

**;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 KARL UNTERFRAUNER**

---

Date of document: 19 August 2020  
Filed on behalf of: Stamford Plaza Melbourne  
Prepared by:  
**Piper Alderman**  
Lawyers  
Level 23, 459 Collins Street  
MELBOURNE VIC 3000

DX: 30829 Melbourne  
Tel: +61 3 8665 5555  
Fax: +61 3 8665 5500  
Ref: LG:RN:423217  
Attention: Louise Gehrig  
Email: LGehrig@piperalderman.com.au

---

**1. What is your title and role at Stamford Plaza Melbourne?**

General Manager, Stamford Plaza Melbourne (**Stamford/Hotel**). The Stamford is a 5 star hotel with 282 suites and 26 hotel rooms, nine conference rooms, a restaurant, café, bar, rooftop pool and gymnasium spanning over two towers. The Stamford employs approximately 90 staff. I am responsible for the day to day operations of the Stamford. I am the most senior member of management on site at the Stamford and all heads of department and managers report to me. The Stamford structure comprises nine departments (see organisational chart STAM.0001.0001.0250). The departments are headed by:

- (a) Director of Sales & Marketing;
- (b) Human Resources Business Partner;
- (c) Financial Controller;
- (d) Revenue Manager;
- (e) Reservations Manager;
- (f) Assistant Front Office Manager;
- (g) Head Chef;

- (h) Food & Beverage Operations Manager; and
- (i) Maintenance Manager.

In addition, the Housekeeping contractors also report to me.

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

I have worked in the Hospitality Industry since 1981. I am a trade qualified Chef and I have undertaken multiple industry related training. I also hold a Graduate Certificate in Business Administration with Deakin University, completed in 2014.

I began working in the Hospitality Industry as a chef and was promoted to management roles from 1992, initially as Sous Chef, Executive Chef and Food and Beverage Manager and then to various General Manager roles in Australia and New Zealand. I have worked in the Stamford Group in various General Manager roles for 10 years. I set out my roles below:

1992 - 1998	Sous Chef, Executive Chef and Food and Beverage Manager , SPHC (Southern Pacific Hotel Corporation)
1998 - 2001	Food and Beverage Manager, Plaza International and Duxton Hotel Wellington
2001 – 2005	EAM & General Manager, Duxton Hotel Melbourne
2005 – 2007	General Manager, Rendezvous Grand Hotel Melbourne (formerly Duxton Hotel Melbourne) - 4.5 star, 340 room inner-city property, 1 restaurant, 1 bar and conferencing up to 480 guests.
2007 – 2010	General Manager, Heritage Hotels Auckland - 4.5 star property with 485 rooms and suites, conference centre with capacity of 1,200 people, 2 restaurants, 2 bars, 2 pools and gyms, reporting to board and Group Executive Director.
2010 – 2013	General Manager, Stamford Plaza Melbourne – Managed the Hotel, but in addition developed and project managed refurbishment plans and concepts for restaurant and bar areas, pool and penthouse.
2013 – 2016	Vice President of Operations & Area General Manager of Stamford Plaza and Stamford Grand in Adelaide.

2016 – 2017	Vice President of Operations - Area General Manager of Stamford Sydney, Brisbane - Three 5-star Hotels with a total of 472 rooms and suites, including 7 restaurants and 5 bars as well as multiple conference areas. Operational responsibility for 3 properties with a key focus on building functional management teams.
2017 – Present	General Manager, Stamford Plaza Melbourne

**3. To whom do you report?**

Thomas Ong, Chief Operating Officer.

**INVOLVEMENT OF STAMFORD PLAZA 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?**

The Stamford Hotel has provided accommodation, conference and food and beverage services to various Victorian Government Departments on a commercial basis over the course of many years. Whilst there is no formal contractual arrangements in place, specific government rates are typically accessed through travel agents for accommodation. From a conference and food and beverage perspective, the Stamford typically responds to requests for quotes from the relevant government department and thereafter if successful, a purchase orders is raised by the government department.

