

AFP RECORD OF INTERVIEW

Phone (02) 6131 3000

RECORD OF INTERVIEW BETWEEN MARCUS BOORMAN AND
BRUCE LEHRMANN CONDUCTED AT AFP SYDNEY OFFICE, GOULBURN
STREET, SYDNEY, NEW SOUTH WALES ON MONDAY, NINETEEN APRIL,
TWO THOUSAND AND TWENTY-ONE

PERSONS PRESENT: DETECTIVE INSPECTOR MARCUS BOORMAN
SENIOR CONSTABLE EMMA FRIZZELL
BRUCE LEHRMANN

TIME COMMENCED: THREE THIRTY-SIX PM

BOORMAN:

Q1. This is a taped video and audio recorded interview between myself,
Detective Inspector Marcus BOORMAN and Mr Bruce LEHRMANN, is
that the correct pronunciation?

A Correct, yes.

Q2. Being conducted at AFP Sydney office, Goulburn Street in Sydney.
The time is now three thirty-six pm in the afternoon on the nineteenth
of April, twenty twenty-one.

A Yes.

For the benefit of the recording I will get all persons present to state their name
starting with yourself, Emma.

FRIZZELL: Senior Constable Emma FRIZZELL, badge one two eight nine six.

BOORMAN:

Q3. And yourself, Bruce?

A Ah, Bruce LEHRMANN, no badge number.

Q4. As I've just explained there, as I said before, the interview is audio
and video recorded. And if a transcript is made of this record of
interview, a copy of the transcript will be made available within seven
days of it being made. Okay. So, when I receive it within a week, I'll
make sure you get a copy as well.

A Thank you.

Q5. And at the completion of the interview you will be given a copy of the
audio disk of the interview.

A Mm-hmm.

Q6. Do you understand that?

A Yes.

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Q7. All right. Bruce, myself and Senior Constable Emma FRIZZELL want to speak to you today about a report to police made by a Miss Brittany HIGGINS. And the allegation being that you engaged in sexual intercourse, without consent, with her on the twenty-third of March, two thousand and nineteen at the Australian Parliament House. That's the allegation and the report.

A I know.

Q8. Do you understand that?

A I do.

Q9. All right.

A Ah, from the outset reject it, or is that right?

Q10. Yes, yeah, absolutely.

A Thank you.

Q11. But before we go into any conversations, I need to explain your rights and caution you in relation to it, all right.

A Okay.

Q12. Now I must caution you that you do not have to say or do anything, but anything you say or do may be used in evidence. Do you understand that?

A Yes.

Q13. Can you tell me, in your own words, the understanding of this caution?

A Everything I say, everything you said, the court proceedings as far as your investigation.

Q14. That's correct. And you also – you know you do not have to say or do anything unless you wish to do so. Do you understand that?

A Yes, yes, I do.

Q15. All right. Now the caution also applies to any questions that Senior Constable FRIZZELL may ask. So either questions that either of us ask, that caution applies. Do you understand that?

A Yep.

Q16. Now prior to this interview commencing we had a conversation downstairs in the foyer where your legal representative, Mr John KORN was present.

A Yes.

Q17. And we explained – I explained the process.

A Yep.

Q18. And I told you that I would be giving you this full caution and rights.

A Yep.

Q19. In relation to it. Is that correct?

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A Yes.

Q20. All right. So, you know, I will now explain your rights. You may communicate with or attempt to communicate with a friend or relative to inform that person of your whereabouts. Do you understand that?

A Yes.

Q21. Do you wish to communicate with a friend or relative at this time?

A No.

Q22. All right. You may communicate with or attempt to communicate with a legal practitioner of your choice and arrange or attempt to arrange for a legal practitioner of your choice to be present during the questioning. Do you understand that?

A Yes.

Q23. Now, do you wish to communicate with your legal practitioner at this time?

A No.

Q24. And is it correct that, again I'll just reiterate you attended here earlier with Mr John KORN, your legal representative?

A That's – that's right. I want to just make it clear at the moment, I'm just, you know, taking advice from him.

Q25. Okay.

A He hasn't been formally engaged in a sense because I haven't been, um, you know, it's just been a media report, so, you know.

Q26. Right.

A Um, but he is my counsel, so, you know, I haven't been taking formal advice from him per se.

Q27. All right. But it was correct that he was here with you and we've had discussions downstairs and you're here of your own free will – that's

A Oh, yes, that's correct. Yep, yep. Yes, absolutely, yeah.

Q28. And just while I'm on that, well, I'll finish the caution and we'll come back to that. Are you an Australian citizen?

A Yes.

Q29. Are you Aboriginal or a Torres Strait Islander?

A No.

Q30. Are you known by any other names?

A No.

Q31. All right. How old are you, Bruce?

A Twenty-five, I'll be twenty-six in June.

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- Q32. And your place and date of birth?
A Ah, place of birth was College Station, Texas, USA. Fourteenth of June, nineteen ninety-five.
- Q33. And are you known by any other names?
A No.
- Q34. So, your full name is Bruce - - -
A Emery LEHRMANN, right.
- Q35. And your current residential address?
A [REDACTED]
- Q36. And your mobile phone number?
A [REDACTED]
- Q37. And your occupation or your current occupation, work details at the moment?
A Ah, Regulatory Affairs manager for the British American Tobacco.
- Q38. Are you currently in a relationship or anything like that?
A No.
- Q39. Do you own any vehicles?
A Yeah, yes.
- Q40. What sort of car do you have?
A Volkswagen Golf, it works pretty good.
- Q41. Good, a new car?
A Work helped me out with that, but it's my name, so yes, it's mine.
- Q42. Do you speak any other languages?
A No.
- Q43. And what is your first language?
A English.
- Q44. So you understand English, that's a good thing. So, you're happy to proceed, you don't need an interpreter or anyone to assist you in relation to this interview?
A No.
- Q45. All right. In relation to your education, what education do you have?
A Ah, ah, I haven't, um, I'm not degree qualified per se.
- Q46. Mm-hmm.
A Um, I have completed my Arts degree, I just haven't, um, graduated at this stage. I'm still, um, well, I'm undecided whether I want to finish my policy, it is under consideration, so.

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- Q47. Yes.
A I got a bit lazy working in politics, yeah.
- Q48. Right. So, it's a policy degree that you've been doing is it?
A Yeah, Arts and Policy, a double degree.
- Q49. And where were you doing that?
A ANU in Canberra.
- Q50. Now, do you understand me when I speak to you?
A Oh, yes, yeah.
- Q51. Okay. Now, if you don't understand any questions I ask, please say so, and I'll repeat it or I'll ask it in another way. At any time during the interview should you wish to exercise any of your rights, please let me know. Okay. And at any time during the interview, if you particularly want to reach out to Mr KORN, please let me know. And I want to just make it clear right now, Bruce, that you are not under arrest, all right, you are not under arrest and you're free to go at any time you like. This is an opportunity for you to obviously participate in a formal record of interview in relation to this allegation and provide your version of events. Do you understand that?
A I do, yep.
- Q52. Okay. Now, have you consumed any alcohol, drugs or medication before coming here today?
A No, well, Panadol, that's it.
- Q53. Yeah.
A Yeah, but no.
- Q54. No, you know, illicit drugs or anything like that?
A No, no, no.
- Q55. Any – any, you know, medications that would affect your ability to remember or give frank answers or anything like that?
A No, no, no.
- Q56. How are you feeling at this time?
A Well, I – you know, obviously nervous and distressed and I have been for many weeks now, so yeah.
- Q57. Mm-hmm. But you feel all right to obviously have this conversation?
A Yeah, absolutely. I've – I've – I've wanted to and that's why I'm being more than happy to cooperate, um, yeah, I am.
- Q58. All right. Now, this may take some time, because we've got a lot of ground to cover. Um, and if at any time you wish to have a break, let us know and we can suspend the interview. And again, if you don't understand a question that I ask, please – please let me know and I'll repeat it or reword it. All right. All right. It's fine that you're not

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- under arrest. Myself and Senior Constable FRIZZELL will be taking notes, we'll be writing down to obviously to jog our memory.
- A Yep.
- Q59. During the interview, I – I may show you some documents or something like that if it becomes relevant. And, of course, it is audio and video recorded, but verbal responses are quite important in relation to the – obviously for the benefit of the recording. During the interview I will be talking to you about a number of things.
- A Mm-hmm.
- Q60. But in particular the – the events or what you may have been doing on some time ago in two thousand and nineteen.
- A Mm-hmm.
- Q61. On the evening of Friday, the twenty-second of March, two thousand and nineteen leading into the early hours of Saturday, the twenty-third of March, two thousand and nineteen.
- A Mm-hmm.
- Q62. And I will also – I would like to ask you a number of questions and talk to you in relation to your employment at Parliament House. The workplace, the operations, how it functions, conduct, peoples' behaviour, that sort of thing.
- A Yep.
- Q63. And your obviously your knowledge or relationship, if any, with Miss Brittany HIGGINS. And also, as I said, the events of the Friday and the Saturday night, I believe it was.
- A Mm-hmm.
- Q64. And just based on what you talk to me about, I may have some further questions a bit later if I have further need. Do you understand that?
- A Yes. I do, yep.
- Q65. All right. So, you're happy to go on?
- A Yes, yep.
- Q66. So, I think we'll start the interview by you sort of giving me a response in relation to the allegation I read out to you before.
- A Sure.
- Q67. And I'll repeat that if you like.
- A Yep.
- Q68. So, the whole purpose of this record of conversation, record of interview, is in response to a report made to police by a Miss Brittany HIGGINS that between one forty-eight am and two thirty-three am on Saturday, the twenty-third of March, two thousand and nineteen, you engaged in sexual intercourse with Brittany HIGGINS at the Australian Parliament House in the Australian Capital

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Territory without her consent. And contrary to section fifty-four of the Crimes Act nineteen hundred. What can you tell me about that allegation?

A So, obviously I reject that allegation because it simply didn't happen.

Q69. Mm-hmm.

A My recollection of the evening in question, um, and I'll just explain, some time ago, and I have had – you know, looked, you know, just piece – piece together, like I got out of Parliament and moved on with my life.

Q70. Mm-hmm.

A Ah, but the – the event was set up as a, um, Department of Defence drinks at The Dock in Kingston.

Q71. Yes.

A I can't – well, I don't understand, I can't remember whether Brittany invited me or the invite went to Austin WENKE, who works for, um, Peter DUTTON as a press secretary, I still believe he does. Um, however, um, we were invited nonetheless. And Austin and I went to the Kingston Hotel prior for – we often went, you know, not just him, others as well, we often went to the Kingo as we used to call it, and had a steak and a beer.

Q72. Yeah.

A Um, and then we – we indicated that, um, I can't – I can't recall which one of us, that indicated to Brittany that we'll pop down later to The Dock and join her and her Defence colleagues. It was our understanding that she'd been in the Defence portfolio for some time, she'd previously worked for Steve CIOBO.

Q73. Mm-hmm.

A And being, at the time of coming to the portfolio, I was Linda REYNOLD's most senior staffer. So, we inherited a number of Steve CIOBO's staff. And, um, it was on that basis, from our understanding that – that, you know, Brittany was staying on and, um, you know, the Department of Defence were having some drinks down at The Dock and we went down to The Dock. I believe I only bought one – one or two rounds of drinks. I was, um, not intoxicated at all.

Q74. Mm-hmm.

A Um, we were there for a couple of hours I suppose. Um, but I'm not a hundred per cent on that, but we were there for a while at the event. I – I treated it as a – as a Parliamentary event that I often get invited to.

Q75. Yep.

A Um, so, I was not carrying on or anything because I thought there's going to be colleagues there from the Department of Defence, there was certainly, um, individuals who I recognised as ADC's of various ministers. The Governor-General's ADC was also present. I remember meeting him. Um, so, and there was other officials from

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the Intelligence community as well, so, I understand that I'm aware of my obligations, um, with those.

Q76. Mm-hmm.

A Um, so, and you know, it was actually a very good night. Um, Lauren, I can't remember her name, but there was a blonde girl that was quite close to Austin.

Q77. Mm-hmm.

A Lauren someone who identified herself as the head of media or head of comms for the Chief of Navy.

Q78. Mm-hmm.

A She seemed to be sort of running it. Um, and sort of took me around and introduced me to everybody.

Q79. Mm-hmm.

A Um, a blonde girl she was. And we then made a decision not – not necessarily in connection with them, you know, just Brittany, Austin and Lauren, it was certainly everybody that we were then finished at The Dock and they wanted – we all sort of said, "Well, let's keep – let us keep having a drink."

Q80. Mm-hmm.

A And we went to – I've – um, I have, I really enjoyed 88mph, it's a favourite of mine.

Q81. Mm-hmm.

A So, I value music and I said, "Well, you know, that's – let's go there." Um, and that's where we proceeded. Um, and I was – still by that point, by no way intoxicated, I was, um, you know, particularly in the company that I was in at The Dock.

Q82. Mm-hmm.

A Um, and I was fully aware of what who I was there with.

Q83. Mm-hmm.

A Um, and then we got to 88mph, it was my recollection that Lauren was still sort of leading the group. Um, and because I certainly don't recall buying lots of drinks at all, um, um, and I'm happy to provide my bank statements, it's – it's from that night.

Q84. I appreciate that.

A I actually only spent forty dollars at 88mph.

Q85. Mm-hmm.

A So, you know, that would have been maybe perhaps one round. Um, so, um, I then indicated to the – I can't recall if it was to the group or not, but I believe we were sitting in one booth we normally do, um, when I've gone with other people. Um, that, um, I had to go back to Parliament House to get my keys to get back into my apartment where I was living with my girlfriend.

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- Q86.** Mm-hmm.
A Um, and, um, Brittany also indicated that she had to attend Parliament for something, I didn't enquire as to what. I thought I was being a gentleman and I said, "Well, I'm ordering an Uber, I've got to go back there briefly, you know, you're happy to stay – you know, it's fine if you want share an Uber."
- Q87.** Mm-hmm.
A And she indicated she was happy to go back there. So, um, we both hopped in the Uber, it was after midnight, ah - - -
- Q88.** So, that was Brittany who needed to get back to - - -
A She had to get to Parliament House.
- Q89.** Oh, all right.
A So, yeah, correct. So, I – I made an indication that I was ready to go and I had to pop back to Parliament to get my keys and, um, she – she indicated as well as part of that discussion that she – she also had to pop by Parliament. And I said, "Well, you know, I'm already going there, if you wanted to share an Uber there and I've got to pop up." You see, I live very close to Parliament, a five minute walk. Um, (clears throat) and then we – the Uber took us to the ministerial entrance at the rear of Parliament House.
- Q90.** Mm-hmm.
A And we pushed the – we didn't have our passes on us, um, the reason why she didn't have her pass, I'm not sure, but I didn't have my pass, typically, typically the case because, not necessarily the pass, I think I probably just forgot about it. But specifically I didn't have my keys and belongings because I wasn't expecting a big night.
- Q91.** Okay.
A Um, so we went – typically it was just going to be over in the Barton/Kingston foreshore, I'll just pop back up if it's before ten o'clock or whatever to get my things and pop home.
- Q92.** Yep.
A Um, because it was often the case that staff and ministers attended Parliament after hours all the time.
- Q93.** Mm-hmm.
A Um, and we've never had an issue. Um, and then, um, we – I buzzed the, um, the initial intercom at the car park.
- Q94.** Mm-hmm.
A Um, and indicated to security my name and what office I was from. I can't recall if I indicated I was with Brittany.
- Q95.** Mm-hmm.
A Um, they would have seen on the cameras.

