room. The Hotel prepared an incident report in relation to this event containing a number of follow up actions, which it submitted to the DHHS ("Incident x 1 and Hotel Issue x 1 from 25th June Four Points Hotel" [SHER.0002.0001.0391](#)).

Following the incident, I spoke directly to the Security Guards Supervisor and then met with him and [REDACTED] to alert them to the matter and the Hotel's concerns. I requested the immediate removal of the guard from the hotel site and that they not be allowed to return and that the Security Guard Supervisor provide me with the training logs and standard operating procedures for the guards (as I had concerns regarding the monitoring and training of the security guards). The Security Guards Supervisor referred me to his management. In following this up, around three days after the incident I received a telephone call from a director of MSS Security apologizing for the incident and assuring me that it would not occur again.

As far as I am aware, [REDACTED] did not do anything with the information I provided to him. As I remained concerned, I called the local Police Area Commander and sent an email to my Departmental escalation contacts (see document [SHER.0002.0001.0391](#)).

I identified to Security, as well as DHHS representatives and [REDACTED] that PPE had been used and applied by security guards across the Hotel in inconsistent and, in some cases, non-compliant ways.

I also identified to Security, as well as DHHS representatives and [REDACTED] that access to level 1 was uncontrolled so, upon arrival, security guards would be placed onto level 1. This was not actioned until July when DJCS became involved.

On 4 July 2020 I sent an email to representatives of DHHS and DJCS outlining my concerns that included the use of particular lifts, procedures for fresh air walks, DHHS staffing levels, nursing record keeping, the clear assignment of responsibilities between persons at the Hotel and the cleaning of public areas, including high touch points ("Four Points by Sheraton, items for review and follow-up" - [SHER.0003.0001.0022](#)). I did not receive a response to my email, which I did not view as acceptable.

I also expressed concerns in writing concerning guests having access to cigarettes and lighters in their rooms. This concern was with respect to the safety of the Hotel, its staff and guests, having regard to the risk of fire (see "RE: URGENT : Cigarette Policy" [SHER.0002.0001.0007](#) and "Fw: URGENT : Cigarette Policy" [SHER.0002.0001.0009](#)). Ultimately I determined that guests were not permitted to have cigarettes or a lighter. The Department accepted this decision.

I sent emails to the DHHS, DJCS, Alfred Health and Spotless Cleaning noting my concerns in relation to cleaning of guest rooms, including the lack of effective communication, the absence of standard operating procedures, the capability of the persons hired to perform cleaning services, the general standard of cleaning delivered and the level of planning that had gone into the cleaning process ("Four Points Hotel feedback on cleaning and sanitizing of departed rooms" [SHER.0002.0001.0217](#); "Four Points Hotel feedback: standard of cleaning and sanitizing" [SHER.0003.0001.0024](#); "RE: Four Points Hotel feedback: standard of cleaning and sanitizing" [SHER.0002.0001.0543](#); "RE: Four Points Hotel feedback: standard of cleaning and sanitizing" [SHER.0003.0001.0048](#)). In my opinion, I did not receive an effective response to my concerns. The standard of cleaning remained a concern for me until all guests had left the Hotel by around 10 July 2020.

I sent an email to representatives of DJCS on 3 July 2020 noting my concern that a guest who was in isolation and ferried to level 7 of the Hotel for a fresh air walk travelled with a nurse via an elevator that was not to be used by isolation guests ("Re: Breach of agreed upon

procedure" [SHER.0002.0001.0486](#)). I was informed that the guest had not tested positive, but remained concerned that the elevators had been used incorrectly, particularly as the issue of the correct use of elevators had been highlighted previously. I viewed this as completely unsatisfactory.

On 10 July 2020 the Hotel received an email from the DHHS confirming that a security process involving the use of identification cards was to be rolled out across all quarantine hotels across Melbourne ("OFFICIAL - Sensitive: Operation Soteria - Hotel Quarantine - Upgrade to Security Processes" [SHER.0002.0001.0401](#)).

46. Who was responsible for identifying and acting on complaints or concerns regarding work conditions for hotel staff in relation to the quarantine program?

For hotel employees, myself and managers at the DHHS and DJPR carried out a role of identifying and acting on complaints or concerns regarding work conditions for hotel employees in relation to the quarantine program.

47. What complaints and concerns (if any) were raised? In relation to any complaints and concerns:

- (a) what were the details including dates;
- (b) how was the complaint or concern dealt with; and
- (c) what was the outcome?

These matters are addressed in my response to question 45, above.

48. Did you or your organisation identify or receive notice of poor or unacceptable conduct by any person in connection with the hotel quarantine program? [Without limiting the generality of this question, it includes hotel staff, contracted cleaning, catering and security personnel, authorised officers and government departmental personnel]

These matters are addressed in my response to question 45, above.

49. If so:

- (a) what were the details including when notifications were made;
- (b) how were those issues dealt with; and
- (c) what was the outcome?

These matters are addressed in my response to question 45, above.

Additional information

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

N/A

Date 17 August 2020