**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 or about the 26 March 2020, I was made aware of the program through discussions with the Tourism Association of Australia (TAA) a division of Australian Hotels Association. Subsequently, I submitted an expression of interest to participate in the Hotel Quarantine Program (**HQ Program**) to the Australian Hotels Association, which was in the form of completing an on-line survey.

On 27 March 2020, I had the first discussion with Douglas Galbraith of the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Region (**DJPR**). We discussed that the Department would be interested for the Stamford to contract for 280 suites for one month, with the option for two further

months.

We briefly discussed the services needed from the hotel around accommodation and meal requirements.

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

11 April 2020.

**7. When was the agreement formalised in writing?**

11 April 2020.

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

**(a) infection control,**

Use of PPE was discussed during the orientation on 29 April 2020 prior to the first group arrival and that with DHHS on site infection control experts would be on site as part of that team.

**(b) personal protective equipment and**

I requested from Douglas Galbraith if DJPR would supply PPE (face masks on 27 March 2020). He declined. We proceeded to agree to sign the Contract after being satisfied about the quality and quantity of the PPE we could obtain and provide to our staff.

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

DHHS informed us that we would have specialists on site at all times. I can't remember when exactly they informed us. Training from DHHS was only provided on 2 and 3 July 2020.

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

Yes. Stamford engaged in the HQ Program pursuant to an Agreement for Provision of Accommodation executed on 11 April 2020 (STAM.0001.0001.0304), with a commencement date of 12 April 2020 and completion date of 12 May 2020. Various extensions and variations

of the Initial Agreement were entered by Stamford on 15 May 2020, 16 June 2020 (STAM.001.0001.0161), 26 June 2020 (STAM.001.001.0150), 3 July 2020 (STAM.0001.0001.0249) and on 28 July 2020 Stamford executed a further extension of the Initial Agreement (STAM.0001.0004.0001), resulting in the Initial Agreement (as varied) being extended to 12 September 2020, with no further options for extension.

**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. An Option Period for one calendar month has been exercised under the Contract which commenced on 12 July 2020. The completion date is 12 September 2020. Whilst participation in the HQ Program is on-going, Stamford has not had any returned traveller quarantine guests since 25 June 2020.

Stamford is also currently participating in a new tender for the HQ Program business conducted through the Department of Justice and Community Services (DJCS).

**TOTAL QUARANTINE GUESTS AT YOUR HOTEL**

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

30 April 2020.

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

913 guests.

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

20 guests.

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

Different arrangements were in place where guests tested positive for COVID-19. The process was:

- (a) Once the Stamford duty manager on duty is advised of a positive test for COVID-19 by DHHS, contact is made with me or if I am not on site at the time, Ali Didi, Assistant Front Office Manager is advised.

- (b) Ali or myself will inform all of our staff so they are aware of the room that has been identified with a positive case. The room is marked as DND (Do not enter) in our system.
- (c) DHHS then make arrangements for the guest(s) to be moved to alternative accommodation at another venue – not at the Stamford.
- (d) DHHS advise the timing of the ambulance/transport transfer and which lift will be used.
- (e) DHHS would coordinate the move of the guest(s) from Stamford, including a nurse and security dressed in full PPE, attending the relevant room to collect the guest(s).
- (f) The involvement by Stamford staff in that process was for the duty manager to arrange for the lift that was going to be used to be sanitised ahead of use and then for the duty manager, wearing full PPE, including a hazmat suit, to lock the relevant lift, preventing its use by anyone else.
- (g) After the guest has been transferred, the exit path including the whole corridor and relevant lift are then sanitised. The relevant hotel room is sealed until the designated cleaners from the DHHS clean the room.

## **THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT OF THE HOTEL**

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

The hotel is located on 111 Little Collins Street, Melbourne Victoria and occupies two towers (referred to as East and West Tower).

