

WITNESS STATEMENT OF **Manager**

Name: **Manager**

Address: Level 16, 50 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne, Vic, 3000

Occupation: **Manager** Department of Health and Human Services

Date: 21 August 2020

1. I make this statement to the Board of Inquiry in response to **NTP-058**, the Notice to produce a statement in writing (**Notice**). This statement has been prepared with the assistance of lawyers and Departmental officers.
2. This statement is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief. I make this statement based on matters within my knowledge, and documents and records of the Department. I have also used and relied upon data and information produced or provided to me by officers within the Department.

QUESTIONS**Roles and Responsibilities**

Question 1: What is your usual role within the Department of Health and Human Services (the Department) and what are your key accountabilities?

3. My usual role within the Department is as Manager, **REDACTED** I joined the **REDACTED** team when I joined the Department on 24 October 2011. I was appointed Acting Manager in December 2015 and moved permanently into the Manager position on 7 November 2016.
4. In that role, my key accountabilities are:
 - (a) managing a team of people responsible for regulating human services under the *Disability Act 2006* and *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005*;
 - (b) assessing applications for registration and renewal of registration under the *Disability Act* (including for National Disability Insurance Scheme purposes) and *Children, Youth and Families Act*; and
 - (c) monitoring compliance with the gazetted Human Services Standards.
5. For the past two years, I was working offline from my substantive position as Manager, **REDACTED**

REDACTED

Department of Health and Human Services.

Question 2: What is (or was) your role within the COVID-19 Hotel Quarantine Program and what are your key accountabilities? How long have you held (did you hold) this role (include dates)?

6. Within the COVID-19 Hotel Quarantine Program, I do not have a formal title. My role could broadly be described as "Manager, AO Operations Support".
7. I started working with the COVID-19 Hotel Quarantine Program on 26 March 2020, when Meena Naidu (at that time the Commander, Enforcement and Compliance) asked me to assist.
 - (a) Initially (that is, for the first few days), I worked on logistics: for instance, organising parking passes and car parking spaces.
 - (b) Subsequently, my role became sourcing, recruiting and managing (from an administrative perspective) a large number of authorised officers (**AOs**), including:
 - (i) contacting organisations to recruit AOs to the Department;
 - (ii) assisting with the authorisation process (that is, briefing the Chief Health Officer (**CHO**) about the skills and qualifications of proposed AOs for the purposes of appointment and authorisation under the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008* (Vic) (**PHWA**));
 - (iii) managing induction of AOs, in terms of connecting them with Human Resources (**HR**), payroll, and information technology (**IT**);
 - (iv) assisting with training AOs; and
 - (v) oversight of rostering and logistics.
8. I am also an AO for the purposes of the PHWA; however, I did not exercise any powers as an AO for the purposes of the Hotel Quarantine Program.
9. I will finish my role in the Hotel Quarantine Program at the end of August, and return to my usual role within the Department, namely as Manager, **REDACTED**.

Question 3: In relation to question 2, who:

- (a) **is (or was) under your supervision**
10. The team under my supervision evolved over time and currently includes a team of around 9 people, including me as the manager, across the following positions. At present, there is some

fluidity between these roles, with some staff working across different roles and staff leaving and joining our team.

- (a) Two senior advisers, responsible for providing advice and assistance to me, in particular about the approval and removal of AOs. This includes:
 - (i) assisting me with record keeping for recruitment, induction and training;
 - (ii) leading the AO approval and removal process; and
 - (iii) contributing to maintenance of the Master AO Register.
- (b) Two data analysis and administration officers, responsible for supporting the reporting and administrative operations of the AO team, including by providing advice and assistance to me in relation to AO recruitment needs, and reporting and responding to day-to-day queries. This includes:
 - (i) providing reporting and administrative support to me;
 - (ii) maintaining the Master AO Register;
 - (iii) managing the timesheet shared mailbox; and
 - (iv) maintaining the AO Distribution List on Outlook, Teams channels and sending DHHS IT Account information to new AOs.
- (c) Two AO logistics support officers, responsible for providing logistical support to ensure AOs have access to the tools and resources they need to complete their duties (such as access to mobile phones, building passes, AO ID cards and the like).
- (d) At least two AO rostering officers, responsible for managing the AO roster to ensure sufficient coverage across airport and hotels (noting at present that one of the data analysis and administration officers is also working on rostering, and we have new staff joining the team to work on rostering and other roles). The rostering officers also work on rostering for other operations; that is, they are not “exclusive” to rostering AOs for the Hotel Quarantine Program. The rostering officers reported directly to the Deputy Commander until around mid-June 2020, when they were directed to report to me.