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- Q96.** Yeah.
A They let us through the car park, so, I've seen you guys, I know you guys through PM's motorcades' there. And we go – and then we go through the next layer where the signing process happens. And my understanding is that, um, from then – the best I can recall is I've provided all the things I needed to positively ID. So, um, you know, my driver's licence, um, whatever – they needed photo ID typically, so I did that.
- Q97.** Yeah.
A They looked me up, signed in, signed the back of the, um, positive ID card.
- Q98.** Mm-hmm.
A Ah, put my – put my wallet through and phone through the security, because the phones aren't good at that time. Um, and she was taking some time. I – I proceeded to head up, but then she was taking a while to, um, put her shoes back on or whatever. Um, certainly and by that stage, from my memory, I was not intoxicated to a degree whereby I was, um, you know, unable to sign in and do all those things. And certainly I'd got indication that she was intoxicated to a level of that extent either. I mean, she also did that herself.
- Q99.** Mm-hmm.
A Um, um, and she was taking a while with her shoes. And her belongings in the, um, the tray. And then the security guard, um, I think they called on the Foxtrot with the keys, um, and met us – took us up to the office on Level Two to the front doors. They had to obviously open them and disarm the fire - - -
- Q100.** Mm-hmm.
A Um, I entered the office and turned left to my desk. Um, Brittany turned right into the minister's suite, which is opposite the chief of staff's suite. Um, I turned left obviously to my desk, um, and, um, I didn't see her again. So, I went to my desk, um, my brief case was there, I've got what I needed to for the weekend.
- Q101.** Mm-hmm.
A I also, um, attended to some of the Question Time folders because through the course of that evening, the discussions that we were having with Defence officials, um, while it was on my mind, I, um, attended to some of the Question Time folders because we had a new minister heading into her, um, first Question Time, so I wanted to ensure that – that was part of my role was to look after her Parliamentary duties.
- Q102.** Yes.
A So, um, while it was still on my mind, um, and the discussions that we'd have, particularly about some of the industry, um, programs, particularly in the Air Force.

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- Q103.** Mm-hmm.
A Um, I was moving those around.
- Q104.** Yep.
A Um, and then I ordered myself an Uber. Um, and I left the building through the – through the car park. The Uber indicated that it was here and I went – and I left the building. That's – that's how I recall that evening.
- Q105.** Okay. Sorry.
A No, no, that's fine.
- Q106.** I'm trying to write as fast as I can.
A Sorry, I can slow down if you like.
- Q107.** No, no, that's okay. So, look, we're just going to recap now, if there's any – anything I've missed that you know, but we will go into things later on.
A Yeah, yes, yep, sure.
- Q108.** So, basically you've said you were out at an event at The Dock.
A Yes, on the Kingston foreshore.
- Q109.** On the Kingston foreshore.
A Yes.
- Q110.** And the night in question we're talking about is what night did this occur?
A Oh, Friday the twenty-second, yep.
- Q111.** Friday, the twenty-second?
A Of March, twenty nineteen.
- Q112.** Yep, yep. So, that's the night in question?
A Yep.
- Q113.** So, you said you were – you were out with Austin WENKE, you went to the Kingo Hotel beforehand.
A Yep.
- Q114.** You – you've indicated to Brittany that you would pop in or someone did, we'll go into that.
A Yeah, yes, yep.
- Q115.** You, at the time, you were a senior staff with Minister Linda REYNOLD's office.
A It was a Home Affairs role prior to going to the Defence portfolio, yep.
- Q116.** Okay. So, when you were at The Dock you bought one or two rounds of drinks, you recall?
A Yeah.

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- Q117. You were there for a couple of hours. There was the Governor-General's ADC you recall being there.
A He was there. Um, the ADC's of every minister who had an ADC was there, including our own, Captain Nikita someone.
- Q118. Mm-hmm.
A Um, she was there. All in civvies, they were not in - - -
- Q119. Yeah, yeah. There was a lady, Lauren.
A Yeah, Lauren, I think her last name starts with "G," I have no – because I was intending on leaving politics, I was not, um, ingratiating myself too much with the attendants, just so the purpose of it, you know, just call my minister before I left, so.
- Q120. Yep. So, you were there you were having a few drinks, um, you kept having some drinks and there was a group – there was a discussion - - -
A Yeah.
- Q121. - - - about going to Eighty-eight Miles Per Hour.
A Well I offered that as a location, was because there was a discussion to – to proceed on as The Dock, I believe, I believe the booking was ending or something to that effect, because there was something that prompted us to be leaving.
- Q122. Okay. Then you – you've said you don't recall buying a lot of drinks whilst at The Dock. And then you went to Eighty-eight Miles Per Hour, you recall sitting in a booth at Eighty-eight Miles Per Hour.
A Yeah, that's – that's the best of my recollection, that's how the bar is set up, yeah.
- Q123. And we'll go into who you were there with and all that sort of thing.
A Yes.
- Q124. And then you – you say you had to go to Australian Parliament House to get your keys.
A Mm-hmm.
- Q125. Brittany mentioned she needed to get back there to the Australian Parliament House, so an Uber was ordered.
A Mm-hmm.
- Q126. And you returned – you went to Australian Parliament House with Brittany.
A Mm-hmm.
- Q127. You didn't have your pass with you.
A No.
- Q128. And as you said you weren't expecting a big night and it was often the case that staffers, ministers or – had entered Parliament House

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- after hours. When you got to Parliament House you buzzed the intercom at the car park, and you can't recall whether Brittany said anything or you mentioned Brittany, but you said they would have seen both of you on the camera.
- A Yeah, and when we went to sign.
- Q129. So, you went to the signing area, you provided ID. They obviously looked you up, you signed the back of the ID. Is that correct?
- A Yep, the green card.
- Q130. You went through but Brittany was taking a while.
- A Yes.
- Q131. And, at that stage, you – you stated that you weren't intoxicated – was to that a high level or how would you describe your intoxication level?
- A Oh - - -
- Q132. I just missed that.
- A Oh, moderate. I was certainly able to – I was functioning.
- Q133. Yeah.
- A Yeah.
- Q134. And you said neither was Brittany.
- A Yeah, not to my observations, yeah.
- Q135. Yeah. The security guard escorted you to the office.
- A Mm-hmm.
- Q136. And I take it you were referring to is it Minister REYNOLD's office where you work?
- A Yep, yep, yep, the suite, yep.
- Q137. You were – you were let into the suite. You went to the office, you turned left to your desk. Brittany went right into the minister's suite.
- A Mm-hmm.
- Q138. You went to your desk, you - - -
- A Well, can I clarify. So, when I – she went right, I'm assuming she went to the minister's office. It's possible she went through the minister's office and then to the media. Where my desk is I can't see any other peoples' desks, so, once I'm there. You know, I don't want to say she went straight there, she could have gone to the media office and her desk.
- Q139. Oh, okay, yeah.
- A Like they were joined to the minister's office.
- Q140. Yeah, we can go through things. What we might do is break sessions of things, then get down and clarify and go from there.
- A Yeah, yeah.

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- Q141. When you said you went to your desk, you mentioned your briefcase, was that to get your briefcase?
A No, I don't – no, I don't believe I got my briefcase, I just got what I needed for the weekend because I was back on Monday morning.
- Q142. Yeah, okay. And you worked on some Question Time folders.
A Yep.
- Q143. All right. And then, you know, what you needed to do you ordered an Uber and you left through the car park and that's how you recall the evening. Is that right.
A Yep. That's correct.
- Q144. All right. Now, do you want to have a break or minute before we – we start breaking things down or are you - - -
A I'm okay, if you want to keep going, yeah.
- Q145. All right. Right. So, you said before you went to an event at The Dock. Can you explain how – when you say, “an event at The Dock,” how that came about, who organised or how you came to be there?
A No, I can't recall. All I know is I didn't organise it, that's all I know, yeah.
- Q146. So, you definitely know you didn't organise it?
A Yeah, yeah, yeah.
- Q147. Can you tell me how you came to be there, how did you know about it?
A I'm not – I can't be sure.
- Q148. Mm-hmm.
A But I'm – I'm – I think it was through Brittany, yeah.
- Q149. Right.
A Yes.
- Q150. Now, and you say, “through – through Brittany.” Maybe to make it clearer, let's – let's start with – you work for Minister REYNOLD's at Australian Parliament House?
A Yes.
- Q151. What – what role did you – did you perform in your employment at Australian Parliament House?
A Ah, I was policy adviser, yes.
- Q152. And you said you were a senior adviser?
A No. But – but when she was in Home – when she was in the Home Affairs portfolio, as assistant minister, I was – I was still adviser rank but I was her most senior staffer.
- Q153. Yes. Ah, senior staffer, right, okay.

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- A Yes, yes, yeah, yeah, sorry, I didn't - - -
- Q154. No, that's all right. I just need to be clear because I'm not a political person with things in Parliament.
- A Oh, okay, yeah, yeah.
- Q155. So, you were a senior staffer.
- A Yeah.
- Q156. And what was Brittany's role?
- A Well, I'm not – I'm not sure, um, because I didn't know her very well, like much of the CIOBO office. So, when we moved to that portfolio, um, we inherited some staff who had chosen – they'd indicated they wanted to stay on as – as staffers.
- Q157. Mm-hmm.
- A Um, and, um, Brittany was one of the few that, um, was allowed to stay on. So, my understanding was that she was in a media advising role.
- Q158. Yep.
- A Um, handling media – in connection with Lindy HAYMER who was – who was the existing media adviser.
- Q159. So, how long have you worked with Minister REYNOLDS in that office?
- A Ah – oh, in that office?
- Q160. Yeah.
- A Oh, two or three weeks.
- Q161. Right. And how long have you been working for the minister all up?
- A Ah, a year, I think, yeah, maybe.
- Q162. And how long have you worked at Parliament House?
- A Oh, six years, I suppose, soon after the twenty thirteen election, yeah.
- Q163. Okay. Can you explain to me that – how the sort of minister's office and staffing is set up?
- A Oh, you mean the - - -
- Q164. In Parliament House, yeah, yeah.
- A Like the office, the total desks or?
- Q165. Well, we'll go into the layout, but also like who works for Minister REYNOLDS. Like you say you're a senior staffer, the structure and the roles and - - - ?
- A Oh, okay. So, when she was the Assistant Home Affairs Minister, um, they get two personal staff allocated by the Prime Minister's Office. An adviser level and an assistant adviser. The adviser level is typically, um, the senior staffer who – I had, um, I was in – I was in

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the WhatsApp group chat with all of the chiefs of staff, including John KNUKLE, the Prime Minister's Chief of Staff.

Q166. Mm-hmm.

A Um, I had – I had oversight of the staff who were hiring and firing. Um, but I will say not when we moved into the Defence portfolio, only when we were in the Home Affairs portfolio, did I have that role.

Q167. Right, right.

A Um, everything from liaising with, you know, your commissioner at the AFP, ASIO, ah, handling Estimates processes. Um, because all those offices, um, things like that. So, that was my role, Parliamentary Policy as well. National Security, because I had the relevant security clearances to do with that.

Q168. Mm-hmm.

A Um, signing for the ASIO briefs and the Home Affairs briefs and I don't know, various other briefs that would come to the office.

Q169. And that was in the – when you were working in what portfolio was it?

A Assistant Home Affairs.

Q170. Assistant - - -

A Home Affairs. So, we had, ah, Counter – we had Counter Terrorism. I mean obviously we assisted DUTTON's office but we had specific areas. So, we had Emergency Management, some Counter Terror stuff, um, I honestly can't remember everything, but yeah.

Q171. Yeah, yeah, yeah. No, that's okay. And who was that under, what minister at that time?

A Linda REYNOLDS.

Q172. Linda REYNOLDS.

A Was the Assistant Home Affairs, yep.

Q173. Right.

A But Minister DUTTON was our senior minister, yeah.

Q174. Okay. So, and then Minister REYNOLDS, did she move portfolios?

A So, Steve CIOBO, um, was part of that group of ministers. Julie BISHOP, Christopher – Christopher PYNE, Steve CIOBO had indicated that they're not contesting the election and they were going to resign.

Q175. Yes. Mm-hmm.

A Um, the Prime Minister phoned Minister REYNOLDS, saying that she was – he was offering her the Minister for Defence Industry portfolio.

Q176. Right. Okay.

A With a caveat that should we win the election, she will become the Defence Minister.

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- Q177.** Mm-hmm.
A Um, which happened.
- Q178.** Yep.
A Um, so, um, um, I've – soon after she received that phone call from the Prime Minister, you know, she let me know and her electorate staff, quietly know, that you know, let's get to Canberra where she's gets sworn in and it was so exciting.
- Q179.** Yeah, yep. Mm-hmm.
A Um, and, um, then we – so then what happens in the transition I suppose, is that we want to go too.
- Q180.** I'm just trying to work out the staffing in – in like with Minister REYNOLDS's office. Like you say you were a senior staffer?
A Oh, yeah. So, then – then once - - -
- Q181.** How many other staff are in there?
A Oh, so, now there's just the four electorates, so every member, senator gets by standard, ah, four electorate staff, um, depending when you become a junior minister, like she was, you get an assistant adviser and then an adviser.
- Q182.** So, you say, "four electorate staff." Who – who were they?
A Michelle LEWIS was the sort of diary manager, a close confidant of Linda's.
- Q183.** Mm-hmm.
A Um, Linda CROOK was another one. I can't remember the other two. And then often they have a budget where they can put the casual staff on as well. So, I don't recall if she had any casual staff. But they – they – they don't handle a lot of ministerial matters at all. They sort of handle the electorate work as a senator.
- Q184.** Mm-hmm.
A Um, so, the assistant adviser and adviser would, you know, do the liaising with departments and policy and ministerial work.
- Q185.** So, the day work at the minister's office up in Parliament House, well, or that was prior to Minister REYNOLDS moving into that?
A No, they work up in that office. If they needed to – if they came over for a sitting week from Perth, they would, they had a desk. But, um, I – I was actually the only one, when she was assistant in Home Affairs, we had a smaller office, we weren't in the blue carpet wing, we were on the red Senate wing.
- Q186.** Mm-hmm.
A I was the only staffer based in Canberra.
- Q187.** Right. So, in two thousand and nineteen in the day in question we're talking about, I'm just trying to clarify and trying to get the picture.

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A Yep.

Q188. Who was working in that office with you?

A Well, - - -

Q189. Leading up to like when - - -

A - - - well, it was just me.

Q190. So, you – it was only you that worked for Minister REYNOLDS?

A Yeah. We're still talking about the role as Assistant Home Affairs Minister?

Q191. Yeah. And this is in the two thousand and nineteen, in March, two thousand and nineteen.

A Before we moved to the – the new office in the ministerial wing, it was just me. Oh, sorry, we had a DLO, sorry, sorry. No, we had a DLO. Why that – why that didn't click for me is because the DLO is from the department, they're not officially on staff, they're just there to conduit between sending out submissions from the department, so.

Q192. Politics is very confusing isn't it?

A Yeah, sorry.

Q193. No, that's fine, take your time. I'm just trying to get an understanding of who was working in Minister REYNOLDS's office at that time in March, two thousand and nineteen.

A Yes, yeah, yes.

