



Special Commission of Inquiry into the Ruby Princess

EXHIBIT 73

Statement of David Annesley dated 21 May 2020



STATEMENT OF A WITNESS

In the matter of: Investigation into the Ruby Princess and COVID-19 related deaths

Place: [REDACTED]

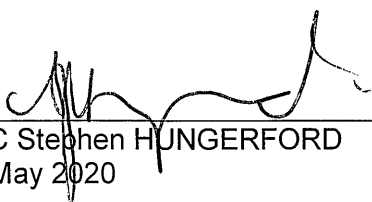
Date: 21 May 2020

Name: David ANNESLEY


STATES:

1. This statement made by me accurately sets out the evidence that I would be prepared, if necessary, to give in court as a witness. The statement is true to the best of my knowledge and belief and I make it knowing that, if it is tendered in evidence, I will be liable to prosecution if I have wilfully stated in it anything that I know to be false, or do not believe to be true.
2. I am 56 years of age.
3. Helen RHODES is my mother in law. Helen and Greg [REDACTED] had three children Leanne (52), then Donna [REDACTED] (49 years old) and Glen [REDACTED] (46 years old). I am married to Leanne, we have known each other for 30 years and been married for the past 25 years, we have three children. Leanne and I own a used car business. I also drive part time as an Uber driver.
4. Helen was living alone in her unit at [REDACTED] Fennell Bay which is an over 55's community.
5. Helen had been on 6 or 7 cruises before and I really enjoyed them, she normally travelled alone. Last year Donna and I travelled with Helen on a cruise with her from Sydney to New Caledonia and back it was a 7 day cruise.
6. Helen had a heart valve replacement when, since that time she had been on Warfarin daily for this. Helen was Asthmatic and used Ventolin and sometimes medication if it was playing up. However lately she did not have any issues. Helen has been a bit unsteady on her feet and

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using a walking frame just for safety however she can also walk around without it. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

7. On the 7 March 2020 Helen drove from her house to ours on the Central Coast. Helen stayed at our house overnight and I was going to drive her to the Ruby Princess on the morning of the 8 March 2020. I familiar with the area as I also works as an Uber Driver.
8. About 10am on the 8 March 2020 I drove Helen from our house to boarding area of the Ruby Princess at Circular Quay. I dropped Helen in the drop off area about 11.15am and she was due to board at 12.30pm Helen only had the medical issues I have mentioned above she was in good health. There was about 150 to 200 people around waiting in the area. I got Helen's luggage out and she walking off with her bag and walking frame. There was about 8 cars dropping of people in this area at the same time.
9. About 12.20pm I received a call from Helen that time of boarding has been delayed and she had just received a message telling her boarding had been delayed as Department of Health were ion the Ship and had not cleared it for boarding. I asked her if she wanted me to come back and pick her up and Helen told me she was fine she was okay waiting there.
10. At 6.15pm on the 8 March 2020 Leanne received a text from Helen stating she was finally in her cabin and the room was nice and could I let the others know.
11. On the 17 March 2020 Leanne had a phone conversation with Helen she had called from the Ruby Princess telling us she was returning to Australia early and would arrive on the morning of the 19 March 2020 but there was expected to be a delay with Heath checks getting off the ship.
12. At 5.30am on the 19 March 2020 I left home to pick up Helen from Circular Quay. We were not expected her until about 11am to leave the ship due to potential Health checks. I had come down to Sydney early to do some Uber driving whilst waiting.
13. About 7.50am I received a phone call from Helen that she was already off the ship. There had been no health delays and she had walked straight off and straight through customs. I was at Silverwater and made my way soon after to pick up Helen.

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14. I have picked up passengers many times before from the Circular Quay area and there is normally a que along George Street of about 12 to 15 cars/ small buses.
15. About 8.40am I arrived and there and because it was early that Helen got off the ship I drove straight in and there was no waiting. There were only one other car in the waiting area normally there are about 35 to 40 cars there. I had never seen it this empty and can only assume it took us the organised transport like myself by surprise and they were not there to collect the passengers. As I drove into the pick up I called Helen. In the pick up area there are two large trees with seats around them area I saw there was about 600 to 800 people all waiting around. It was very crowded and there was no social distancing. I saw Helen walk out from the crowd and I help put her luggage and walking frame in the car. Helen sat in the back of the car as a precaution.
16. On the way home Helen said to me she has never got off a ship faster almost hustled off. She said that had repeatedly been told there was no COVID on the ship. I asked if she had her temperature taken and she said no. She had a mask with her on the trip and offered to use it but I said no it is ok. Other than that we had general chit chat on the way home and Helen used her phone a bit. Helen appeared healthy and happy and when had had a good trip.
17. I drove Helen to our house and Leanne was at home. Leanne had a quick hello with her Mum and Helen got into the car and she drove off to her home.
18. I was aware of Helen's health issues from the next day onwards and Leanne was keeping me up to date with Helen's health and my statement would be the same as Leanne's.
19. I was aware that Helen had received emails and texts of warning of COVID-19 on the Ruby Princess.
20. After Helen was tested Leanne asked if we could get tested and was told no we did not meet the criteria at that stage.
21. On Monday the 23 March 2020 I had a sore throat. We could not get tested at this time until Helen was tested as positive.

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22. On Tuesday the 24 March 2020 [REDACTED] Leanne and I got tested for COVID-19 at the same time.
23. On Thursday 26 March 2020 I got my test result and was positive for COVID-19.
24. On Saturday the 28 March 2020 Leanne got her results back and she was negative for COVID-19.
25. I started with a sore throat and then got a high temperature, I had self isolated and was receiving calls from NSW Health every day. I had flu like symptoms, headaches, my breathing was restricted, a very dry cough I describe it as feeling like you have a spiders web in your throat. I had a very severe head ache and then went on and on. I sometimes felt my skin was irritated and just had to take my shirt off from the irritation/ pain. I had no smell or taste. I had no energy. It was the worse I have ever felt. After about 12 days I started to get better. At 16 days I was symptom free.
26. I had to self isolate after that for a further 3 days of no symptoms.
27. I was released from self isolation on the 10 April 2020.
28. I am still getting called by the Department of Heath to check on my health.

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