(b) reports (reported) to you?

11. In addition to the positions described in Q2(a), I am the direct line manager for all AOs (at present approximately 191 AOs, not including those AOs on secondment to the Department). This is an administrative reporting relationship, for the purposes of AOs’ contracts, payroll, IT and HR issues, including approving some timesheets, higher duties, and business expense

claims. It is not an operational supervisory role. Operationally, on a day to day basis, AOs reported to Senior AOs and the Deputy Commander Enforcement and Compliance.

(c) do (did) you report to?

12. I reported to the Deputy Commander, Enforcement and Compliance. That role was initially held by Anthony Kolmus, and subsequently by Steve Ballard and Stuart Bailey.

Authorised Officers

Question 4 – What is your understanding of the role of an Authorised Officer in the Hotel Quarantine Program?

13. My understanding was that the role of an AO in the Hotel Quarantine Program was to enforce compliance with the relevant Public Health Directions made by the Deputy Chief Health Officer under the PHWA. That meant that AOs were responsible for administering and explaining the direction and detention notice issued under the PHWA to arriving passengers and for the movement of people into and out of their hotel room.
14. Details of AOs specific responsibilities were listed in sections 4 and 5 of the “COVID-19 Compliance policy and procedures – Detention Authorisation Authorised Officers under the PHWA”. I was not involved in preparing this document but I referred to it in the document “Authorised Officers – FAQs”, as discussed further in Question 10 below.

Question 5 – what powers do Authorised Officers exercise in order to fulfil those roles, and what is the source of that power?

15. AOs in the Hotel Quarantine Program exercise emergency powers under s 200 of the PHWA to fulfil the roles referred to in question 4. They are appointed as authorised officers by the CHO acting as the Secretary’s delegate under s 30 of the PHWA and are authorised by the CHO to exercise emergency powers under s 199 of the PHWA.

Question 6 – What selection process was adopted for Authorised Officers to be appointed to the Hotel Quarantine Program? Has the selection process changed since the commencement of the Hotel Quarantine Program? If so, how and why?

16. Initially, AOs were recruited from other government departments, or organisations such as local councils, with a regulatory, enforcement or compliance background, including in relation to the PHWA. For those AOs, the selection process was as follows:
- (a)** The Commander, Enforcement and Compliance, gave me contacts for a range of organisations with a regulatory, enforcement or compliance background. Those organisations included the Victorian Commission for Gambling and Liquor Regulation,

the Department of Transport, and the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (**DELWP**).

- (b)** I called the relevant organisations and explained the need for, and role of, AOs in the Hotel Quarantine Program and asked if the organisation had employees who would be suitable for secondment. I then followed up by sending a brief outline of the role of AOs to the relevant organisations.
 - (c)** The relevant organisations came back to me with a list of available employees they recommended as suitable for the role.
 - (d)** I then worked with HR to establish secondment agreements or contracts to ensure each person was appropriately employed under Part 3 of the *Public Administration Act 2004* (Vic).
 - (e)** Once that was confirmed, I prepared a brief to the CHO, recommending the CHO (acting as delegate of the Secretary to the Department) appoint the persons as AOs under s 30 of the PHWA and authorise them under 199 of the PHWA to exercise the emergency powers as required. Arrangements were made at the same time for the AO identification cards.
 - (f)** The prospective AO would also be required to attend training (described in further detail in response to Question 7 below) before being rostered on to commence work at a hotel site. The roster was emailed to AOs, and included contact details for each rostered AO as well as senior staff available on call to assist.
 - (g)** Generally, the logistics team would make the AO identification cards available for the AO to collect at the hotel when they commenced their first shift.
17. In early April 2020, I was directed to seek the assistance of the Department's People and Culture Branch to bring on approximately 100 additional AOs. From that time:
- (a)** The People and Culture Branch took over the role of sourcing AOs that I describe in paragraphs 16(a) to 16(c) above. AOs were sourced from a wider pool of organisations, including from the Environmental Health Professionals Australia (EHPA) which had put out an expression of interest to their individual members, who then applied to the Department directly for AO positions.
 - (b)** In addition, I asked People and Culture to do additional vetting of individuals who applied directly to the Department; that is, to contact them individually, explain the role and check if they were suitable.
 - (c)** I continued to perform the roles described in paragraphs 16(d) and 16(e) above.