Q194. So, you were saying it was just, you, yourself?

A Yeah, and the DLO's.

Q195. And who is the DLO, can you recall?

A Ah, we had a few, Victoria someone.

Q196. Victoria.

A Victoria, ah, I – I can't remember, I can't recall names, I'm sorry, yeah, I - - -

Q197. No, that's okay, that's okay. So, there's yourself, there's the DLO, Victoria that work in the minister's office area in Parliament House?

A Mm-hmm, yep, yep.

Q198. When did and how did you get to know – know a Miss Brittany HIGGINS, when did she come in to work in that office?

A Well, when we moved offices to the Defence Industry portfolio. So, I moved – we moved out of the Senate wing.

Q199. Yes.

A Um, upon being promoted to Defence Industry Minister, we got a bigger suite. Cabinet – I don't think it was Cabinet rank at that time.

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- Q200.** Mm-hmm.
A But anyway we've moved to the ministerial wing, ah, which affords us a bigger room, more staff.
- Q201.** Right. And so, the ministerial wing - - -
A Mm-hmm.
- Q202.** - - - is the office that you went back to on the evening of the twenty - -
A That's correct.
- Q203.** Right. So, at that time there was yourself working there?
A Yes.
- Q204.** Brittany HIGGINS worked in that office?
A Yes.
- Q205.** Anyone else?
A Many, yep.
- Q206.** Many?
A Many.
- Q207.** Can you tell me who that is?
A Um, we had Fiona BROWN was the acting chief of staff, very new in the role, it was put to me by Linda that she was a close personal friend of the minister's.
- Q208.** Right. Yes.
A So, she was there. Um, we had Nikki HAYMER, who was – ah, she was based in Perth, but when we moved to Defence Industry, the minister made her come to Canberra quite often because it was a bigger role.
- Q209.** Yes, yes.
A Ah, we had – and I can't remember their names, but we inherited an older gentleman from Minister CIOBO's office as a policy adviser as well.
- Q210.** Mm-hmm.
A A younger gentleman who handled, um the F18 or F15 Air Force program. He was a policy adviser. Um, then we had – obviously, Brittany, I'm just going through the desks sort of around.
- Q211.** Yeah sure, yes.
A Um, and then we had the ADC, Nikita. We had a DLO from the Department of Defence.
- Q212.** Mm-hmm.
A We had a black haired girl who was new, she – she had briefly joined me in Assistant Home Affairs, because we still had Emergency Management as well.

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Q213. Yes.

A We'd been afforded a Home Affairs DLO.

Q214. Yes.

A So, that girl was there. Michelle LEWIS would often come over from Perth, she would sit in Fiona BROWN's office. Ben CARLSON, he was seconded up from the Department of Defence, he was in the media office which joined the minister's suite. I think that's to the best of my recollection.

Q215. So, how long had Miss HIGGINS been working in that office prior to the night of the – of the twenty-third, it was the twenty-third?

A Oh, a couple of weeks.

Q216. So, she'd only been there a couple of weeks?

A Yeah, I can't – I don't have those, I was no longer in charge of staff anymore, so, I didn't have those details, so. Um, but – but, you know, because we inherited the CIOBO staff, they all sort of – the ones that stayed were only there for a couple of weeks, so, when we set up the office and what the hell's this portfolio all about, so.

Yep. Right.

FRIZZELL:

Q217. It was fairly new for everyone?

A And very much so. The only two, - the only two people that were still – that stayed were myself and Jesse WATT, who was the assistant advisor within that Home Affairs area.

BOORMAN:

Q218. Right. It's just that I'm trying to get a picture of who – who worked in that area.

A Yeah, yeah.

Q219. Because what I'm – I'm getting at there, in relation to who worked there, is where – where the layout of the office, where people sat, who interacted with who and those sort of things.

A Mm-hmm.

Q220. And can you draw me a sort of a bit of mud map in relation to whose desk was where and the layout of the office from the entry?

A Sure. So, suppose I'm going through an entry.

Q221. Yep.

A These are the, um, double doors what you say.

Q222. Mm-hmm.

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A Um, so, you go in past – ah, reception is sort of here, you've got a hallway here. Chief of Staff's office is here, and I'll just put, "Chief of Staff."

Q223. Yeah.

A Reception.

Q224. Yep. Is that like a desk into the hallway?

A Yeah, this is just a desk. It's not – it's not obvious.

Q225. Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

A Um, hallway behind reception. Chief of Staff and then the doors to the minister's office from here.

Q226. Right.

A And then there was a sort of large sort of square here, they've got flags in the hallway here.

Q227. Yep. Mm-hmm.

A The minister's office.

Q228. Yes.

A Windows out into the PM's courtyard. She had a door here.

Q229. Mm-hmm.

A This walks through to the media, or we use it as a media office.

Q230. Mm-hmm.

A Um, hallway, um, back around here. So, then we would have all desks along here, so these are all desks. So, we'd probably have one, two, three along here.

Q231. Yes.

A Then we had more media desks – there was a hallway through here, another row of desks here.

Q232. Yes.

A Um, the secure room was somewhere over here, a secure room.

Q233. Mm-hmm.

A DLO's were the next to the secure room. I'll put, "DLO." The kitchenette was sort of in here.

Q234. Mm-hmm.

A And then around the corner was the spare fridge, oh, an extra fridge. The exit door was just the back entrance and my desk was sort of wedged in behind. So, but I liked it, because it was a big space that I could put all my folders that I was working on.

Q235. Mm-hmm. Oh, right, so, your desk was in here was it?

A Yeah, but at the back, behind there was – there was a high divider that divided all of these desks.

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- Q236. Right.
A And I was in behind here. And that was – that was the corner of the room as well, so I had the wall, the fridge and then the exit.
- Q237. Right. So, this is the front entry into the minister's sort of suite?
A Yep.
- Q238. And that's the minister's office there. And that's the only other exit out of the place is it?
A That's right.
- Q239. And your desk is sort of - - -
A That's a pin code, which at the time I – I can't tell you it now, but I knew that's what it was.
- Q240. Yeah, yeah, okay. All right. Thanks that's very helpful.
A Oh, I hope it is.

Yeah, that's very helpful.

FRIZZELL:

- Q241. Do you mind just writing what the things were?
A Oh, yeah. "Front door, front door." So, in here, these – some may – we had – so, Brittany's desk was here somewhere I believe, so, I think it was here, I didn't pay too much attention because I was leaving Parliament. Um, and then we had a spare desk here, this is spare for like when we had – if we had electorate officer visit from Perth, they'd sit there. And another spare one here for the same reason, we'd have – we'd have a visiting – either a policy, defence. I believe most of those gentleman were seconded from the Department of Defence.
- Q242. Okay.
A Because they had specialist policy knowledge, yeah.

BOORMAN:

- Q243. Yeah. And so, you said you were leaving Parliament in a couple of weeks were you, you were leaving?
A Yeah, my – my, um, and I don't have any records of it, but my, um, my recollection is that a week or more prior to these alleged events.
- Q244. Mm-hmm.
A Which in my view didn't happen at all of course.
- Q245. Mm-hmm.
A We – ah, I had a discussion with Fiona BROWN, the chief of staff.
- Q246. Mm-hmm.

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A Um, because when a – when a new portfolio happens all the staff are fired essentially.

Q247. Yep.

A Then you know, the minister makes a determination whether to keep you on.

Q248. Mm-hmm.

A Now, I was offered to a position to stay on but I had indicated then to Fiona BROWN that I was actually looking at, um, jobs in Sydney, because my girlfriend was to taking a role in the New South Wales Parliament here.

Q249. Mm-hmm.

A And that's what I was doing. And I indicated to her that I would be leaving Parliament and, um, she came back to me the next day and said, um, that, um, she pulled aside in the hallway, I think near reception there.

Q250. Yep.

A And said, um, you know, the minister wanted to thank me for the service briefs and that we would be offering your position to someone else. And I thought fine, whatever.

Q251. Mm-hmm.

A You know, it'd be great – you know we had the nice ease of I'll stay on until you find someone and I'll help you, yeah, prepare the minister or whatever.

Q252. So, you were – you were, your intention was to leave in a couple of weeks?

A Yeah, a couple of weeks. We didn't – we didn't settle on the date, I just said, when you find that person, I'll do a handover with the person, I'll, um, I understood the gravity of my role in terms of, you know, um, if you can imagine politicians, fair enough to care enough about their public image, so, um, it was her first Question Time and she wanted to be fully prepared with answers to questions, so that's yeah.

Q253. All right. That's very helpful to me because that explains so, you know, who's in the office, who works there and the layout of that, so that just clarifies that for me. Sorry if that - - -

A No, no, that's okay, yep.

Q254. - - - I think it was good to get an appreciation of that role you do there.

A Mm-hmm.

Q255. And if I just recap all of that. You've explained that there's a number – a number of staff that work there, who was there at the time and that Miss Brittany HIGGINS had only been there for a couple of weeks. Is that correct?

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A Yeah, yeah. No, all the CIOBO staff had only been there for a very short period of time, we didn't know them very well, and just heard of them, so when they were joining.

Q256. That's all right. It just helps me clarify things with everyone there. So, if we go back to Friday, the twenty-second of March, two thousand and nineteen at The Dock.

A Mm-hmm.

Q257. And I'll go back to my original question that I asked is how – how did you come to be there, and you said you cannot recall who organised it or anything like that.

A Yeah, yeah, I can't recall. I was, um, with the ADC Nikita, you know, I was, um, I did work with her a little bit in the short period because she would obviously may travel with the minister.

Q258. Mm-hmm.

A Um, it might have been the case that she mentioned it. I – I recall knowing that the Defence Department were putting on something.

Q259. All right.

A Yeah, I can't be sure on that, I'm not a hundred per cent.

Q260. Yeah, no, that's okay. If you're not sure don't speculate.

A Yeah, yeah.

Q261. So, you said you went out with Austin is it to the Kingston Hotel that evening before going to The Dock?

A Mm-hmm.

Q262. What time was that can you recall?

A Um, no, and I don't want to – I don't want to speculate and just guess.

Q263. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

A Often after work we'd pop down six o'clock usually leave, have a beer and a steak.

Q264. Right. Yep, yep.

A I mean looking at what I spent, I only think I bought a beer, but we went there, so.

Q265. Yeah. So, you're not sure what time you got to the Kingo?

A Yeah.

Q266. Like you've just said then normally that it's six o'clock or you go to the steak and a beer?

A Yeah, it's after – we'd often leave, whoever was still at the building and, you know.

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- Q267. So, you just said you went there, you had a steak or a beer or whatever. Do you recall what time you would have left there or how did you – and, you know, get to The Dock?
A I walked.
- Q268. Right.
A Ah, we walked because it was close.
- Q269. Yep.
A Um, I don't recall the time though.
- Q270. Right. So, you walked to The Dock from the Kingston Hotel.
A Mm-hmm.
- Q271. Was there communication, that you can recall, between yourself or anyone else while you were at the Kingston Hotel before you got to The Dock?
A Between - - -
- Q272. Did anyone – and I don't want to suggest things, but you know, was there a message from someone, "Oh, come back to The Dock, it's happening," or you know?
A Mm-hmm, possibly, oh - - -
- Q273. If you can't recall, that's all right, I'm working here, you know.
A - - - and I can't recall I'm sorry. All I can say is on past events, the things about how it was – how invariably it happened was, you know, "We're at this event come and join us," you know. So, but on this particular night, I just can't remember.
- Q274. Yeah, no, that's okay. So, you're saying past event, is it normal behaviour, like people that obviously work in Parliament House, people that work together they attend the events and all that sort of thing?
A Oh, yes, all the time.
- Q275. Yep.
A Yeah, all the time, particularly during sitting weeks.
- Q276. Yep.
A Um, all the time, yep.
- Q277. So, you walked from the Kingston Hotel down to The Dock with Austin is it?
A Yeah.
- Q278. And Austin, what's Austin's surname?
A Ah, WENKE, WENKE.
- Q279. WENKE?
A Yeah, W-E-N-K-E.

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- Q280.** All right. And what does Austin do for instance?
A Ah, he's Minister DUTTON's media adviser. But at the time he was and I believe he still is now.
- Q281.** Okay. So, you arrived at The Dock and the The Dock we're referring to is – what sort of place is that, where's that?
A Just the foreshore bar on the Kingston Foreshore.
- Q282.** All right. In the ACT?
A Oh, yes, sorry, yeah, yeah.
- Q283.** Yes. All right. Who was there when you got there, can you recall?
A Oh, lots of people.
- Q284.** Yes.
A We had – well, when I say, “we,” the event had the front tables, um, which is an outside area, when you enter the bar but they have front bit, it was, um, I don't know, I remember seeing Nikita, of course, because, um, I sort of – I knew her a little bit better than the others in the office at the time. Brittany was there.
- Q285.** Yep.
A I was introduced to Lauren, I don't want to speculate, but I think Brittany introduced us to Lauren as a friend of hers. Um, and then we were introduced to ADC and this minister, that minister, Governor-General and the roles they performed for their various bosses. I – I can't recall the type of like why the Department of Defence, like those officials, why they were there.
- Q286.** Okay. Is it common for Defence people to be at these events or?
A Well, my recollection was that it was – that was a Defence event.
- Q287.** Ah, right.
A That there, because there was – well, when I arrived I assumed that it was such a more of a Department of Defence, like this is one of their shindigs.
- Q288.** Yep.
A We're the new minister in the portfolio and I sort of got it, I thought, okay, well, we're just being nice to them basically.
- Q289.** Yeah.
A But I would invite Minister REYNOLDS, whoever wanted to come. Austin, Austin was a mate of mine, I was going to hanging out with him anyway. I can't recall but I probably just dragged him along and, you know.
- Q290.** Yep. Was there – was there anyone there that didn't fit into that sort of crowd that you didn't know?
A Mm-hmm, I mean I – like I want to say, you know, some of the Intel people that I met, but - - -

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- Q291.** Yeah. No, what I suppose, I'll rephrase that question because it is a public place in a bar, there's probably a lot of people you wouldn't know there. So, I'm not asking you for your recount of everyone that was there, everyone that was there.
- A** Yeah, everyone, not off the top of my head, yeah.
- Q292.** What I'm saying out of the – you know, you've got the Department of Defence crowd, you've got the minister's office crowd.
- A** Yeah.
- Q293.** Was there anyone that was sort of mingling with people or engaging that wasn't with that sort of crowd, that you can recall?
- A** Not that I can recall. Not that I recall. As you said it was a public bar, so, I don't – I'm not some sort of weirdo that scans the whole, you know, area, I don't do that.
- Q294.** Yeah. So, when – when you got there, what did you do, what – what was the event sort of there, as in what did you do, did you have a drink?
- A** Oh, yeah. Yeah, I would have had a drink absolutely, um, and – and mingled and spoke to everybody. Um, I certainly got introduced. I was often – I can't remember who, but a lot of the ADC's were wanting to introduce themselves to myself and Austin.
- Q295.** Mm-hmm. Why is that?
- A** I don't know.
- Q296.** Because you worked in the minister's office probably?
- A** Oh, yes, that – that – that to them was probably, yes, they had – they had ministerial staff there and they were sort of – like they were able to go and have a chat to them, yeah.
- Q297.** Is that how it sort of works in the political world?
- A** Yeah, there's – there's a – there's a, um, there's a divide I suppose between public service and, you know, political ministerial staff, yeah.
- Q298.** Now, when you – when you arrived there was Miss Brittany HIGGINS there on your arrival?
- A** So, on my recollection she was, yeah.
- Q299.** But you're not a hundred per cent sure?
- A** I'm not a hundred per cent sure.
- Q300.** At any time at The Dock did you engage with Miss Brittany HIGGINS?
- A** I would have, yes, yep, she was a colleague of mine, yeah, yeah.
- Q301.** Okay. And I know it's taking you back, it's a couple of years now, but you could comment on the level of drinking that was going on at this event or who got - - -
- A** Nothing out of the ordinary, um, nothing out of the ordinary.

