

COR 2017_003044

CORONER'S COURT

INQUEST

MELBOURNE

FRIDAY 3 MAY 2019

(2nd day of hearing)

BEFORE MS J. HAWKINS, CORONER

SENIOR SERGEANT BRUMBY: Ms Cosson, can you please state your full name, your business address and your occupation?

1 ---Ah, my name is Elizabeth Cosson. Um, my business address is the Department of Veterans Affairs in Genge Street in Canberra City. And my occupation is the Secretary of Department of Veterans Affairs.

Thank you. You made a statement in relation to this inquest for the Coroner?---Yes I did.

I'll just get you to have a look at that statement...

Is there anything in relation to that statement you wish to add, change or amend?---Ah, I believe it was tabled this morning. Just to make reference to the **parliamentary privilege** on, um, references to the Productivity Commission. Um, that just to ah remove the reference to the Productivity Commission's report. But essentially, um, the findings of that report I can refer to in any questions that may arise today.

There's been a document provided to the Coroner highlighting those particular areas?---That's correct.

That are the subject of parliamentary privilege?---Yes. And are quite familiar with the material contained in it. But just generally, that statement goes through what investigations and enquiries and reviews have been undertaken in relation to the management of Jesse's case.

It talks about the joint enquiry and the recommendations that came out of that. It also goes through what's practically and materially changed in relation to DVA since Jesse's death. Also it talks about the progress on the implementation of the joint enquiry recommendations and I think you also - you explain that the scale of change that's been undertaken by DVA is quite large. It's a huge shift in the way the organisation is doing business?---That's correct.

In relation to - so just to clarify. You can answer questions in relation to the Productivity Commission report but there's just - - -

THE CORONER: No, just a clarification on that, Ms Fitzgerald. She can't answer questions to - that's under parliamentary privilege?

MS FITZPATRICK: THE CORONER: No, just a clarification on that, Ms Fitzgerald. She can't answer questions to - that's under parliamentary privilege?

MS FITZPATRICK: It's covered by parliamentary privilege.

.TJ:JLA 03/05/19 COR 1I 191 E. COSSON

THE CORONER: I can't answer questions in relation, yes.

MS FITZPATRICK: The existence of the report - - -

THE CORONER: Is fine.

SENIOR SERGEANT BRUMBY: That's fine.

THE CORONER: The questioning about the report, no. 5

SENIOR SERGEANT BRUMBY: Yes, certainly. I'll rephrase my 6 question, Your Honour. (To witness) In relation to all the reviews and enquiries, investigations in relation to this particular case, and some of the conclusions in relation to the DVA system generally, would you agree that there was a - the general finding is that the system just wasn't fit for purpose, it wasn't doing the function of assisting and supporting veterans in the manner in which it was intended?---That - I can - I agree with that observation.