18. At the same time, I maintained the relationships I had developed with organisations for the purposes of renewing or extending AO appointments as necessary. In doing so, I sought feedback from Senior AOs, as well as AO Team Leaders once they were stood up in relation to each AO, to determine whether to seek a renewal or extension.
19. More recently, since around the beginning of June, the Department has recruited AOs from the private sector, particularly the airline industry. The Department's People and Culture Branch continues to be responsible for recruitment.

Question 7 – What training or qualifications do Authorised Officers have or receive? Is the training ongoing? Is there a training register?

20. Initially, AOs did not require additional formal training or qualifications to perform their role within the Hotel Quarantine Program as they were being recruited from, and endorsed by, other government departments, or organisations such as local councils, and therefore had a regulatory, enforcement or compliance background.
21. Since the change in the recruitment process in around April 2020 described in paragraph 17 above, I am not aware of whether or not HR have required persons who applied for AO positions to have specific training or qualifications.

Training provided by the Department

22. From around early April, AOs received training by a 1 hour teleconference before starting work on the ground at hotels. The training was organised and run by the Department's Learning and Development team in the People and Culture Branch, but I was involved in delivering a significant part of it. The training covered:
 - (a) the values of the Department;
 - (b) occupational health and safety (OHS), including stating that personal protective equipment (PPE) was available for use, and discussing general safety and wellbeing (delivered by the Department's OHS area);
 - (c) the role of AOs on the ground and practical information such as timesheets, expected attire, ID cards, the Compliance Application and access to IT, as well as the availability of relevant documents and procedures on the AO Teams Site and at each hotel site.
23. The part of the training I was involved in delivering was the role of AOs on the ground. In that part of the training, I provided a practical explanation of what AOs did on a day to day basis as well as the practical administrative information I refer to in paragraph 22(c) above. I also reiterated the then-current advice on use of PPE and the importance of personal hygiene. In

particular, I reiterated that masks and gloves (and subsequently, gowns) were available for use when AOs were on shift in contact with detainees; however, I did not instruct AOs that they were required use PPE in any particular circumstance. I talked to them about making sure PPE was donned and doffed appropriately and that if they were not sure how to do that, to seek advice on shift from the nursing staff. It was otherwise difficult to provide practical training on how to don and doff by teleconference. I talked about the risks of becoming complacent about hand hygiene and touching surfaces if wearing gloves. I also talked about the importance of following the CHO's recommendations at the time regarding hand washing, using hand sanitiser, coughing or sneezing into elbows, and not touching faces.

24. I usually delivered this part of the training with the Deputy Commander, Enforcement and Compliance, and occasionally with a Senior AO if the Deputy Commander was not available.
25. During or following the training session, the Learning and Development team also provided access (by email) to online learning modules and a return date by which the modules were to be completed.
26. Since early April, there have also been multiple training sessions on using the Compliance Application. These are done through Microsoft Teams, for about an hour.
27. In around June, the Department developed a more intense 5 day training program. This training program was developed to cater for recruits from the private sector. I have not been involved in this training program.

Training records

28. The Department's Learning and Development team maintained records of who had completed training, both by teleconference and online.
29. My team also records training on the master AO Register, although I believe the registers maintained by the Learning and Development team would be more accurate and are the "definitive" registers for training.

Question 8 – Is there a command structure or hierarchy applicable to Authorised Officers? If so, what is that structure and how does (did) it operate?