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- Q302.** When you say, “ordinary,” what sort of events are these when you say, “ordinary,” when it comes to buying alcohol and consuming?
A Well, sure, okay. Well, um, um, often on a sitting week we had a social event at Parliament House, um, they would get quite rowdy.
- Q303.** Mm-hmm.
A And we’d often end up back invariably with your minister in the office drinking more. Um, because this was a – an outside event where there was clearly Department of Defence people and I was new to the portfolio, you know, I was – I treated it differently to what I would have with closer colleagues in an event in Parliament House.
- Q304.** Okay. I understand.
A Yeah.
- Q305.** So, how many drinks do you recall buying at The Dock or were you in a shout, what was going on there?
A I was probably in a shout, um, I – I only recall buying a couple of rounds. I – I can’t – I can’t be sure, I can’t be sure, but I wasn’t – yeah, I can’t be sure, but yeah.
- Q306.** Was it a good evening?
A Very good, yep. I met – met a lot of good people, yeah.
- Q307.** Was there any instance there that you can recall that stand out?
A No, no. Oh, it was – it was a really good event for, um, you know, um, staff to get to know each other, understand our roles with the Department of Defence people who were there, particularly ADCs. I personally also didn’t know very much about what ADCs did. So, I found it quite useful, yeah.
- Q308.** Is there anything else that you can tell me that you think would be helpful for me during this investigation of any activities at The Dock on that evening?
A Um, no. We were just standing out the front there, yeah. Yeah, I was obviously – you - you sort of phrased the question like that.
- Q309.** It’s not – no, I’m not trying to trick you with a question.
A Oh, okay.
- Q310.** I’m just asking is there anything you could - - -
A Oh, because I’m sort of thinking, I’m going, no, we were just all standing there. (laughs)
- Q311.** Yeah. So, it was just a normal sort of - - -
A Yeah, a social event, yeah.
- Q312.** All right. What was everybody wearing can you recall, what were you wearing on that evening, do you recall?
A I wasn’t in a suit, because it was a Friday, I don’t tend to wear a suit on a Friday.

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Q313. Yeah.
A I don't – I can't recall what – I'm assuming you guys know, but you know, I can't recall, no.

Q314. Yeah. All right. Do you recall what Miss HIGGINS was wearing on that evening?
A No, no. I – I don't but obviously there's been a lot of media on this, so, you know, there's that but from my perspective, I don't recall, yeah.

Okay. That's fine. Is there anything you want to ask in relation to The Dock at this point?

FRIZZELL:

Q315. Yeah, just a couple of questions. You said that you went there from work.
A Mm-hmm.

Q316. Can you tell me more about that?
A Well, we went from work to the Kingston Hotel and then onwards to The Dock, um, yeah, so, that's - - -

Q317. What did you take with you? Who did you go with leaving work?
A Austin.

Q318. Mm-hmm.
A Yeah.

Q319. And what did you take with you or what did you leave at work?
A Um, well, I – well, I can't recall. If you're suggesting I had my briefcase? But I can't recall that. I mean I had to go back to Parliament to get my keys anyway, so, they weren't in my – yeah, so, yeah.

Q320. So, I guess, is – is that normal practice. Can you tell me more about that?
A Normal practice?

Q321. You've left your keys at work. So, you have said earlier when you were talking about your keys.
A Oh, yeah, yeah, it is.

Q322. So, sometimes you'd leave them there and then before ten o'clock you'd go back and pick them up?
A Yep. And that could be because, you know, I would often just leave them on my desk, because, um, I wouldn't have a lot of things in my pockets or anything like that. My briefcase would be shoved under my desk somewhere, so, um, you know, it's – it was often that I've forgot things, forgot laptops, forgot whatever, yeah.

BOORMAN:

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Q323. Mm-hmm. What about – sorry, like phones or anything like that, do you carry your mobile phone?

A Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Q324. Did you carry that with you all the time?

A All the time, yeah.

Q325. And the number of that mobile phone is or was?

A Oh, you're talking about my ministerial one?

Q326. No, your personal one.

A Oh, O four two eight one six eight nine.

Q327. And what sort of phone is that?

A An iPhone.

Q328. Right. Do you carry any other phones with you?

A No.

Q329. Or would you have done?

A Oh, I would have, my ministerial one, yeah, which was also an iPhone, but I – I can't remember the number of that because it's - - - .

No, that's all right. Sorry, go on.

FRIZZELL:

Q330. No, that's all right. Now, you mentioned that you were probably in a shout, but you're not quite sure, but you're also presented some bank records before.

A Yes.

Q331. Do you have them for The Dock?

A I do for that night, yep.

Q332. Yep.

A But honestly, I'm sorry.

You can obviously - - -

BOORMAN:

Q333. Yeah, if it's going to refresh your memory, that's great.

A So, yeah, sorry.

FRIZZELL:

Q334. That's all right.

A So, I had two – two accounts in my name, um, or the two accounts that I have a card, a credit card. So, this is the more relevant one, um, like this is my spending account I believe.

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BOORMAN:

- Q335.** Mm-hmm.
A So, the twenty-second, um, so there was some Ubers on that day, which, um, my recollection I often took Ubers to work in the morning.
- Q336.** Right.
A Um, so, then there's The Dock's, sixteen dollars.
- Q337.** Mm-hmm.
A There's the Kingston Hotel charge, um, it's twenty-four twenty.
- Q338.** Yep.
A Ah, and then there's the Eighty-eight Miles charge.
- Q339.** Mm-hmm.
A And then there's, ah, well, that's just for me getting groceries the next day.
- Q340.** Mm-hmm.
A Um, and then they're the two Ubers to Parliament. So to Parliament and then leaving.

Okay.

FRIZZELL:

- Q341.** All right. The first column is date?
A Yes.
- Q342.** The second column is what expenses you've incurred?
A Yeah, the charge.
- Q343.** The charge for – okay.
A Now I've got these in PDF as well. I – I just – because I'm here in Sydney, I don't have my laptop with me. So – so this one here, I don't think any charge is relevant to the allegation, um, so there's just nine charges, when I go to Aussies to get my coffee, my lunch at the cafeteria. The subsequent charges the following Monday.

BOORMAN:

- Q344.** Yeah, these ones?
A They're the following Monday.
- Q345.** Oh, right. So, you're back to the Kingston Hotel on Monday?
A Yep, Monday night, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Right.

FRIZZELL:

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Q346. Do you – so, these Ubers ones?

A Mm-hmm.

Q347. Do you still have the trip records?

A I do, um, they're obtainable, I haven't got them here.

BOORMAN:

Q348. Mm-hmm.

A But I've certainly got them, yeah. Well, I've got the – sorry, I don't have – well, I can go – I can go back, it's a bit of thing, but I've got – the only ones I have readily available is these ones relating to if I'm going from Eighty-eight Miles Per Hour to Parliament and then me if I went to home. Yeah.

Mm-hmm.

FRIZZELL:

Q349. Are we able to keep these?

A Oh, yes, they're for you, yeah.

BOORMAN:

Q350. Do you want to sign them for us?

A Oh, yeah, sorry, yep. Do you need the date on them?

Yeah. You may as well date them.

FRIZZELL:

Q351. Nineteenth of the fourth, write in here, twenty-one, the date.

A Yeah, the year.

BOORMAN:

Q352. Thanks for that.

A That's okay.

FRIZZELL:

Q353. And then from – so, you had mentioned earlier that you were leaving, you'd had a discussion with Fiona.

A Oh, leaving, sorry, Parliament?

Q354. Yeah, yeah.

A Not the bar, sorry.

Q355. Yeah, sorry. Who knew about it?

A Well, I mean, who didn't know (laughs). Um, former staff here had left Steven CIOBO's office. Carly ABBOTT, for example, she was – I

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was close to her. Um, I had discussions with her. Daniel WARD who was, um, the senior legal officer for the Prime Minister, I'm assuming he's been across all of this.

Q356. Mm-hmm.

A Um, ah, Michelle LEWIS would have known. Um, I'm just trying to think who else – I'm just trying to think of confidants I have discussed it with. Paul O'SULLIVAN, who's a close confidant of mine, the former Director-General of ASIO. Um, so, these people, Taylor ROBERTSON, who was a – ended up being a reference for my jobs outside of Parliament and politics. Um, so these are people I've discussed – Alex, Alex my girlfriend, obviously because she was in a good job, so um.

Q357. What about the people in your office?

A Ah, who? Ah, Jesse WATT it would have been, would have been aware. Oh, not many, we were quite close. Um, um, I'm just trying to think who else, Michelle LEWIS, she was there she would have known. Fiona BROWN was – my interactions with Fiona, they were a formal sort of thing, because I didn't know her very well. And I think the DLO, I just can't remember her name, she had black hair, from Home Affairs, the DLO she would have known I was quite close to her. Yeah, that's – that's as much as I can recall.

Q358. What about Brittany?

A Um, possibly. Yeah, but I mean people talk, you know, I mean this – it got around certainly.

BOORMAN:

Q359. Yeah, I was just going to ask you that. Is – you know, if you know things in-confidence, there's a common within Parliamentary staffing, is there one person - - -

A Oh, yeah, because they would have been angling for my job there.

Q360. Right.

A Absolutely, so, particularly if they were genuine and they saw an opening, because my position as adviser might have been used for policy but it was up to the chief of staff and minister how they utilised it. So, it could have been – I mean you could be in – it's quite often that, um, people are employed as an adviser, but not for that amount of money, but just a receptionist.

Q361. Mm-hmm.

A So, and that – that's reasons for that, um, but that's – they can use that role for however they want.

Q362. Is it pretty ruthless you would say?

A Very, um, that's – that's the basis for me wanting to get out, um, was that I'd had a gut full. Probably soon after TURNBULL was ousted, I – my mind started to working out a transition out. And at that point I was with Bridget MCKENZIE and – and I mean, you know, I don't

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want to use it as a therapy session but minister's treat their staff in a way that's not the same I've seen since leaving politics.

Q363. Mm-hmm.

A It's very mentally scarring.

Q364. Mm-hmm.

A Um, Bridget MCKENZIE was one minister who was notorious for treating her staff poorly and me included on a very personal level.

Q365. Mm-hmm.

A And – and I just formed a view that the culture of that place, I know there's been a lot of discussion about the treatment of women, but irrespective of that, I think that broadly the culture was horrendous. Um, I was not a member of a political party. I, of course, supported one side, but I was there to do my policy work, I was studying, but most of the time I was working as well. And – and I was there to, you know, receive advice from departments and put out good policy.

Q366. Mm-hmm.

A Not to sort of stuff around and use it for political – a lot of people would use it for party political, um, things, you know, so that part of it, I didn't like that and I – I'd just had enough, I'd done it long enough. I'd worked fourteen, fifteen hours days long enough and yeah.

Mm-hmm.

FRIZZELL:

Q367. What was the interaction like in your area, with the new group of people?

A They were, um, tense, because you had – essentially had new staff, you had the old REYNOLDS staff, we were a small office joined in taking these other staff from CIOBO's office, and we didn't know anything about them.

Q368. Mm-hmm.

A Um, and Fiona BROWN, um, came on board as the minister's friend and acted as the chief of staff.

Q369. Mm-hmm.

A Um, and she sort of – as was her right, started setting up the office, making decisions.

Q370. Yep.

A Um, so, it was – it was – there was – it was tense, you know bringing two offices that didn't know each other together. Who's doing what, who's responsible for what in those initial few days, um, yeah. But we – we eventually got to a point where it was workable, don't – don't get me wrong, you know.

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BOORMAN:

Any further questions about The Dock?

FRIZZELL:

No.

BOORMAN:

Q371. So, based on your bank statements you've shown that you were spending at The Dock on that evening was - - -
A Sixteen dollars.

Q372. - - - sixteen dollars. And you stated that you believed you were in a shout or you can't recall, you can't be certain?
A I can't be certain. It's - it's common that I would have been, but - but at the same time I treated this event very differently to just - just a staff one going to the Kingo for a drink. And because I was - there was the public service, so, we operated a little bit differently, yeah.

Q373. And when you were at The Dock, just before you left, what do you believe your intoxication level was?
A Oh, moderate level. I suggested let's go to Eighty-eight Miles Per Hour. We got let into Eighty-eight Miles Per Hour as well. So, no, I was - I was okay.

Q374. Yeah. All right. So, can you tell me about how and how you ended up getting to Eighty-eight Miles Per Hour from The Dock, how did that - what eventuated there?
A Ah, well, it would - it would have been an Uber.

Q375. Yeah.
A Um, I don't - I don't have a record of doing that Uber.

Q376. Mm-hmm.
A So, but yeah, my recollection is that it would have been an Uber because there's not a lot of taxis around the Kingston Foreshore.

Q377. Yeah. What time of night was this?
A Probably when The Dock, The Dock closes - closes rather early, it would have been close - close to midnight. Like you sort of then head to the city if you want to keep going because all of those bars close, because there's residences there obviously, so.

Q378. Yeah. Okay. Can you - can you explain, who went to Eighty-eight, how did the arrangement, who made those arrangements and who was involved?
A I - I can't recall, all I remember is I suggested Eighty-eight, that was one of my favourite places.

Q379. Mm-hmm.

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A Um, so, I can't recall – I don't believe it being a formal, ah, formal sort of set-up sort of thing, it was sort of an open – this is where we're going.

Q380. Mm-hmm.

A Um, who to join a sort of situation, yep.

Q381. Yeah. And who did join you?

A Well, from my recollection it was Brittany, Austin, um, and Lauren, because he was – he was rather close to this Lauren girl.

Q382. So, just the four of you?

A To the best of my recollection, yeah.

Q383. Yeah. No, that's okay, only what you remember, yeah.

A Yeah. It was a long time ago (laughs).

Q384. So, let's recap there. You're saying that you left The Dock, you think you took an Uber but you've got no records of paying for that. And you went with Brittany, Austin and Lauren?

A Mm-hmm.

Q385. Right. Austin WENKE, Lauren, what's Lauren's surname?

A I – I just remember it starting with "G."

Q386. Right. Do you know – what did she look like?

A Mm-hmm, blonde. I'm friends with her on Facebook.

Q387. Ah - - -

A I don't talk to her, we're just friends, like we added out of each other, I just – yeah, post meeting each other, yeah. I'm sorry, I can't even recall her last name, sorry.

Q388. No, no, that's okay, that's okay. So, when you arrived at Eighty-eight, what happened then?

A Well, we went in and had a boogie. I really like it there, so, it's good music, so. Um, um, I – my bank records – and you know, I – I don't – I wasn't intoxicated to a – I mean they have very good security on the door there, there's often a line that they're observing before you go in. Um, and, um, I didn't even think we were in rounds per se, because I don't recall going up to the bar often and then coming back with drinks.

Q389. Can you recall how many drinks you may have had at Eighty-eight?