The two towers are separated by Alfred Place, a laneway linking Little Collins Street to Collins Street. Each Tower houses accommodation from level 3 to 15. A typical floor in the East tower has 13 rooms per floor and a typical floor in the West tower has 11 rooms per floor. Both towers have 2 guest panorama lifts and 1 service lift.

The towers are connected via a walk bridge on level 1 and level 2.

Levels 1 and 2 in both towers house conference rooms and back of house areas including administration offices, kitchen and staff facilities. The ground floor in the East tower houses the hotel lobby and reception area, while the West tower ground floor houses the restaurant

and bar facilities.

Floor plans of ground floor, level 1 and level 2 along with a typical accommodation floor are at STAM.0001.0004.0003. Stamford has marked the floor plans to indicate the areas of the Hotel being utilised in the HQ Program, including identifying the relevant usage.

**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.**

Hotel areas in use during the HQ Program are described below and where appropriate marked on the floor plans at STAM.0001.0004.0003:

- (a) Accommodation – level 3 to level 15 in both towers – typical floor plan supplied with indicative room numbers at STAM.0001.0004.0006 and STAM.0001.0004.0007.
- (b) Guest lifts for guests, security, DHHS staff, Stamford meal delivery staff;
- (c) Service lift for House Keeping and waste collection only by Stamford staff.
- (d) Level 2 – West Tower:
  - (i) Bathroom facilities for the exclusive use of DHHS staff; and
  - (ii) Other areas on level 2 used for Stamford internal staff only.
- (e) Level 2 – East Tower:
  - (i) Stamford staff facilities
- (f) Level 1 – West Tower:
  - (i) Conference room housing DHHS, Authorised Officers, DNATA staff (an Emirates owned ground crew, cargo and catering business), DJPR staff;
  - (ii) Separate Conference room housing security team; and
  - (iii) Bathroom facilities exclusively for security staff.
- (g) Level 1 – East Tower:
  - (i) Hotel kitchen;
  - (ii) Conference room used by the Stamford to package and distribute food from;

- (iii) Bathroom facilities exclusively for hairdresser and Stamford staff
- (h) Ground floor West Tower:
  - (i) Restaurant area was used as a supervised play area for children when approved by DHHS and accompanied by security staff; and
  - (ii) All other areas on the west tower ground floor were not in use
- (i) Ground floor East Tower:
  - (i) Main hotel entrance used for arrivals and departures;
  - (ii) Main reception desk with Stamford staff;
  - (iii) Security desk where all deliveries for guests were received or checked;
  - (iv) During guest check in, this area was also used by Authorised Officers, DHHS staff, DNATA staff, DJPR staff and security staff to obtain information from arriving guests.

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

I refer to my response to paragraph 16 above.

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

All areas were allocated as described in my response to paragraph 16 above.

Unless noted to the contrary on the floor plans, as per house rules (STAM.0001.0001.0186), all other areas including service areas and lifts were for the use of Stamford staff only.

Areas like the offices, kitchens and food plating area were set up as GREEN rooms with a sanitising station and bio bin provided to dispose of PPE. PPE needed to be disposed of prior to entry to the areas marked GREEN.

The DHHS area was also set as a GREEN room with sanitising station and bio bin provided to dispose of PPE.

The accommodation floors can only be accessed with a valid security pass to activate the lift. HQ Program guests were not provided with a security pass. The typical access on the



accommodation floors in use for the HQ Program are by:

- (a) Security personnel on duty, who were present on each corridor (2-3 guards per corridor per shift) and not directed by Stamford;
- (b) DHHS/DNATA (an Emirates owned ground crew, cargo and catering business) staff as required by the Authorised Officer on duty or persons other than Stamford staff;
- (c) Ad hoc guests moved for fresh air breaks or similar if and when approved by the DJPR/ DHHS, such movement being escorted by security guards; and
- (d) Stamford staff – 3 meal deliveries per day left outside guest rooms, a single daily waste collection from outside guest rooms, ad hoc and minimal attendances for special requests by guests.

## COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION SHARING

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

### DHHS

- (a) Daily briefings, Email and/or phone contact were predominantly with the representative of DJPR, AO and DHHS team leader - Duty phone team leader [REDACTED], AO duty phone: [REDACTED], email group - stamfordplaza@dhhs.vic.gov.au

- (b) [REDACTED] (DHHS TL Concierge at StamfordPlaza@dhhs.vic.gov.au), west.feedback@dhhs.vic.gov.au, [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

### DJPR

Merrin Bamert, Sandy Austin, [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

### Worksafe



There was also a list of useful contacts that I referred to (STAM.0001.0002.0286).

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

Prior to arrival - flight manifest including, first name, surname, date of birth, passport number, nationality, country of flight origin, dietary requirements, any specific medical conditions of the guest and their requirements, if any (STAM.0001.0002.0244/STAM.0001.0002.0245).

After check in - dietary needs, special requirements if any.

**21. How did you receive that information?**

Email correspondence, with updates or changes communicated via telephone calls and emails.

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

No specific report about the guests were requested, other than confirmation of the guests' names, number of guests and room numbers. Otherwise, Stamford responded to ad hoc government requests for information.

**DIRECTION AND DECISION MAKING**

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

On site team leader at [stamfordplaza@vic.gov.au](mailto:stamfordplaza@vic.gov.au) and 

Authorised Officer (AO) on duty – 

Others as listed in my response to paragraph 19 above.

**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?**

Operational requests such as meal requirements were directly given to us by DHHS via email correspondence. I could not recall exactly who from DHHS those directions came from or was requested from, however most of the communication come through the onsite DHHS

Supervisor. For example from [REDACTED] (DHHS TL Concierge) to advise the hotel kitchen of all guests who had food allergies or required a special diet (STAM.0001.0001.0038).

- 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. A change related to the procedures for cleaning of exit rooms was made.

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

Merrin Bamert, Sandy Austin, [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

- 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?**

[REDACTED] provided me with directions as part of the contract and during the pre-implementation stage in April 2020.

[REDACTED] provided me with directions in relation to orientation with DHHS, Victorian Police, Sky Bus, DNATA, Security, DHHS prior to the first check-in, including the timing of the orientation and how it was to work. I attended an operational walk through with him and agreed on what spaces will be used for the program.

Operationally directions were provided through DJPR's on site representative [REDACTED] or his replacement from time to time.

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

Yes. The directions and requests given to Stamford changed over time, including as set out below:

- (a) The room to be used by doctors, nurses and the DHHS and DJPR teams.
- (b) Protocols to facilitating guests who wished to take exercise and smoke breaks and kids play area.

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

Most requests were coordinated through the DJPR on matters such as logistics for guests departure, which were agreed upon with DNATA, security personnel and the relevant Authorised Officer.

#### **INVOLVEMENT OF HOTEL STAFF**

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

The operations team consisted of 45 Stamford staff and 25 Empire staff (Housekeeping contractor) who were rostered on site to oversee and perform the check-in/out of guests, fielded guest queries via phone, prepare and deliver food, collect waste, clean public area, maintain plant rooms equipment and provide administration support. The list of Stamford and Empire staff can be found below at paragraph 31, together with their roles and responsibilities.

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

I refer to the list of Stamford staff can be found at STAM.0001.0004.0008. I also note some further detail as to responsibilities of the management team below:

- (a) Ali Didi, Assistant Front Office Manager: managed all front office operation in relation to staff and guests, including check-in procedures. Ali had three duty managers reporting to him, plus the night team and reception. He also assisted me with the creation of the Standard Operating Procedures adopted by Stamford to assist in managing the HQ Program (STAM.0001.0004.0008).
- (b) Henna Kossi – Human Resources Business Partner: responsible for all human resource functions, with one team member reporting to her. Co-ordinates all general human resource activities, including recruitment, training etc. Henna created a policy in relation to personal hygiene measures and maintained a training register.
- (c) Alexandra Rolton, Director of Sales & Marketing: administration work and assisted in operations such as packaging meals and meal delivery.