30. Currently, the operational command structure or hierarchy applicable to AOs is:
 - (a) AOs report to AO Team Leaders (a position developed in approximately May 2020);
 - (b) AO Team Leaders report to Senior AOs (a position developed in approximately May 2020);
 - (c) Senior AOs report to the Deputy Commander(s), Enforcement and Compliance;

- (d) the Deputy Commander(s), Enforcement and Compliance, report to the Commander(s), Enforcement and Compliance.
31. AO Team Leaders were intended to be designated to a defined team of AOs to ensure they could deal with administrative issues such as timesheets for those AOs. However, this has sometimes been difficult in practice because AOs worked across multiple hotel sites and not necessarily in the hotel “group” to which the AO Team Leader was allocated.
32. Before the implementation of the AO Team Leader and Senior AO structure, Senior AOs and Deputy Commanders were rostered to provide support to AOs 24 hours a day 7 days a week, and AOs were given their contact details via the roster.

Question 9 – During the months of;

- (a) April 2020;
- (b) May 2020;
- (c) June 2020; and
- (d) July 2020,

how many Authorised Officers were operational at each hotel where the Hotel Quarantine Program was delivered?

33. Generally, the rostering officers aimed to have 1 AO rostered on per shift at each operational hotel, across 3 shifts of 8 hours, over a 24 hour period. Additional AOs could be called on as necessary for arrival and departure of detainees. AOs were rostered on to work at multiple different hotel sites.
34. In May, when the AO Team Leader and Senior AO positions were developed, there were initially 8 Team Leaders across the Hotel Quarantine Program and 3 or 4 Senior AOs (although more recently, there have been additions to the AO Team Leaders and Senior AOs). Generally, there was approximately 1 AO Team Leader allocated to each of 4 “groups” of hotels (approximately 3-4 hotels). That meant AO Team Leaders were not necessarily on site at a hotel, but could respond to issues and concerns for their designated hotels.

Question 10 – Identify any computer program(s), application(s) document(s), or otherwise used by:

- (a) the Department; and
- (b) Authorised Officers,

to enable the Authorised Officers to fulfill their roles and functions.

35. The Department and AOs used the “Power App / Compliance and Welfare Application”, part of which was known as the “COVID-19 Compliance Application” (**Compliance Application**), to fulfil their roles and functions. I approved AOs to have access to the Compliance Application as part of the onboarding process.
36. I also prepared the following two documents to assist AOs:
- (a) “General Information – COVID-19 Quarantine Authorised Officers”, which covered issues such as IT access, ID cards, payroll, vehicles and parking, logistics, workplace health and safety and employee wellbeing and support. The document was provided to AOs as part of their onboarding and was also sent out with each roster. It has been updated 5 times to date.

A copy of each version of the document is **annexed** to this statement as follows:

Annexure.	Document Name	Date of document
M₃1	General Information – COVID19 Quarantine Authorised Offices v1	2 May 2020
M₃2	General Information – COVID19 Quarantine Authorised Offices v2	14 May 2020
M₃3	General Information – COVID19 Quarantine Authorised Offices v3	5 June 2020
M₃4	General Information – COVID19 Quarantine Authorised Offices v4	25 June 2020
M₃5	General Information – COVID19 Quarantine Authorised Offices v5	31 July 2020

- (b) “Authorised Officers – FAQs” dated 26 June 2020, which was based on questions I was frequently asked by AOs and provided to AOs as part of their onboarding. It covers the role and skills required of AOs, as well as issues such as dress code, supply of PPE, rostering, pay and expenses, COVID-testing and the employee wellbeing and support program.

A copy of the document ““Authorised Officers – FAQs” is annexed to this statement as **Annexure M₃6**.

37. I am aware that in the very early days of the Hotel Quarantine Program, there was a "FAQ" type document put together by the person then responsible for rostering.
38. There were a range of documents in the nature of policy and procedures, including Operational Instructions, that were used to enable AOs to fulfil their roles and functions. Generally, I did not prepare those documents, but occasionally had input into them. I otherwise received copies of those documents by email. I am aware that the documents changed over time. Documents were available on the AO Resources Teams site accessible by AOs and, I understand, on-site at each hotel. As part of my role in the induction onboarding process, my team ensured each AO had access to the Teams site.
39. There were also, from quite early on, weekly catch up meetings for all AOs, and once the team leader structure was implemented in May, there were weekly team leader meetings. In addition, there were initially daily command meetings for senior staff, and subsequently weekly meetings for senior staff.