A Oh, no, no.

Q390. So, you said - - -

A They would have – they would be stronger drinks than what I was having, so, you know, I was having beers before, but we probably would have gone for something like vodka or something, yeah, yeah.

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- Q391. All right. So, that's beers before at The Dock, is that what you were drinking at The Dock?
A Yep, yep.
- Q392. And at Eighty-eight?
A I – I can't be sure, but I know when I go there, there's not – you don't have a beer at an Eighties club.
- Q393. Mm-hmm. What would you normally have?
A Well, some - they have vodka in plastic cups so you can sort of drink a bit quicker and get to the dance floor. (laughs)
- Q394. Ah, right, right. Okay.
A Yeah. Because it's not – it's a very loud, on place where you can sort of sit and have a chat, it's loud.
- Q395. Right, right. So, you – you've arrived at The Dock, you're there with Brittany, Austin and Lauren?
A At Eighty-eight.
- Q396. At Eighty-eight, sorry, I apologise.
A No, it's all right.
- Q397. At Eighty-eight, you believe that you said you think you left The Dock at closing time about midnight, so you can't be sure exactly what time we're talking about here?
A I can't be sure exactly, no. Yeah.
- Q398. How long were there for?
A Oh, a few – a few hours, it was lengthy, we were having – I was meeting – the problem the thing – well, it's not a problem, but the good thing was it would have ended on a meeting was a good thing. Um, so that was, you know, and having good discussions.
- Q399. All right. So, was it just the four of you from The Dock that ended up there or other people as well?
A Oh, the best I can recall it was the four of us.
- Q400. Right. Okay.
A Yeah.
- Q401. And you said before you were there for a couple of hours. In that couple of hours what were you doing?
A Dancing, the four of us would have been dancing, yeah. We were at – you know, we would have got to know each other as I said beforehand.
- Q402. Yep. What was – you know other peoples' level of intoxication at that time?
A Similar to me, I mean I didn't observe, um, people to be so drunk that, you know, the night was over, they couldn't function, they couldn't talk to each other.

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- Q403.** Mm-hmm. Yep.
A Um, certainly when police or security did their walk throughs of the club, they didn't determine that. They were kicking other people out of course.
- Q404.** Mm-hmm. What was the mood between - - -
A Very good.
- Q405.** - - - yourself, Brittany, Lauren and Austin?
A The group was joyous, happy, um, you know, excited to be coming into the new portfolio, even, um, um, yeah, and forming that link. I mean Lauren's sort of set herself up, set herself up, having been so tied into the Chief of Navy I suppose. It was someone who I think Brittany saw as, um, a helpful contact in terms of a media perspective, because that – as I understood it, Brittany was taking on media work, so, um, that was obviously a useful contact as well.
- Q406.** Mm-hmm. What – what time did you decide to leave, how did leaving come about, when was that?
A Oh, well after midnight. I can't – I can't give you a specific time but it was well after midnight. Because I often look at my clock and, you know, my watch and – and I would have done the same just like, okay, I've got to wrap it now.
- Q407.** Mm-hmm.
A Felt my pockets and think, you know, what do I need to get, so.
- Q408.** Mm-hmm. So, you said you were dancing, I take it that you were having drinks but you can't recall how many. And Brittany was dancing and drinking also?
A Yeah, yeah, I don't – I don't recall her being on the dance floor though.
- Q409.** Right.
A I – I was always on the dance floor.
- Q410.** Yeah.
A Because I like that bar.
- Q411.** Yeah.
A Um, but look, you know, that's being here nor there, we were having a good time, we were all happy and – and I didn't observe any of us being, um, so, grossly intoxicated that we were not functioning or anything, so.
- Q412.** Mm-hmm. Yeah. You mentioned earlier that you said when you went to Eighty-eight you were in a booth, is that like a - - -
A Yeah, when – when you go in there's – it's not a round, but it's sort of more of a rectangle one. You invariably do share it with other members of the public, um, because you're just looking for table space, um, yeah.

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- Q413. Mm-hmm. So, you recall being in a booth or you don't?
A I can't be sure.
- Q414. Okay.
A But I'm confident, I'm relatively confident we would have got a table somewhere, um, yeah.
- Q415. Okay. And, you know, when it was time you decided to leave, you said that – you noticed it's time to go, you've had enough and all that sort of thing.
A Mm-hmm.
- Q416. Was there any communication between anyone, did you communicate with anyone that you were leaving?
A Yeah, the – the people, yeah. It definitely would have been Austin.
- Q417. Yeah.
A And I recall definitely telling Brittany.
- Q418. Mm-hmm.
A Ah, and Lauren as well. I mean I – once we sort of entered, that that was the group, and I was leaving, I didn't want to just not just go.
- Q419. Yeah, yeah.
A I sort of just gave them my attention that I was heading to Parliament and I had to go and get a few things, I'm heading home.
- Q420. Did they stay there or did they all – did they leave as well?
A Well, obviously Brittany came with me to the Parliament.
- Q421. Yeah.
A Um, I – I don't remember. On subsequent days I've – I've – it was so long ago that I think Austin and Lauren ended up getting together.
- Q422. Mm-hmm.
A I – I believe.
- Q423. Mm-hmm.
A Um, yeah, I think he made that known to me.
- Q424. Mm-hmm.
A Um, yeah.
- Q425. So, you mentioned before that Brittany left with you.
A Mm-hmm.
- Q426. And this is in your first account of events, Brittany left with you and you said, "you were going back to Parliament House." Is that correct?
A Mm-hmm.

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- Q427. What can you recall the conversation with Brittany in relation to this?
A Well, not – well, but not word for word. And I don't – I don't recall it being one on one.
- Q428. Right.
A Um, and her – she just then indicated that she also had to pop back there.
- Q429. Right.
A Um, and then I said, "Well, I'm getting Uber did you want to share an Uber?"
- Q430. Mm-hmm.
A And that made sense, if that's what she was meant to do.
- Q431. Yeah.
A And I – and then I indicated that once I've picked up, gone to Parliament, I'm probably going back home.
- Q432. Mm-hmm. So, when you – when you left Eighty-eight, you left with Brittany?
A Mm-hmm.
- Q433. Right. Can you describe Eighty-eight, you know, how you left it and - - - ?
A Yep. Um, you come up the stairs out of – from the underground bar.
- Q434. Mm-hmm.
A There's a – there's a cab rank, but you sort of stand there on the pavement waiting for the Ubers.
- Q435. Yep.
A Who came – you know, maybe do a Uey into Hobart Place and then back over the Commonwealth Bridge and then, yeah.
- Q436. Yeah. So, you ordered the Uber. Is that correct?
A Yep, yep.
- Q437. All right. And that and you've got a record of that in your - - - ?
A I'll be able to get that to you, yep.
- Q438. Yeah, yeah. And you and Brittany got into the Uber and you proceeded to Parliament House?
A Yep. And was pushed together that where we were going, yeah.
- Q439. Yeah. Right. Can you recall what time that was?
A Going and get in the Uber actually, or getting in - - -
- Q440. Well, when you left – when you left Eighty-eight and went to Parliament House, roughly what time that was?
A We left Eighty-eight at about one – one thirty.

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- Q441.** Mm-hmm.
A I mean it was between one fifteen and one forty-five that we would have left, you know, it was decided we were going. I ordered the Uber and then it go to Parliament about a quarter to two.
- Q442.** Mm-hmm.
A Um, and then, um, I ordered the Uber at about, from my desk in Parliament at about, oh, two twenty, two twenty-five and waited for the Uber. And it sort of arrived at about two thirty.
- Q443.** And what was your level of intoxication when you would have left Eighty-eight?
A Ah, again, moderate. I – I recall things clearly, I mean I don't – yeah, and I certainly recall fixing up the Question Time folders properly and Monday they were all fine. And, you know, um, I recall – and to enable me to do that, I recall conversations from earlier in the evening to do that.
- Q444.** Mm-hmm.
A So, I wasn't in a state that I was not able to function.
- Q445.** On a scale of one to ten?
A Probably a seven.
- Q446.** What about Brittany?
A Probably the same.
- Q447.** Mm-hmm.
A And I – I had no reason, from observations, I had no reason to believe she was any more or any worse than that, any worse than everybody else.
- Q448.** Right. Yeah, so everybody was a similar sort of behaviour and - - -
A Unless she was – she – I mean I can't account for her and (indistinct) so, you know.

Yeah, yeah. All right. Have you got anything else about Eighty-eight?

FRIZZELL:

- Q449.** Yeah, I do. You said they went in and you had a boogie because you always like to go there.
- Q450.** Ah, who else had a dance with you?
A I can't remember. I – I don't think I – I'm assuming we all did.
- Q451.** Yeah.
A Yeah, I just don't remember.
- Q452.** And what were the interactions between all of you like, what do you recall?

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A Oh, they would have been – they would have been close, not in a – not in a romantic or intimate way, but just because we'd known each other from the night, um, and went out in public, we don't know anybody else, um, so, that was yeah.

Q453. You said that Austin and Lauren were involved together?
A Yeah, I – I recall him telling me that days after, that he did, um, yeah. They were quite close that night.

Q454. How – how close would you say?
A Oh, at The Dock and stuff they were quite close, just sort of touching and things like that and yeah.

Q455. Can you tell more about that?
A Well, just sort of with hands and, you know, her and him were – I think she was recently divorced, I think she sort of told us all her story about that. So, and they were quite close at Eighty-eight as well I recall, so yeah, just mainly touching. I – I didn't observe any kissing or anything at that point, so.

Q456. Was there anything like that anywhere?
A Um, I can't recall, yeah. I can't remember. They were close, they were very close, they were very close.

Q457. What about your interactions with Brittany?
A Ah, close, yeah, close. Um, I – because we were – we were sort in front of The Dock, the only ones sort of left, I – you know, we – we all took it upon ourselves to look after each other.

BOORMAN:

Q458. Mm-hmm.
A So, that was that, that was the basis of that, yep.

Mm-hmm.

FRIZZELL:

Q459. So, Austin and Lauren were handy and close. Were you and Brittany were close?
A Yeah, yeah, we would have – oh, not in a – I don't think I would have done anything, um, out of the ordinary from what I normally would do with other, um, girls who are friends when we go out. In terms of, you know, moving them away from a person that might be coming to dance with them or just, you know, watching out for them. Or opening a door or whatever for them. Um, you know, it was quite friendly. Yeah, like I can't recall exact movements, um, but you know by that stage we were all close, yeah.

Q460. You said in terms of your intoxication levels you described yourself as being moderately intoxicated.
A Mm-hmm.

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Q461. And you rated that seven out of ten.

A Mm-hmm.

Q462. What would your one be, and what would your ten be?

A Well, one would be – one would be sober and ten would be, you know, in a cab straight home, um, you know, knock on the door and get my girlfriend down to open up the door. I – I think the fact that I was, um, holding conversations throughout the night very well, um, and able to understand the work that I needed to just get together, um, that – I mean that's sort of a hard question to sort of say, I mean, it's – it's also two years ago, so.

Q463. Sorry. You also mentioned that you ordered an Uber, we've spoken about Ubers a fair bit.

A Mm-hmm.

Q464. Can you tell me a little bit about how you go about ordering an Uber, how long it takes, what information you put into the order?

A Oh, sure. So, um, I just go on the app and it provides my location. I confirm the location. Usually Eighty-eight is eight to ten Hobart Place, just out the front there. And then I put in my location. And order and it arrives. Um, and I follow it on the app and all of that sort of stuff and check the number plate before we get in and those sorts of things, yeah.

Q465. But when you order an Uber and I don't know how, I'm one of the few who don't know how, I wonder if you could tell me how.

A (Indistinct) (Laughing).

Q466. You have the input where you are going to?

A Yep, yep, yep, so that's all before you order it, yep.

Q467. All right. So, you go into app on your phone that therefore you are ringing up. Is that what it is?

A Yeah, it picks up on – it uses the location services on your phone, you're given an approximate, but then you can amend that and just put in – I just confirm that it's, you know, eight to ten Hobart Place which is the car park out the front of Eighty-eight. Um, and then you put in your location.

Q468. Yep.

A It – it does help you with, ah, suggested location, so the ministerial entrance is one that Uber recognises, a lot of staff go there, and then you just – you put that and order an Uber.

Right. Okay.

BOORMAN:

Anything else?

ROI BETWEEN BOORMAN/LEHRMANN ... CONTINUED ... PAGE 44**FRIZZELL:**

No, I'm right.

BOORMAN:**Q469. Are you happy to continue or do you want to have a break?****A No, no.****FRIZZELL:****Q470. We've been going for an hour and a half.****A Oh, God, okay.**

What about bathroom break or?

BOORMAN:**Q471. Yeah, do you want to - - -****A I don't need to go, but I – yeah, I'm conscious of, you know, I'm not the only one in the room, so.**

Do you want to keep going at the moment or do you need a break, have to have a break?

FRIZZELL:

Yeah, let's take a minute to have a break.

BOORMAN:**Q472. Yeah, absolutely.****A Yeah, yep.****Q473. All right. Bruce, do you agree the time is now – what's it there, seven past five in the evening.****A Yep, it is.****Q474. Right. Record of interview between Bruce LEHRMANN.****A LEHRMANN.****LEHRMANN and Detective Inspector Marcus BOORMAN is suspended.****FRIZZELL:**

Yep.

ROI SUSPENDED AT FIVE ZERO SEVEN PM**ROI RESUMED AT FIVE FIFTEEN PM**

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BOORMAN:

Q475. **Recommencement of a taped record of interview between Detective Inspector Marcus BOORMAN and Mr Bruce LEHRMANN conducted at the AFP, Sydney Office, Goulburn Street, Sydney, New South Wales.**

A **Yes.**

Persons present are Senior Constable Emma FRIZZELL, can you state your name?

FRIZZELL:

Emma FRIZZELL, badge one two eight nine six.

BOORMAN:

Q476. **And Mr Bruce LEHRMANN, can you just state your name again please?**

A **Bruce LEHRMANN.**

Q477. **All right. And Bruce, do you agree the time is now five fifteen pm?**

A **That's it.**

Q478. **All right. And I'll just remind you of your rights, you're not obliged to say or do anything, but anything you say or do may be recorded and given in evidence or will be recorded and used in evidence.**

A **Yep.**

Q479. **Do you understand those rights? So they still apply, yep.**

A **Yep, yep, so far, yep, yep.**

Q480. **All right. And we've just had a break and during that break we didn't discuss any – anything in relation to this incident. Is that correct?**

A **No, yep.**

Q481. **All right. Now where were we? All right. So, we've spoken about the job and we've spoken about Eighty-eight and now we're – I just want to clarify in relation to how yourself and Brittany ended up in the Uber to go to Parliament House. Can you explain – explain that again?**

A **Yeah, yeah. Yeah, so, I – so, I indicated to the group that – that I was heading off, um, and I needed to stop by Parliament. Brittany had indicated that she also needed to, um, and I offered her a lift because I was already going there.**

Q482. **Yep.**

A **Um, and she accepted and well, she said, that she needed to, I didn't – she didn't offer what for and I didn't ask what for.**

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- Q483.** Okay.
A Um, but I said, "I've got to go and get my keys." And we left it at that and I ordered an Uber.
- Q484.** All right. And it's common for people just to go back to Parliament House at all hours of the night is it?
A Yeah, absolutely, um, absolutely. Even when I indicated to Fiona BROWN when she was asking about the after-hours access.
- Q485.** Yes.
A It was incredibly common, um, yep.
- Q486.** So, and you say, "Incredibly common," is that for work or socialising purposes?
A Ah, well, in my case it was, ah, ah, the majority of the time for work.
- Q487.** Mm-hmm.
A Um, ah, or to quickly retrieve something.
- Q488.** Mm-hmm.
A But, ah, there were times when I've been back with my minister, for example, and the whole office, um, and – and had drinks in the office. That happened all the time.
- Q489.** Right. So, there's alcohol kept at the office is there?
A Yeah.
- Q490.** What sort of alcohol?
A Oh, beers, spirits, um, not in Linda REYNOLDS's office there wasn't. But that's – that's also because we were moving offices.
- Q491.** Right.
A I would be surprised if a minister's office didn't have alcohol, yeah, yeah.
- Q492.** So, you ordered the Uber, you got into the Uber with Brittany and you travelled to Parliament House. Can you tell me what happened then?
A Well, then we got out of the Uber and walked down the – the path, the driveway to the intercom at the ministerial car park.
- Q493.** Yes.
A Um, I pushed that, um, indicated that who I was and wanted to access the suite.
- Q494.** Yep.
A Um, or my desk, um, I needed to get my keys.
- Q495.** Mm-hmm.
A They buzzed us through.
- Q496.** Mm-hmm.