- (d) Francis Navarro, Maintenance Manager: day to day maintenance activities within the Hotel, plant room checks, repairs to public areas or rooms as required.
- (e) Sunny Singh, Head Chef: purchasing and receiving of food, preparation and packaging of food, supervision and record keeping of all dietary requirements, supervision of food safety plan.
- (f) Daria Khan, Food & Beverage Operations Manager – overseen the packaging and delivery of meals. Also planned and overseen the dietary meals in conjunction with Sunny/kitchen and ensured concise execution of this critical operational task. She was assisted by 2 F&B Supervisors.
- (g) Urvashi Patel, Executive Housekeeper (Empire Employee): planning and supervision of PA cleaning, public toilets, sanitising touch points, cleaning of staff areas, cleaning of accommodation rooms after departure of guest, ordering and controlling linen, coordinating guest dry cleaning collection and return.
- (h) Shenaz Khan, Reservations Manager: administration and operational assistance at Front desk, switchboard and also with meal deliveries.
- (i) Temmy Chen, Financial Controller: administration and operational assistance with food packaging and delivery.

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

No Stamford staff members tested positive for COVID-19 during the time frame over which Stamford was hosting HQ Program guests (ie. from 30 April 2020 to 25 June 2020).

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

I am not aware of any Stamford staff member working at other quarantine hotels during the time frame over which SPM was hosting HQ Program guests (ie. from 30 April 2020 to 25 June 2020).

## **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?**

PPE Training and Infection Control Training were provided by DHHS on 2 and 3 July 2020. That training was class room style training that took in the order of 60 minutes and was completed with appropriate levels of social distancing.

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

Stamford provided training to staff regarding infection control, personal hygiene, social distancing and the use of PPE. Staff were trained by their department head using Stamford's own "COVID-19 Operational Health and Safety On-boarding". The operational standards relevant to the department they work in, including specific instructions in relation to COVID-19 were provided. At the time Stamford entered the program the hotel was closed with most staff stood down. The training was conducted on each staff members first shift back as/when they returned to work. It was reiterated in daily briefings. All staff members received the training before commencing work and were required to sign off confirming completion.

Staff also undertook Stamford's own "COVID-19 Operational Health and Safety On-boarding" course and signed an attendance register to confirm completion. Staff were not permitted to commence work until both programs had been completed.

The Human Resource department oversaw the induction of all staff into the COVID-19 Spread Prevention Program – an on line safety course.

On line infection control (Australian Government Department of Health) training on Standard Operating Procedures specifically designed for the HQ Program.

Daily tool box briefing and reminders on the above.

Regular emails with updates and reminders to staff members in regards to infection control, PPE and operational procedures including display on notice board in staff room.

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

In addition to my oversight and supervision as General Manager, each department operated under the supervision of a Department Head or Supervisor.

A Duty Manager was present on site twenty-four hours a day to supervise and oversee Stamford's operation.

I conducted daily shift briefings with department heads and random spot checks on procedures in all areas.

## **PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)**

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

Prior to commencing the HQ Program, Stamford sourced and obtained sufficient PPE for all Stamford staff. The PPE available for use by Stamford staff included facemasks, gloves, protective eye-wear (goggles), full body hazmat suits, clinical gowns, sanitisers, disinfectant wipes.

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

On 22 May 2020 DJPR advised that DHHS would be providing PPE for all Stamford staff during the quarantine period and Ali Didi was asked to provide a list of the items of PPE required. Stamford ordered various PPE items from DHHS and was supplied with part of what was ordered.

As a one-off arrangement in late June 2020, DHHS delivered some PPE to Hotel staff, being gowns, shields and goggles for the exit clean of the last group of guests.