Question 11 – What is (was) the purpose and function of the COVID-19 Compliance Application? Who has access to and who uses the application and for what purpose? Is the information contained in the COVID-19 Compliance Application stored by the Department? If so, where and how is it stored?

40. The Compliance Application was developed quickly and refined over time. To the best of my knowledge, its purpose was broadly as follows:
- (a) at a port of entry (i.e the airport), AOs used the Compliance Application to record and confirm passenger details;
 - (b) at the hotel, AOs used the Compliance Application to:
 - (i) record the room number for each detainee;
 - (ii) subsequently, to record activities such as exemptions from quarantine or room changes.
41. AOs had access to the Compliance Application for the purposes described in paragraph 40 above.
42. I do not know the details of who else used the Compliance Application and for what purpose. I believe members of the Enforcement and Compliance Command and other areas of the Department involved in the COVID-19 response had read-only access to the Compliance Application, and that the IT team had read and write access.
43. I do not know where or how the information contained in the Compliance Application is stored.

Question 12: During the period you worked within the Hotel Quarantine Program, was there a designated person responsible for managing or overseeing Authorised Officers? If so, who was that?

44. The designated person responsible for managing or overseeing AOs from an operational perspective was the Deputy Commander, Enforcement and Compliance (Anthony Kolmus, and subsequently Steve Ballard and Stuart Bailey). Ultimate responsibility was held by the Commander, Enforcement and Compliance (Meena Naidu, and subsequently Murray Smith and Leanne Hughson).
45. In addition, from around May 2020, Senior AOs and AO Team Leaders were rostered on to provide a level of management and oversight of AOs on the ground.
46. As set out at paragraph 11 above, I was responsible for managing and overseeing AOs from an administrative perspective only. I was not responsible for managing or overseeing AOs from an operational perspective.

Question 13: Did Authorised Officers involved in the Hotel Quarantine Program undertake daily reviews of the Hotel Quarantine sites and the detainees? Did they provide reports to the Department? If so, what did this review and reporting function involve?

47. I am not aware of whether AOs involved in the Hotel Quarantine Program undertook daily reviews of the Hotel Quarantine sites and the detainees, or whether they provided reports to the Department.
48. I understood that the PHWA required that an AO must undertake a daily review of whether continued detention is necessary.
49. To the best of my recollection, the training sessions I described in paragraphs 23 and 24 above did not cover daily reviews.

Question 14: During the period you worked within the Hotel Quarantine Program, was there a practice, procedure or policy regarding the making, receiving and/or responding to complaints, concerns or issues raised by or on behalf of Authorised Officers, nurses, security guards and/or detainees? If so, please annex copies of any relevant policies and protocols and describe:

- (a) who was responsible;
- (b) how the procedure was applied in practice;
- (c) any changes to the procedure; and
- (d) how effectively it operated.

50. I am not aware of whether there were any formal procedures or policies regarding the making, receiving and/or responding to complaints, concerns or issues raised by or on behalf of AOs.
51. Receiving and responding to complaints, concerns or issues raised by or on behalf of AOs was not formally part of my role. Nevertheless, because I was responsible for onboarding/ induction of AOs (which meant I was listed as the “contact person” on their contracts), AOs did often send complaints, concerns or issues to me by email. I would also say to AOs during the onboarding process to contact me if they had any concerns. My usual practice in responding to such emails was as follows.
- (a) If the complaint, concern or issues was administrative (such as HR, access to IT, or payroll issues), I would try to help problem-solve and support AOs as best I could. That might involve responding to the email directly, or forwarding on to HR, IT or Payroll as relevant.
 - (b) If the complaint, concern or issues was operational, my usual practice was to forward the email to the Deputy Commander, Enforcement and Compliance. To the best of my knowledge, the Deputy Commander would raise those issues with the Commander, Enforcement and Compliance, who would respond, including raising them with Operation Soteria Command as relevant. In some cases, I raised complaints, concerns or issues directly with the Commander, Enforcement and Compliance.
 - (c) If the complaint, concern or issue concerned an employee performance issue (for instance, I recall receiving a complaint about potential employee fraud and another complaint about a staff member reportedly sleeping on shift), I would also forward it to Employee Relations for advice as required.
52. On many occasions, complaints, concerns or issues were sent to me as a “FYI”, or I was copied on to an email about a complaint, concern or issue sent to someone else. In that case, my usual practice was, if necessary, to confirm with the sender if I was required to do anything and otherwise file it.
53. I am not aware of whether there were any procedures, policies or practices regarding the making, receiving and/or responding to complaints, concerns or issues raised by or on behalf of nurses, security guards or detainees.