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- A Um, the car park to the main point, I think it's called Point – no Point One's at the front, but anyway, whatever Point is it there to the ministerial entrance. Um, they opened the doors, um, there was a couple of security guards there, I think. It's usually well-staffed at that particular entrance.
- Q497. Yep, yep.
A Um, and we proceeded to sign in. So, I, um, I offered my ID because I didn't have my pass on me, that was – that was – that was also common during the day, security didn't make a fuss about that at all, that is often the case.
- Q498. Mm-hmm.
A So, they positively ID'd me, looked me up, signed the back of the pass, signed the form. Um, went through the members enter, ah, waited for Brittany and I mean, oh, we would have been told to wait at the Foxtrot without the keys as well.
- Q499. Mm-hmm.
A Um, so, that was all taking place. And went up the elevators, Level Two, yeah.
- Q500. All right. So, what was your demeanour and Brittany's demeanour when you arrived at Parliament House initially?
A Well, I think professional, yeah. I don't recall it being anything else.
- Q501. Mm-hmm.
A So, it was like, I was just sort of ensuring that she got to the office and whatever she meant to do at the very least and then – and then, you know, and then I was meaning to do what I needed and then I left, I didn't sort of - - -
- Q502. Did you have any conversations on the way to Parliament House in the Uber in relation to why either of you were going to Parliament House?
A No. Oh, certainly why I was, yeah. I was quite upfront about it.
- Q503. Mm-hmm. Yep.
A Um, but not about – then it – then it was – it was, ah, particularly The Dock, I was asking about – I know I was talking about Austin and Lauren, because they were close and I think she observed that too.
- Q504. Mm-hmm. Yes.
A Um, that's all I can recall being the extent of the conversations, yeah.
- Q505. Right. Did Brittany mention why she was going to Parliament House to you at any time?
A No. She – I mean, she – she was the media adviser, so, and there was a quite a bit going on, so, it – it didn't – it didn't shock, well, it shocked me at the time, the timing that she had to do that.
- Q506. Mm-hmm.

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- A Because I was going to get keys, and so wh - - -
- Q507. Yes.
A But I like, that's her business, obviously, I'm not a media adviser, so, it's – you know.
- Q508. Yep.
A Sometimes the minister might have asked her for something I don't know, but if that's not been the case, play – play on, a late request.
- Q509. All right. Now, you say you got to the car park entrance, you pressed on the intercom?
A Mm-hmm.
- Q510. All right. And you gained access, they let you through to the next step.
A Yep.
- Q511. You've gone in first. Is that correct or how – how did you both proceed through the security and were there any issues?
A Well, well, there were no issues.
- Q512. Mm-hmm.
A I mean it's a double-doors, we probably just like walked through.
- Q513. Yeah, yep.
A Um, um, and it was a normal process, so, I haven't – I sometimes leave my pass and there was nothing out of the ordinary in terms of accessing the building, yeah, without your ID.
- Q514. Yep. And you just followed that process?
A As I'd known it for the amount of years that I'd been there, yeah.
- Q515. When you sign in, what do you sign, do you show your ID then?
A Yeah, you sign, there's a book that you sign in.
- Q516. Mm-hmm.
A Um, you know, you've forgotten your pass.
- Q517. Yep.
A And you sign the back of the green temporary pass.
- Q518. Yes.
A Just to say it's yours.
- Q519. Yes.
A Um, yeah, everything – there was nothing unusual because – because I'd done it before and with – with other people.
- Q520. So, you've gone back to Parliament House after hours with other people?
A Yeah, yeah.

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- Q521. For what purpose?
A To – often to drink.
- Q522. Is that a common practice?
A Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.
- Q523. After hours?
A Yep.
- Q524. Early hours of the morning?
A I've never – well, well, probably – I mean we're talking about a long time, so, but my answer is that, you know, it was common practice and – and, you know, more often with your minister.
- Q525. Yes.
A So, often with a senior staffer, a group of you and, you know, you've had dinner and then we've got all the booze stuff at Parliament anyway.
- Q526. Yeah. Was there any conversation between you and Brittany about going back and having more drinks?
A No, no. I didn't have any – well, we didn't have drinks in the office.
- Q527. I was just going to ask you, that was my next question.
A Yeah, yeah, no.
- Q528. You said it was a new minister's office, was there any alcohol in the minister's office that you were aware of at that time?
A No.
- Q529. Right. Okay. So, you've gone – you've gone through the security, you've gone through.
A Mm-hmm.
- Q530. And I asked about your demeanour and Brittany's demeanour. How was Brittany behaving when she went through the security?
A Ah - - -
- Q531. Were there any issues?
A No, no. She was wearing heels, there was an issue putting heels on as there always is with somebody taking them off and then, you know, security there waiting to take you up. So, but that wasn't out of the ordinary going out there with - - -
- Q532. Was Brittany intoxicated at all?
A Well, yeah, we were all intoxicated, yeah.
- Q533. At what level at this time, from one to ten?
A I'm – like probably the same as me.
- Q534. Mm-hmm.

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- A We – we were – we were, you know, we were discussing Austin and Lauren being drunk and them hooking up and potentially hooking up.
- Q535. Mm-hmm. Yeah.
A I mean we were not at an intoxicated level like they were.
- Q536. Right.
A Because we were talking about them, um, talking about the new office and the people we'd met at the Defence thing.
- Q537. Mm-hmm. Yep.
A Um, so, and – doing the signing process because doing that way is – requires focus. (laughs)
- Q538. Is it a complex process?
A Not complex but it's, you know, it requires you to be aware of your surroundings, talking with security, um, you know.
- Q539. If someone was to turn up at Parliament House at security and were ten out of ten intoxicated, do you think they would be let in?
A I would – I would – no way. And it was quite often the case that a member of your party going back after hours was too intoxicated, we did have times when they were sent away and the rest of us could go up, so.
- Q540. Who sends them away?
A Usually a senior member of the team that night.
- Q541. Okay.
A Yeah.
- Q542. Yeah. Are you aware of any time of security turning anyone away or prohibiting entry?
A That night?
- Q543. No, in your period, given six years at Parliament House?
A Oh, oh, oh, oh, all the time, and not – not from personally seeing it, just by word of mouth, "We had a big night but, you know, these two guys they just weren't allowed in because, you know, security wouldn't let them have too much to (indistinct)."
- Q544. Right, right. So, you said, you went through the process, Brittany was having issues with her heels. Is that her shoes, is that right?
A Yeah, yep.
- Q545. Why was that do you know?
A Well, because they had (indistinct) on them, so she (indistinct), yeah.
- Q546. And they called someone. Is that right to get you, because you hadn't had your pass - called someone to escort you to the minister's suite. Is that right or?

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The transcript was checked for accuracy by DLSC Madders on 05/05/2021.

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- A No, no, no, they do that as a matter of course after hours.
- Q547. Right.
A So, after – I think after ten o'clock they – they lock all the fire – like they double bolt the front doors.
- Q548. Okay. Yep.
A Yep. So, if there's a person in there, they have to unlock it, so, if there's a fire, you can still get out.
- Q549. Mm-hmm.
A So, they have to call the main person wandering the building that has all the keys.
- Q550. Mm-hmm.
A Um, to come and escort and open up the whole suite.
- Q551. So, how far is it from the security check point to the minister's suite, where your office is?
A Ah, well, up the main lift to Level Two, and then down the hallway to the left. So, you will immediately sort of – oh, yeah, immediately to the right and then down left, because we were on the Reps side.
- Q552. Right. So, you know, I take it yourself and Brittany walked from the security check point with the – who – who escorted you?
A The person with all the keys, the security person.
- Q553. Right. Are they Parliamentary security or some private?
A Yeah, yeah, yes, they're Parliamentary security, yep.
- Q554. Right. Okay. So, you went and – when you were walking from that security point to the minister's office, were there any issues along the way. Can you tell me anything about that if there was?
A No. No, nothing, nothing out of the ordinary.
- Q555. Were you walking in a straight line or were you staggering?
A I wasn't staggering.
- Q556. Mm-hmm.
A Um, no, I was with the program.
- Q557. Yeah.
A Yep.
- Q558. What about Brittany, how was Brittany, was she herself?
A No observations that she was – no observations that she was any worse for wear, um, none, no.
- Q559. So, is there anything – anything that comes to mind that would alarm you if someone was, you know, worse for wear or?
A What do you mean, if they were - - -

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- Q560.** If they were bouncing off the walls or, you know.
A Oh, yeah, if she'd been falling over and things like that, I actually would have said, that's where you – where you need to go and get back in the Uber and go to your place, um - - -
- Q561.** Right. Yep. Did she ever fall over or anything like that during the evening that you're aware of?
A I never witnessed that, no.
- Q562.** Okay. So, you've gone up to the minister's office. What happened then?
A I've turned left at my desk.
- Q563.** Yep. Sorry, the entry, so you said the security people need to swipe you in.
A Yep. Yeah, they opened the, um, door.
- Q564.** Right. Yep.
A Um, and then that layout I showed you, the reception desk, um, I went, you know, down the hall to the right to my desk in the same corner.
- Q565.** Yep.
A Um, and Brittany went to the right. Um, I did think sort of think that it was unusual to be – because that's going to the right is the minister's office or the chief of staff's office.
- Q566.** Mm-hmm.
A Um, but like it's not my place to – you know, she was there to do something, so, um, and, um, but it's possible because they use - like, I mean it's possible she went through there, but it's unusual to go through the minister's – I mean I wouldn't dream of going into the minister's office at all, um - - -
- Q567.** Was there any conversation between you and Brittany when you were walking to the minister's office that you can recall?
A Ah, not that I can recall, no. Um, yeah, and then so I went to my desk, got what I had to do.
- Q568.** Mm-hmm.
A I got what I needed and then, um, worked on the Question Time folders, very quickly. I wouldn't do policy work at that time of night, while I'd been drinking but while it was on my mind, I was certainly moving certain topics up the front, so then on Monday, it was – I knew – I knew what I had to do.
- Q569.** So, you say you were working on the Question – again, can you – can you recall what time you got to Parliament House?
A It was about quarter – quarter to two or ten to two, yeah.
- Q570.** And how long were you there all up, do you think, how long did you stay there for?

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- A From entry and exit?
- Q571. Mm-hmm
A Probably forty-five minutes.
- Q572. Mm-hmm. You've just said, you've gone – after you've gone left you've gone to your desk and you were working on some portfolios, right.
A Mm-hmm.
- Q573. Can you explain what a portfolio is, is it a computer record, is it a – a

A Oh, no, no, it's a Question Time brief, so, the big – the big folders of files we have probably four or five of them.
- Q574. Right. Right.
A Um, we serve them because in the Senate we represented other ministers.
- Q575. Mm-hmm.
A Um, but my primary focus was on the defence matters because it was the new portfolio that we'd not been in.
- Q576. Mm-hmm.
A Um, so, I was, um, certainly moving a lot of the Industry, um, matters to the front that could have been controversial, um, the submarine program was certainly one of them which was a focus of mine.
- Q577. Mm-hmm.
A Um, so, they were paper-based.
- Q578. Right.
A Like you sort of tab them up, um, like they're massive, they're huge folders and you take them into the chamber for Question Time.
- Q579. So, what were you doing with those? You said you went there after hours to – to do something, what did you actually do with those portfolios?
A Well, I just left them on the desk.
- Q580. Yep. Yeah, yeah, sorry, I'll rephrase that. So, you said you went back there for the purposes of getting your keys?
A Yep.
- Q581. And you said you performed some work on or activities with the portfolios. Is that correct?
A Yeah, that's correct, yep.
- Q582. Right. When you did those activities, can you explain what you did, can you tell me more about that?

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A Sure. So, a lot of it was, um, sticking tabs to certain topics that I recall from discussing with the guys at The Dock.

Q583. Right. Yep.

A Um, so, not on the actual briefs because they're – that's what you get from the department.

Q584. Mm-hmm.

A But we won't alter them, we put a tag on them with our notes.

Q585. Right. Yes.

A And the DLO can change them, not necessarily, we can redo them ourselves, um, but it was better to do them through the department, so they can see the changes, so, then they wouldn't send up a brief that was the same, and they would very likely.

Q586. Yeah.

A Um, certainly moving certain topics further up the folder.

Q587. Mm-hmm.

A Um, so, the minister, when she's sitting at her desk, the things that we were talking about the – ah, we were theorising that the Labour Party might ask questions on the Question Time, I was just there, writing notes on the submarine issue and ensuring that the folder was in a way that the minister was happy, it was readily accessible to her. Because when you're asked a question in Question Time, you have a matter of seconds to find, you know, the relevant part, so.

Q588. Mm-hmm. All right. So, when you write these statements, do you write anything or you just put stickers on them or?

A Oh, no, I write and make notes and, you know, yeah, the things that jog my memory, so, yeah.

Q589. At any time did you utilise any electronic equipment whilst you were there during that period, that you can recall?

A It's possible that I logged into my Parliament House computer.

Q590. Mm-hmm.

A Ah, because, um, we typically – well, at Parliament House, so you've got all parties that – it's a rule within the Coalition that if you were doing political work, it's to be done on the APH network, because it can't be FOI'd.

Q591. Yes.

A Um, so, it was – because I was working on the Question Time folders, if I was making notes, political notes, um, for the minister, it would have been on that system, like. The other system had Defence Top Secret and had these Top Secret as well. But then they were useless devices anyway, like they didn't have anything on them, so, yeah.

Q592. So, if you were to – you say, it's possible that you'd logged on?

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A Yeah, yeah.

Q593. To – but that would be to the Parliament House - - -
A House computer.

Q594. - - - computer.
A Yeah.

Q595. Not Defence or – or the other one.
A No.

Q596. Or Home Affairs?
A Well, if I had a defence, the Defence Department had the Top Secret, then they had the central one which – the central one had the Parliament connected into it and the Home Affairs connected into it, so, I would have had to have logged into that first and then you press a switch and it switches into the other network.

Q597. Right. So, and you said you made notes on that system. Is that right?
A Yeah, yep, yeah.

