

## Questions taken on notice

Portfolio:	Attorney-General
Witness:	Mr Colin Radford
Committee member:	Mr Danny O'Brien
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**Mr D O'BRIEN:** *Okay. We are aware that a number of public sector employees have lodged WorkSafe claims related to COVID-19. Can you provide a breakdown of the WorkCover claims lodged per government department since March 2020?*

**Mr RADFORD:** *I do not have that at my fingertips, Mr O'Brien. I will see what information I can provide. Obviously there are privacy provisions around individuals.*

**Mr D O'BRIEN:** *Of course.*

**Mr RADFORD:** *So I would have to ensure that no individual could be identified, but I will take that question on notice if that is appropriate.*

**Mr D O'BRIEN:** *Simply a list by department of the number of claims both lodged and approved, Mr Radford, if we could.*

As at 26 August 2020, there have been 38 claims accepted for impacts of COVID-19 and one for a positive COVID-19 diagnosis across Government agencies.

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**Ms VALLENCE:** *And have you sought to contact any of the security guards themselves who are potentially victims of these unsafe work practices?*

**Mr RADFORD:** *I am not able to answer that question, Ms Vallence, because I do not know. We are investigating some of the activities as they pertain to the health and safety Act, and the duty holder in that case would be the security companies. So yes, absolutely, we are investigating whether they have complied with their responsibilities under the Act.*

**Ms VALLENCE:** *Okay. You said you do not know; can you take that on notice for the committee?*

**Mr RADFORD:** *I can.*

WorkSafe's investigators seek to contact all people who may have information relevant to an investigation. However, to ensure the integrity of any of WorkSafe's investigation process, it is not appropriate to identify persons who are assisting with our enquiries while an investigation is ongoing.

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**Ms VALLENCE:** Thank you. How many investigations are there involving private security guards or the security companies?

**Mr RADFORD:** There are eight worksites that are the subject of investigation, and where the duty holders are the security companies they would form part of that investigation.

**Ms VALLENCE:** Okay. Can you provide the names of the eight worksites on notice?

**Mr RADFORD:** I can endeavour to find out if I am able to do that, I think is the best answer. I would need to talk to our investigators.

As a part of its investigation to date, WorkSafe has made enquiries with respect to the following workplaces: Travelodge Melbourne; Travelodge Melbourne Southbank; Stamford Plaza; Rydges on Swanston; Park Royal Melbourne Airport; Holiday Inn Melbourne Airport; Holiday Inn Flinders Lane; and Four Points Sheraton Docklands. The investigation is ongoing.

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**Ms VALLENCE:** Yes; thank you. You have mentioned DJPR and DHHS, Mr Radford. You have said you would check if there are any others. If there are, could you take that on notice and provide it to the committee?

**Mr RADFORD:** As far as I am aware, Ms Vallence, there are not, but I will confirm that for the committee.

Of the 20 workplaces under investigation, WorkSafe is considering whether the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions and/or the Department of Environment Land, Water and Planning held duties with respect to particular workplaces. WorkSafe considers which persons or entities may have duties under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* and as these investigations progress, it may be appropriate to consider whether any other government departments or entities held duties relevant to the particular investigation.