Question 15: Were any complaints, concerns or issues raised by or on behalf of Authorised Officers, nurses, security guards and/or detainees made in writing and sent, either directly or indirectly, to you? If so, please annex copies of each document containing the complaints, concerns or issues.

54. As set out in my answer to Question 14, AOs raised complaints, concerns and issues to me directly by email.

55. I did not receive complaints directly from nurses, security guards or detainees. On occasion, I received complaints, concerns or issues raised by other people and sent indirectly to me by AOs.
56. A summary of complaints, concerns and issues made in writing and sent to me, containing document IDs is annexed to this statement as **Annexure M 7**. This summary has been prepared to the best of my knowledge and belief, having undertaken all reasonable searches of my records.

Question 16: Were any complaints, concerns or issues raised by or on behalf of Authorised Officers, nurses, security guards and/or detainees made orally to you? If so, please summarise the substance of each complaint including details as to:

- (a) the nature of the complaint or concern;
 - (b) the date on which it was made; and
 - (c) who made the complaint.
57. Complaints, concerns or issues raised by or on behalf of AOs may also have been made to me by telephone. For instance, I recall complaints raised on behalf of AOs by DELWP were initially made by telephone and then followed up by email.
58. To the best of my recollection, all complaints, concerns or issues raised by or on behalf of AOs to me are reflected in the summary document described in paragraph 57 above.

Question 17: In relation to each of the complaints, concerns or issues identified in response to the preceding two questions, please identify and describe what steps were taken to address the complaints or concerns.

59. The steps I took to address those complaints, concerns or issues are summarised in my answer to Question 14 above. More specific detail is included in the summary document described in paragraph 56 above.
60. In general, unless I was sent or copied on to an email in reply, I am not aware of what steps were taken to address complaints, concerns or issues sent to me as an "FYI", copied to me, or forwarded by me to the appropriate person.

Question 18: In addition to those matters identified in answer to questions 15 and 16, are you aware of any, and if so what other information or allegations indicating that Authorised Officers, private security contractors or their subcontractors were performing their duties unsatisfactorily or were engaging in behaviours likely to increase the risk of COVID-19 transmission? Please provide details of that information for each month referenced in Question 9.

61. Other than the matters identified in answer to Questions 15 and 16 above, I am not otherwise aware of any other information or allegations indicating that AOs or security guards were performing their duties unsatisfactorily or were engaging in behaviours likely to increase the risk of COVID-19 transmission.

Question 19: Were/are Authorised Officers and nursing staff directed or required by the Department to prepare notes or documents to enable an end of shift hand-over? If so, please annex copies of any applicable policies and protocols regarding that requirement.

62. To the best of my knowledge, AOs were directed or required to prepare notes to enable an end of shift handover. I believe that was initially done in note books and subsequently electronically in the Teams site.
63. The training described at paragraphs 22 and 23 above covered the need for handover at the start and end of each shift, but did not detail how handover should occur.
64. On 14 June 2020, I was copied on to an email sent by **REDACTED** Senior AO, attaching an Operational Instruction entitled "Authorised Officer Handover Notes". A copy of that Operational Instruction is at DHS.5000.0008.3881.
65. I am not aware of whether or not nursing staff were directed or required to prepare notes to enable an end of shift handover.

Question 20: Did you have any reservations about any aspect of the Hotel Quarantine Program at any time? If you did, what were your reservations, and to whom, if anyone, did you express them?

66. The Hotel Quarantine Program was set up extremely quickly and involved the hard work and tireless efforts of many departmental staff and others, including a number of excellent AOs who have consistently acted professionally and not put themselves or others at risk. However, some of the complaints, concerns or issues raised with me (as referred to in Question 15 above) made me concerned about the management of the program at the hotels, including the performance of some departmental team leaders (non-AOs) on site. Although I am aware that those complaints, concerns or issues were escalated through the Enforcement and Compliance Command, I had concerns about what was perceived to be a lack of responsiveness to those complaints, concerns or issues, noting that I am not fully aware of what steps, if any, were taken to respond.