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

No – Stamford always provided enough PPE for all staff.

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

Operational policies stipulated PPE use as follows:

- (a) Check in/out: facemasks, goggles, gloves;
- (b) Food delivery: facemasks, gloves;
- (c) Waste collection: facemask, gloves, body suit;
- (d) Disinfecting areas after a guest was moved – full PPE (i.e. facemasks, goggles, gloves and a hazmat suit);
- (e) Rooms exit clean: gowns, gloves and face mask; and

- (f) The Hotel also marked back of house areas as GREEN areas, where PPE are needed to be disposed of prior to entry.
- (g) Stamford also posted placards throughout the hotel to remind staff and security guards to maintain safety standards.

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

The training on the correct use of PPE that Stamford staff received included:

- (a) Stamford provided its staff with online training via the E-Learning Stamford Portal.
- (b) Face to face training for each department as each employee come on board at the beginning of the program.
- (c) Diagrams on how to use PPE were displayed.
- (d) On 30 May 2020, Joe Ventura of MSS Security provided Stamford with PPE advice for hotel security and authorised officers (STAM.0001.0002.0554).
- (e) On 2 and 3 July 2020 the DHHS provided Stamford cleaning staff with training on full PPE to clean accommodation rooms and public areas. (STAM.0001.0001.0094).
- (f) On 13 June 2020 [REDACTED] of DHHS provided Stamford with an updated PPE policy and asked Stamford to make sure all teams understood what was required (STAM.0001.0002.0311).
- (g) On 17 June 2020, [REDACTED] of DJPR circulated PPE advice for Hotel Security Staff (STAM.0001.0001.0053/54/56).
- (h) Class room style training was provided separately by DHHS on 2 and 3 July 2020.

**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?**



On one occasion in about mid June 2020, the Hotel gave face masks to the security team while they waited for their supply to arrive at the Hotel. Stamford supplied one box of 50 masks for the particular shift.

## COMPLAINTS AND CONCERNS

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

Myself, assisted by Henna Kossi, Stamford's Human Resources Business Partner, and Ali Didi, Assistant Front Office Manager, Daria Khan Food & Beverage Operations Manager, Urvashi Patel Executive Housekeeper were responsible for the operations of the services provided under the Contract. We were continuously on the lookout for risk to the hotel staff. The relevant duty manager working at the time would report to Ali or me on any risks they have observed as well.

**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?**

- (a) Shortly before the commencement of the HQ Program contract on 12 April 2020, I worked with Ali Didi in particular and various Stamford department heads and staff to identify potential situations where staff may be in contact with guests and steps were taken to reduce where possible and otherwise manage that contact.
- (b) The following Standard Operating Procedures were created and implemented in or around 12 April 2020, prior to Stamford accepting any quarantine guests, which was reviewed by DJPR:
  - (i) Operational ISO review STAM.0001.0001.0030
  - (ii) Email re-allocating bathrooms STAM.0001.0001.0036
  - (iii) Isolation Guests (Housekeeping Cleaning) STAM.0001.0001.0158
  - (iv) COVID-19 Isolation Groups (Maintenance) STAM.0001.0001.0184
  - (v) COVID-19 Isolation Groups (Maintenance) STAM.0001.0002.0223
  - (vi) COVID-19 Isolation Groups (In room inventory) STAM.0001.0001.0231