Q598. So, when you're working on your portfolios, you say, you're tagging them and – but where do you make your notes, is it, "hand written"?
A Hand-written. More often than not, hand-written and that's – that's the political reason for – you know, it's not recorded anywhere.

Q599. Right. Right. Okay.
A Um, because, you know, the comments we make, particularly about the submarine issue, were quite sensitive about it. Yeah.

Q600. Mm-hmm. Yep. Okay. So, are you a hundred per cent you did or you didn't access the electronic equipment or you don't or you can't recall?
A I – I can't recall, I can't recall.

Q601. Right.
A I know I was doing Question Time stuff then, I'm just thinking because I was doing that - - -

Q602. Yes.
A - - - you know, but I do remember doing a lot of writing, so, it's also possible I didn't, because I was just writing notes on – while I was thinking of it.

Q603. Yeah. And what happens to those notes afterwards, like in days later or?
A Oh, the adviser notes and if the minister has written on them they're destroyed because, um, we – know, we don't trust that out of Parliament all views that - - -

Q604. Right.

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A Yeah, yeah.

Q605. All right.

A So, they get put into the secure bin.

Q606. What else did you – did you do anything else, can you tell me what else you did during – that you were there before leaving?

A Well, it was just all at my desk.

Q607. Right.

A Um, yeah, I never saw Brittany again, um, in the office, so.

Q608. Did you hear her or?

A No, no. I – no, and when she – when she went into – and when she turned right, I thought she was working on what she needed to work on, so, I, um, yeah, I did what I had to do.

Q609. Mm-hmm.

A I never left my desk.

Q610. Mm-hmm.

A Or my own corner. Um, then when I – when I did.

Q611. Which way did you exit the suite?

A Well, from memory I exited out the back door.

Q612. Why?

A Because my desk up that end, yeah, yep.

Q613. And that's not uncommon?

A That's very common, it's very common for me to enter that way actually.

Q614. Right.

A Um, because when you come up the elevator it's right there.

Q615. Right. Yeah. Right. During that period you were in there at your desk, were you drinking or anything like that?

A No. Well, I didn't have any alcohol hidden in the office.

Q616. Right.

A That I knew of.

Q617. Yeah.

A Yeah.

Q618. You don't know whether anyone else did?

A No.

Q619. But you didn't consume any alcohol?

A No, I didn't, no, that's – yeah, that's - - -

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- Q620. And how long do you think you were there for?
A Well, at my desk probably twenty minutes or so, yeah.
- Q621. And then you say you left your desk and you exited out the door near your desk, which is the back door?
A Yeah.
- Q622. Okay.
A It's still an entrance, it's the staff entrance, yeah.
- Q623. Did – and you said before that you – after entering, Brittany went right.
A Mm-hmm.
- Q624. And you went left?
A Mm-hmm.
- Q625. And you were saying you didn't see her again?
A No.
- Q626. During the whole time you were in there.
A That's right.
- Q627. And then you exited?
A Yep.
- Q628. Did you tell Brittany you were leaving or – or met – was there any conversation in the minister's office while you were there between the two of you?
A Well, in the minister's office.
- Q629. I mean in the suite, in the - - -
A Oh, okay. Ah, well, no, because no, there wasn't I – I – we both – I went left, so, I've gone and I'll get what I need to do and she went to the right. I think all I said, was something like, "Oh, I'm getting what I need, what I need and I'll do what I need to do and I'll head off."
- Q630. Can you recall what she said in return or any response?
A No, I don't.
- Q631. Did she give you a response or anything?
A Possibly, but I was on my way to my desk. I mean I – you know, I was – my intent was to get what I needed, get out of my head what we were talking about in the drinks.
- Q632. Mm-hmm.
A And go.
- Q633. Mm-hmm.
A Um, you know, I had no, um, there was nothing in my mind that said to me, that I need to be looking after her.

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Q634. Right.
A Um, because she has – she signed in herself and we both did all that.

Q635. Yeah. Mm-hmm.
A And she indicated that she needed to do something as well, which were related to her work and I don't talk about people, going into other people's work business, so.

Q636. All right. When you – when you entered into the room did you have your phone with you?
A Oh, well, hang on – the office?

Q637. Yeah, yeah, the office?
A Yeah, yeah.

Q638. When you went to Parliament House, so you had your phone with you on the night?
A Yeah, yeah, well, I needed it, yeah.

Q639. Yeah, yeah. And when you went on the way into your office - - -
A Yep.

Q640. - - - and whilst in the office did you receive any calls, did you make any calls or anything like that?
A Not to – no, not to my knowledge.

Q641. Okay. And you're allowed to have your personal phone on when you're in the office?
A Yeah, yeah.

Yeah. Have you got any questions at this point in relation to the office?

FRIZZELL:

Q642. Yes, I do. Now, you mentioned – and sorry just like before you mentioned that you didn't have a pass.
A Mm-hmm.

Q643. You had got in to - - -
A Yeah, I didn't have my usual purple pass to get in.

Q644. Yeah. Why is that?
A Oh, I don't know why, I don't know, I don't know, it's the not the first time – it's not the first time from any staff actually, um, I don't know.

Q645. Do you recall where it was?
A Ah, in the office, um, yeah. So, I don't know why I took it off though. But see, yeah, I – I just don't remember that, I don't remember that, because my intention that afternoon was not to have a big night, so I – I acted normally, like I would be returning to Parliament, so, yeah.

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BOORMAN:

Q646. Ah, right, yeah.
A Yeah.

FRIZZELL:

Q647. Now, you've mentioned a couple of times that one of the things that you were working on was a submarine issue. Is that right?
A Mm-hmm. Yes.

Q648. Yep. So, you were absolutely working on – you commented the submarine issue?
A Yeah, yeah, yes.

Q649. And it was a Question Time is that right?
A Yep, yeah, the Question Time folders, we have – we have four at the time.

Q650. Yep. So, was the submarine issue that you've mentioned working on, was that raised in Question Time do you know?
A Um, well, possibly – well, I don't know because I had left then before the next Question Time, so.

Q651. Yep. Who holds those documents?
A Well, so, this is the thing with politics, so, the department produces the Question Time folders and when they get to the minister's office, um, they're edited by every adviser who has responsibility for each area. Um, and then I sort of then had that role as the manager collating it, setting up the folder, determining what issues are more important than others, yeah.

Q652. And then you mentioned before that if something needs to be edited, you'd give that to the DLO was it?
A Yeah, so, if it was a non- controversial item, they can just edit it. I don't recall doing anything in relation to those, because Minister REYNOLDS, um, likes to have what we call a pink slip, above the top of the department provided briefs. So, the pink slip is a politically made document, either typed or hand-written, um, whereby there was no mention to the department so, we were saving the department. So, um, quite often there were lots of them pink notes on top of the department notes in the folders.

Q653. In terms of signing in, did they go (indistinct) and sign, and you take your form out. Did you agree each have to sign yourselves there?
A Yeah, yeah. So, we – there's no form they take out, so, they, um, they just ask for an item, something with your face on it.

Q654. Yep.
A You almost always give your driver's licence, they look you up on the computer, you sign a log book. Then they've given out a

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temporary pass and then you get a green pass with a clip-on, and you sign the green pass and put it on.

Q655. Mm-hmm. Can you sign someone else in, like can you sign on someone else's pass?
A Well, only if they're a visitor, but if they're a pass-holder, they do it themselves.

Q656. All right. Do you recall having to do that though?
A Well, I just sign myself.

Q657. Yeah, what about Brittany?
A Um, well, I don't recall that, but she – but she was a staffer as well, so they would have positively identified her, so. So, that wouldn't have been a, um, like she was an employee in Senator REYNOLDS's office, so she was entitled to access to the office.

Q658. What prompted you to leave the office?
A Well, that I was done with my work and I'd got my stuff and I'd not been drinking and I was getting tired and I was going home.

Q659. And just to confirm, I believe you said before that you ordered an Uber and then you got a notification that it was there and you left. Is that right?
A Yes, yeah. Well, no hang on. I – well, you get sort of updates with the Uber, so, you order it and it's been accepted, it's five minutes away, it's eight minutes away. And then if it's – I usually go down when it's like two minutes away, because you've got to sort of fap around the elevator to get down, yeah, yeah.

That's all.

BOORMAN:

Q660. So, you've done your work, so, you've left. You can't comment on what Brittany was doing, is that what you're saying because you didn't see her. You were telling me you didn't see her after you entered?
A I did not see her, no, I did not see her. I don't know what – no, I don't know what she was doing.

Q661. During your conversations prior to entering was there any conversation in relation to I'm going to be twenty minutes, I'm going to half an hour or – or anything like that, was there any agreements to leaving together or?
A No, there's no agreements to leaving together.

Q662. Right.
A But I definitely indicated that I – you know, as we were discussing the night at The Dock, I – I did say, I'll get my keys and I'm just going to poke around the Question Time folders based on what we

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discussed tonight, or some of the others had discussed tonight, yeah.

Q663. But she didn't say anything in return or you can't recall what she said?

A No, yeah, no, she didn't and she – no one could help her or anything, I didn't – like that was not required, she was going for her own thing.

Q664. All right. So, at any time when you went to the office were you intimate with Brittany HIGGINS at any time?

A I didn't see her after we went in.

Q665. No, I was just asking if – sort of about the - - -

A Oh, no, so, I wasn't and also because I didn't see her. (laughs)

Q666. Right. All right. So, you leave – you exit, you don't know what happened to Brittany, you get in your Uber, you go home. Is that what you're saying?

A Yep.

Q667. Okay. So, the next day what did you do?

A I can't be quite - - -

Q668. You can't remember.

A Haven't got those reasons, I don't know. Prepared and ironed my shirts for the next - - -

Q669. Did you have any communication with Brittany after that evening of the twenty-second of March or Saturday, the twenty-third of March?

A No, no, no, not to my knowledge. I can't recall, no, no, I'm confident I didn't because it was – as I said the start it was such an innocuous sort of night, like it wasn't – it was not for – for staff to be out drinking, it was not an unusual, this was not an unusual night or anything.

Q670. All right. Did you have any discussions with anyone after that evening about going back to the office and Brittany going back with you or anything like that?

A I can't remember doing so.

Q671. Have you had any communications with Miss Brittany HIGGINS since this event, this night in question, the twenty-second, twenty-third of March, two thousand and nineteen?

A No.

Q672. Would you have any reason to?

A And that goes for most of the staff in that office, yep.

Q673. Mm-hmm. Why – tell me more about that, why is that?

A Oh, well, I was leaving and, um, it was unfashionable to leave before an election as well, so, I was doing that.

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- Q674.** At any time during the night of the twenty-second, twenty-third of March, two thousand and nineteen, did you engage in any intimate behaviour with Miss Brittany HIGGINS at all? You said you were close.
- A** Yeah, I can't – I just can't remember that, I know we were close but I just can't remember.
- Q675.** Is it possible?
- A** Yeah, yeah, it's possible but, um, would I have – would I have acted beyond anything that was a bit flirtatious, absolutely not, because I was in a relationship, so.
- Q676.** And who were you in a relationship with?
- A** Alexandra HALL.
- Q677.** Right.
- A** Yeah.
- Q678.** How long have you been in a relationship with Alexandra before this evening?
- A** Um, ah, probably four to five months. Like we were living, we were on the lease together.
- Q679.** Yeah,
- A** Well, we still had a – well, actually, that means – that means I wasn't actually working for Linda for as long, so, I moved from Bridget's – Bridget's on the - . Because Alex and I started going when we both worked for Bridget MCKENZIE.
- Q680.** Right.
- A** Ah, which was, um, September of twenty eighteen I think.
- Q681.** Right.
- A** And then I moved to REYNOLDS's office, so it was probably six months I was actually so, I should correct that, I apologise, I just forgot about that.
- Q682.** No, that's okay.
- A** Ah, yeah, so that was – yeah, we moved in together in Canberra, yep. She moved into my apartment.
- Q683.** So, does she work up in Parliament House or? Well, yeah, you've said you worked together.
- A** We – we did work together but, um, um, before this event she had, um, accepted a job with Ava MARSHALL here in Sydney in the New South Wales Parliament with the minister.
- Q684.** Oh, right, right.
- A** Um, and – and because of that, that just – that sped up my leaving because I thought well, if she's going I'll – I'll actually see if I can get a job in Sydney, so. Let me try and find if I've got that here. Yeah,

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yep. Yeah, that's what I've got here, I was looking at jobs in Canberra, um, in the, um, security side.

Q685. Mm-hmm.

A Ah, which I've got records of meetings on the twenty-second of March and I think the week after as well, I met with someone, but I just – I just need – I was going to talk to John in terms of what I could say about those meetings, that's all.

Q686. Yeah, yeah, yeah, that's okay. So, now, I've gone over the – and I've asked you questions in relation to the alcohol consumption and all that sort of thing. Can you – at any time during the evening did you buy Miss Brittany HIGGINS any drinks that you can recall?

A Not that I can specifically recall.

Q687. Right. Okay.

A No. As I sort of was mentioning earlier, it's possible we were in rounds and things like that.

Q688. Mm-hmm.

A Um, yeah.

All right. Have you got any questions at this point before I – I just want to clarify some things?

FRIZZELL:

Q689. Ah, look, only one. You were just talking about your girlfriend at the time, Alexandra HALL.

A Mm-hmm.

Q690. So, you were living together. She'd just accepted a job in Sydney.

A Mm-hmm.

Q691. You had told Fiona, that you were not going to continue working there.

A Yeah. I already told Fiona I was leaving on the basis of Alex leaving. I – I made that decision of my own accord.

Q692. Yeah. So, your girlfriend is set up to move to Sydney.

A Yep.

Q693. But you just said that you were – you were looking at some jobs in Canberra as well.

A Well, just because of my interest in national security.

Q694. Yeah.

A So, but I was not wedded to Canberra, I was not – we were going to Sydney, but, um, if – if it was possible for me to move into a national security role, then – then right.

Q695. Would that then end the relationship?

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A Well, we discussed it and we were just going to long distance, that was fine because, you know, there was – at that point, you know, I was either going into the private sector or the public service, um, when I do that, I mean to some security role. Um, but that for whatever reason that didn't work out and I actually was progressing to these other corporate roles, particularly with Ogilvy, so that's why – that's what I'm saying for that reason.

Q696. What was your relationship like?

A At that point very good, at that point, yeah, yeah.

Q697. But not – so, you went out on Friday, the twenty-second, for afternoon drinks or the evening drinks. What did Alex know you were doing?

A There was just me – after work drinks. I might have even said to her, when I got there, communication like with her – it was common for me, but it was not just the general staffer drinks, it ended up being more of an event. I probably would have said to her, “Oh, it was a bit more of a Defence evening, you know.” Um, yeah.

That's all for me.

BOORMAN:

Q698. Just in relation to drinking, do you drink much?

A Not regularly, no, only on like Friday and Saturday at the end of the week, yeah.

Q699. Can you tell me about how much you would drink on a Friday or Saturday or if you went to an event or something like that? And you mentioned before that you – you know, at certain events you realised who was there, you obviously wouldn't have as many as maybe, well, I'm assuming this is what you're getting at. Like if it was a more friendly sort of off work kind type of event, you'd conduct yourself differently?

A Yeah, it was just – it was just – well, I'd conduct, my – my behaviour is not different but – but – but - - -

Q700. Yeah, I've got what you're saying.

A Yeah, absolutely, I think it was more, um, just ministerial staff.