Detention and release

Question 21: As far as you are aware, between April and July 2020 (inclusive), what were the procedures involved for authorising Temporary Leave for detainees in Hotel Quarantine? Who was responsible and what (if any) criteria informed the decision maker's assessment? Please

refer to and annex copies of any applicable policies and protocols to this statement.

67. I am not aware of the procedures involved for authorising temporary leave for detainees in hotel quarantine, who was responsible, and what informed the decision-maker's assessment.

Question 22: Are you aware of any procedures, protocols and notices that were applicable to the release of detainees at the end of mandatory hotel quarantine detention for the periods between April and July 2020 (inclusive)? Did those procedure, protocols and notices differ in relation to detainees who were:

- (a) COVID-19 negative;
- (b) exhibiting symptoms consistent with COVID-19; and
- (c) COVID-19 positive?

68. I am aware of the "end of detention notices", which I understand were issued when detainees were leaving quarantine, but I am not aware of the details, procedures or decision-making to support this.

69. I am not otherwise aware of any procedures, protocols and notices applicable to the release of detainees at the end of mandatory hotel quarantine detention.

Question 23: Which department/s, agencies, private companies and/or individuals facilitated arrangements for the release of detainees and their ongoing journey at the end of mandatory hotel quarantine detention for the period between April and July 2020 (inclusive)? What measures were in place to minimise the risk of COVID-19 transmission?

70. I am not aware of which departments, agencies, private companies or individuals facilitated arrangements for the release of detainees and their ongoing journey at the end of mandatory hotel quarantine detention.

Question 24: What was the reason for the closure of the Crowne Plaza Melbourne and what, if any, steps were taken to relocate detainees? Who was responsible?

71. I am not aware of a reason for the closure of the Crowne Plaza Melbourne or any steps to relocate detainees.

Question 25: If you wish to include any additional information in your witness statement, please set it out below.

72. As acknowledged in my response to Question 20 above, the Hotel Quarantine Program was set up quickly and involved the hard work of many. However, I was concerned about the sustainability of the workload for staff involved in the Program, including myself. I raised these

concerns with the Deputy Commanders and Commanders, Enforcement and Compliance, who have sought to address them, including by providing more support for my team. In particular, I was concerned about:

- (a) my workload, including that I have administrative responsibility as the line manager for all AOs (currently approximately 191 people not including secondees) and I am the primary administrative contact for all AOs involved in the Hotel Quarantine Program;
- (b) the capacity for regular, formal, individual supervision and oversight of AOs, which was addressed in part through the implementation of the Senior AOs and AO Team Leaders structure; and
- (c) a lack of a formal reporting line for the staff in rostering and logistics for a period of time, which was addressed by bringing the team more directly under my supervision, as described in my answer to Question 3 above.

73. In terms of workload, I was also concerned about people being required to perform their business as usual roles while on duty in the Hotel Quarantine Program: in particular, that Anthony Kolmus was required to act as Deputy Commander, Enforcement and Compliance, while also performing his business as usual role as Human Services Regulator.
74. I had some concerns about the changes to the recruitment process implemented in around June 2020 and described in paragraph 27 above. In particular, about the Department's capacity for volume recruitment and to interview and vet applicants to ensure the people being brought on had the appropriate transferable skills. I raised these concerns with the Deputy Commander and Commander, Enforcement and Compliance, who confirmed that he provided feedback to the Department's People and Culture Branch about the recruitment process.
75. Finally, I also thought there was a missed opportunity in developing the training process described in paragraph 27 above, in particular that I was not involved in the development or implementation of that training given my role and experience to that time. I am aware that a recommendation was made to incorporate a similar training session into the 5 day training. In any event, I am satisfied that this has been resolved by AOs being provided with the documents I referred to in paragraph 36 above (which generally cover the kind of information I would provide in the training).

Signed at Melbourne
in the State of Victoria
on 21 August 2020

Manager

Manager