- (vii) COVID-19 Isolation Groups (Rooms division) STAM.0001.0001.0233
  - (viii) COVID-19 Isolation Groups (Food service) STAM.0001.0001.0237
  - (ix) COVID-19 Isolation Groups (Contractors) STAM.0001.0001.0184
  - (x) COVID-19 – Workplace Health & Safety STAM.0001.0001.0294
  - (xi) Isolation Guests – Workplace Health & Safety STAM.0001.0001.0258
  - (xii) Isolation Guests – Workplace Health & Safety STAM.0001.0001.0148
  - (xiii) COVID-19 Isolation Groups – Food Service STAM.0001.0001.0285
  - (xiv) COVID-19 Isolation Groups STAM.0001.0001.0289
  - (xv) COVID-19 Isolation Groups STAM.0001.0002.0212
- (c) Over the course of the HQ Program, I gave the following feedback::
- (i) Requesting that the DJPR look into preventing security or government staff entering into Stamford's back of house areas (STAM.0001.0001.0032).
  - (ii) The hotel staff should not be responsible for removing contaminated waste, when requested to do so (STAM.0001.0001.0044).
- (d) I am not an expert at health and safety measures to be taken but in my opinion the measures taken and procedures put in place by Stamford were adequate and effective, with any shortcomings addressed quickly and effectively. My main concern was the safety of Stamford employees, and the measures taken had resulted in no Stamford employees tested positively to COVID-19 during the period in which quarantine guests were staying in the Hotel

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

I was, in conjunction with the relevant Department Heads and Ali Didi.

**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?**

The feedback raised with the hotel included:

- (a) Stamford received feedback in May 2020 about the cleanliness of the toilets being frequented by security staff. This issue arose in part given the sheer number of security staff on site. This issue was addressed by designating different toilets for the hotel staff, DHHS and DJPR personnel and security guards..
- (b) A feedback was received about a guest being checked into a room on 11 June 2020 that had not been fully cleaned before occupation by the guest. Upon receipt of the feedback, Stamford provided the guest with an alternative room and conducted an investigation into the circumstances of the error. It was a case of human error in that a member of the house keeping team changed the room status in Stamford's property management system as having been inspected (and therefore cleaned) on 9 June 2020 (following the departure of the previous guest on 7 June 2020), when that was not in fact the case.

- 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]**

Yes.

- 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?**

The details of notices of poor or unacceptable conduct, including timing of notifications, how each was dealt with and the outcome are addressed below:

- (a) In June 2020, at a team meeting chaired by [REDACTED] of the DJPR, issues were raised involving security guards not maintaining social distance, 70 security guards being present in 1 conference room and security guards not observing the PPE requirements. As far as I was aware, DJPR dealt with the issue with the security guards as the behaviour of the security guards improved.
- (b) Although Stamford had no control over the behaviour of the security guards, on Stamford's part, the hotel managers verbally reminded security guards, as and when observed, that they should not be closely congregating and to avoid having too many security guards in the same lift.
- (c) We also provided feedback to DJPR when breaches of any PPE requirements were observed by security guards by our staff:
  - (i) Guest rubbish was found next to a lift, which might suggest guests were leaving their rooms or guards have moved the rubbish. This was reported to the guards present on the floor and Bruno, the security supervisor in charge at the relevant time;
  - (ii) Up to 5 security guards escorting a guest for a smoke break without wearing masks or social distancing themselves. The staff member immediately informed the guards that this was not appropriate and they needed to wear masks and socially distance;
  - (iii) Up to 6 security guards and guests sharing a lift at one time. The staff member immediately informed the guards that this was not appropriate and they needed socially distance;
  - (iv) Security guards allowing guests to leave their room to discuss menu items with Stamford staff. The staff member immediately informed the guards that this was not appropriate and guests were not allowed out of their rooms;
  - (v) Security guards congregating in groups of up to 5 to chat;
  - (vi) Security guards and nurses attempting to enter Stamford's green zone. The staff member immediately informed the guards and the nurse that this was not appropriate; and

- (vii) A security guard sleeping on duty in the East Tower (STAM.0001.0001.0096).

#### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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

Not at this point in time, unless the Inquiry has any further questions. We will assist as best as we are able to recollect.

I verify that I have read the contents of this my witness statement and I am satisfied that this is the evidence in chief which I wish to give at the hearing.

Date: 19 August 2020

  
.....  
KARL UNTERFRAUNER