Q701. Yep.

A And the minister and just the staff and we were at the Kingo, you'd – you'd drink a bit more than if you were at an event.

Q702. Oh, yeah, no, I get it. Now, I just want to – is there anything else that you want to tell me at the moment or you want to discuss at the moment in relation to this allegation before I clarify a number of things?

A Ah, not – not at this point, no, that I can – not off the top of my head.

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Q703. Yeah, that's okay. Yeah, we're going to go over that. Now, you said you were leaving in two weeks, but after this event, my – my information is that after the event on the twenty-second, twenty-third, you had a meeting with Miss Fiona BROWN.

A Yes, on the Monday, yep.

Q704. Right. How did that come about, can you tell me about that?

A Yep. So, Fiona BROWN, um, called me in. I can't recall the exact time, it was probably mid-morning.

Q705. Mm-hmm.

A Um, she, um, called me into the minister's office.

Q706. Mm-hmm.

A Um, unusual, she had her own office. Um, and she – all it was – all that I can recall from that meeting was that, um, she'd been informed by security that Brittany and I accessed the office after hours, constituting a security breach.

Q707. Right.

A And that, um, it was also against, um, the Ministerial Staffing Code of Conduct ruling.

Q708. Yes, yes.

A What do I have to say on that. Um, and in a much more brief way and I just like have to you, I said, that I had to get my keys, um, and I was only in there for a short period of time. And I – and that's all that was ever discussed. It was a rather brief meeting.

Q709. Yes.

A Um, she told me not to bring any phones in. I was also not allowed to bring any notepad or pen.

Q710. Mm-hmm.

A Um, and she – she put that to me.

Q711. Mm-hmm.

A Um, she indicated that, um, because I was already leaving, I think we – I think from my recollection we actually agreed that that Friday of that week, would be my last day.

Q712. Okay.

A I – yeah, for whatever reason, she – well, for the security breach she said, "Look, because of this, it's quite serious." This is that meeting I indicated to her that, you know, this is – you know, this is the first time by meaning after-hours access, it's an issue, because staff do it all the time.

Q713. Right.

A Including ministers.

Q714. Yes.

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A Um, but she was my superior and that was – and I was leaving anyway, so, look again, but that’s what I did, you’re my superior, so.

Q715. Yeah.

A I copped it on the chin. And she said, “Um, it’s probably best if you just pack up your things and go now.”

Q716. Mm-hmm.

A Um, and I packed up my personal belongings, I didn’t have a lot of stuff, it was just – you know, annual reports and things.

Q717. Yep.

A Um, and – and left. Um, I didn’t talk to anyone in the office – ah, leaving, um, yeah.

Q718. And that was on the Monday or the Tuesday?

A Monday, the twenty-fifth, yeah.

Q719. Right.

A Well, that’s how I recall it, it happened pretty quick.

Q720. Yeah, yeah.

A Yeah, yeah.

Q721. And – and that was it, you were done then, you left?

A Yeah, well, yes, and that was – yeah, that’s right and I left the building, I handed in my pass to security and that was it, yeah.

Q722. And since that did you – since that day did you – when you left, you went – you said you didn’t talk to anyone at all? Did anyone - - -

A No, and not even about – like it was a security breach, like it was, you know, and I was leaving, um, and I didn’t make much of it because I hadn’t been formally terminated. So, because I was waiting for something to happen, which did happen eventually.

Q723. Mm-hmm.

A But that week I sort of just carried on. I was progressing in the job, so, certain jobs.

Q724. Mm-hmm.

A Certain jobs.

Q725. Yeah.

A So, you know, um, you know, you can actually go through my bank records, you know, I was – I was still catching up with mates and staffers and things like that before they were heading off for the election campaign started. Um, so that was fine, I wasn’t – I was – I was more concerned at her terminology saying, “security breach,” and things like that, because that was – as someone who’s – was a Nazi about sort of security, and working in the space, and she sort of then saying, you know, “A security breach,” I was quite concerned because I thought, well, I come back to Parliament and everyone –

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and everyone does often. Um, and I was actually concerned that, you know, the AFP would be involved that week for the security breach, but I thought, crap, this is a - - -

- Q726. When you – you had that meeting, what did you tell Fiona your reason was for going back there?
A To – for getting my keys.
- Q727. Mm-hmm.
A Um, I think I indicated I did some work, I didn't specify what.
- Q728. Mm-hmm.
A Um, that was a special period of time.
- Q729. You mentioned before earlier in the interview when, you know, ah, because of the – the environment in Parliament House and the culture and people tend to find things out, it's – it's ruthless.
A Mm-hmm.
- Q730. Someone being let go, terminated or whatever, with that circulate very quickly amongst the staff?
A I would have thought so, yeah. And I think the shocking part of all of this, is that, um, I proceeded with my life, attended events back at Parliament since leaving. I met with staff at the Prime Minister's office and I've met with officers and through my network I've heard nothing, so.
- Q731. So, you say, it's possible that people would have found out? Can you expand on that, can you tell me more about how that would occur?
A Well, how that would that occur. I mean - - -
- Q732. If you don't know, don't speculate.
A No, I don't want to speculate, well, I'm not going to, yeah, yeah.
- Q733. All right. Have you got any questions in relation to that at this point? I just want to recap over a – over a couple of things. I really appreciate – you've obviously given me a version of events. Now, you said that you went back there – so, when you went back to Parliament House, you had your phone with you?
A Yeah.
- Q734. And you can't recall receiving any calls?
A No, I can't recall, I can't remember that, no.
- Q735. Would it – if I just show you something there, this is just trying to explain things to you. Is that – we've got here, we've got the date.
A Yeah.
- Q736. Two four, two sixteen seventeen. We've got some numbers here. Do you recognise this number?
A Yeah, they look like my ministerial phone, yeah.

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Q737. Is that your ministerial phone?
A Well, I only meant the last three digits, yeah, one one.

Q738. So who's?
A Oh, then - - -

Q739. Do you know whose phone number this is?
A I – I don't know, I don't know.

FRIZZELL:

Q740. So, we've identified that to be Alexandra's mobile. Is that right?
A Oh, yes, that's why I recognised the last three digits.

BOORMAN:

Q741. Right.
A Yeah.

Q742. Did you see there's a number of calls there on the twenty-third at two
seventeen, and I take these are like messages is it?
A Mm-hmm. Yeah. Oh, - - -

Q743. And you didn't answer.
A No. Well, probably because I had – I always have my phone on
Silent.

Q744. Right.
A Um, and I was like how my desk is set up, and my back's turned
away.

Q745. Right.
A At my desk, I certainly would have spoken to her leaving, so.

Q746. Yeah. So, it's possible that your phone was on Silent and you didn't
hear the calls?
A Yeah, I usually leave it on the end of my desk which is a U-shape and
where I – where I have the, um, folders, I would have had my back
turned to my phone to observe.

Q747. Yep. All right.
A So, that's not unusual, that's not unusual to me, that I don't - - -

Q748. Yeah. Is it – you know, do you answer your phone all the time or?
A Oh, yeah, I – I usually answer it but if I'm – like if I'm busy and
distracted and not looking at my phone.

Q749. Yeah, yeah.
A Like I have to have it with me, you know.

Q750. All right.

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A Yeah.

FRIZZELL:

Q751. Why do you think she would have called you so many times if that's one who was calling?

A Well, probably was believing that I'd be home at – at you know midnight-ish, she would probably.

BOORMAN:

Q752. And you – you weren't home?

A Yeah, yeah. If that happened I'd do the same to her too, all the time, so.

Q753. Right. Right. I just needed to clarify that. Now, at all times you've said during this interview that your reason obviously for going back, was to get your keys and get some work done, as in from your meeting.

A Mm-hmm.

Q754. And you said that, to the best of your knowledge or your recollection that there was no alcohol or anything back there. Is that correct?

A Yeah, not – not to my knowledge, no.

Q755. Now, we spoke to officers, we're investigators, spoke to Fiona BROWN.

A Mm-hmm.

Q756. And in the conversation, now, I'm just going to read this to you and I offer you an opportunity to provide comment. "And it was and I – I – and I had asked him and I told him that I'd been advised that he and another person had arrived in the early hours of Saturday morning."

A Mm-hmm.

Q757. And in this context, Fiona's referring to that evening.

A Yep, yep.

Q758. And that so for security breaches that was recorded.

A Yep, yep.

Q759. And – and then and could you please explain?

A Yep.

Q760. "And he didn't agree that they were intoxicated, so you've said that.

A Yep.

Q761. Or he wasn't intoxicated. I should say, he didn't agree he was intoxicated. That's what she said. So, you've said that you weren't intoxicated.

A Yes, yeah, yep.

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Q762. “And – and when I asked him who’d came – came with him, he said, Brittany.’ And I asked him why he attended the office? And she says, ‘Which he told me was to drink whisky.’ And which I challenged why would you do that?” And that’s what she said, you told her.

A Yeah, I didn’t have any alcohol in my office.

Q763. So, can you explain why Fiona would have said that to us or?

A Oh, no, I’m not – I’m not too sure at all. And I would have had a recollection of that meeting, if she’d allowed me to have – to take records of that meeting.

Q764. Yeah, yeah. She said, “I asked him what he did whilst he was there, what part of the offices he accessed, because I was concerned about security. And he said, he just came in to have a drink – to drink his whisky. He denied going in or accessing anything else during that time. And I said, ‘Okay,’ and I asked him how much he had and he said, ‘About two glasses.’” Do you recall saying that to Fiona BROWN?

A No, I never drank in the office, I never did that, so, because there’s no alcohol, I didn’t have any alcohol, so, to access.

Q765. Okay. So, you can’t offer me any explanation why Fiona BROWN would say that?

A No, I’m sorry.

Q766. That’s okay, I’m just being open with you and I’m trying to work through this.

A Yeah, and that’s - - -

Q767. So, is what you’re saying that you didn’t have any alcohol in the office and that was not the reason for going back?

A No, it was certainly not the reason for going back to the office.

Q768. Mm-hmm.

A I would have just (laughs) stayed, I don’t know (Indistinct)

Q769. All right. You said and do you recall that when you’re at the Eighty-eight Miles An Hour, you went there, there was yourself, Lauren and Austin?

A Mm-hmm.

Q770. All right. And you went there and you had a boogie?

A Mm-hmm.

Q771. You know you were dancing, that you said there was booths that sometimes people sit in and sometimes you share them or whatever.

A Mm-hmm.

Q772. You said that you and Brittany were close when you were there?

A Mm-hmm.

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- Q773.** Now, I've spoken to or we've spoken to Lauren GAIN.
A Yeah, oh, yeah, that sounds familiar, yeah.
- Q774.** And she told us about The Dock and Defence members being there and about attending Eighty-eight.
A Mm-hmm.
- Q775.** And remembers seeing Miss HIGGINS and yourself sitting very close to each other. She saw them rubbing each other's legs, kissing pash Miss HIGGINS slipping over once. She left the venue with – with Austin, but she really can't recall how that was all arranged. So, basically what I'm saying is that Miss GAIN says that you were a little bit intimate with Miss HIGGINS or pashing or what - - -
A Yeah, I'm not - - -
- Q776.** Can you recall that?
A No, I can't recall it.
- Q777.** Okay.
A I mean, you know.
- Q778.** Can you offer me any explanation why she would say that?
A Well, I – I mean I accept that, um, um, we were all (Indistinct).
- Q779.** Yes.
A Um, I just can't recall – recall that, um, but that would have been – I just don't recall that, I just don't recall it. I just can't remember, I'm sorry, it is – it is a long time ago.
- Q780.** Yeah, yeah, no, that's okay.
A I'm trying to remember.
- Q781.** I'm just being very transparent with what I've got and, you know, my investigation, but I'm trying to, you know, making sure of the whole situation.
A Yeah, no, I understand, yep.
- Q782.** Now, this is – if you just have a look at that, that's the Visitor's Pass register?
A Mm-hmm.
- Q783.** Yeah, it talks about some sort of – down that far.
A Oh, yes.
- Q784.** So, we've got twenty-third – dated the twenty-third of March, two thousand and nineteen. It's got here – sorry, can you – is that?
A That's my name, yeah.
- Q785.** Right. Is this the normal process that when you've gone through?
A Yeah, you see, quite often, um, I'd often let security write that, so, if they're trying to quickly do this.

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- Q786. Right. Yep. Mm-hmm.
A Um, they would just write myself, because they've identified me as myself.
- Q787. Yeah. Is that your writing though, Bruce?
A It looks - appears, yeah, it appears that I've written my name, yeah. This is - this is certainly got it.
- Q788. Yeah, that's it. And underneath that is obviously, I think, or what I can make out is - - -
A That's not - it doesn't look like mine.
- Q789. No, that looks like Brittany HIGGINS.
A Yeah. This looks like security has done this.
- Q790. Right. So, you can't - that's not - is that your handwriting or is it Security's?
A Yeah, that would be my handwriting.
- Q791. Oh, so, the signature is - - -
A Yeah, yeah, yeah, so, they've asked us to put our names down, yeah. And they must have looked us up themselves.
- Q792. Yep, yep. And this is the register that you're referring to when you arrived at Parliament House and all that sort of thing?
A Correct, yeah, that's right, yes, yes, that's right.
- Q793. Okay. Yep. All right. There's just a couple of other things, just to - . Now, in an interview with Miss Brittany HIGGINS.
A That you've done or?
- Q794. Yes. That was conducted by police.
A Yep.
- Q795. Yep. She alleges that she doesn't remember whether I went to the couch myself firmly. I remember I was being on the couch as he was raping me.
A Yeah.
- Q796. Can you offer me any reason as to why Miss HIGGINS would be saying this?
A Oh, I have no idea why she would be stating this. It - it didn't happen because we went in different directions when - as I've said to you as we entered the office, so, yeah.
- Q797. Yeah, yeah. She says, "I was stuck in the corner and I couldn't get him off. I was crying, he was on top of me." Words to that effect. "And I said, 'No,' at least half a dozen times." Have you got any comment about that?
A Well, I - well, well, I'm not going to comment because I didn't see her as I stated, so, like you know, I'm now - - -

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- Q798. **Yep.**
A **--- I've certainly got a lot of views about it all coming out in the media.**
- Q799. **Yes, yes, yes.**
A **It's not relevant to give indistinct**
- Q800. **Yes, I understand. Mr LEHRMANN, can you offer me any explanation why Miss Brittany HIGGINS would make this statement to police?**
A **I have – I have no idea. I have suspicions around certain things that happened to me in January.**
- Q801. **Yep.**
A **That on reflection since this has come out, appear to have a connection.**
- Q802. **Mm-hmm.**
A **Um ---**
- Q803. **And what – what were those things that happened in January?**
A **They were, ah, two emails from a domain name, not owned by me.**
- Q804. **Mm-hmm.**
A **bruce dot lehrmann one at outlook dot com**
- Q805. **Mm-hmm.**
A **I only have one of them but I have a record of the other one just on the content of it.**
- Q806. **Right.**
A **Um ---**
- Q807. **Can you just explain that to us again, bruce?**
A **bruce dot lehrmann one at outlook dot com. So, they were in early January. Um, ah, fifteenth of January was one of them.**
- Q808. **So, you've received emails from this --- ?**
A **That same address, yeah, which is not mine.**
- Q809. **Through – through which --- ?**
A **My b dot lehrmann at Hotmail dot com, which is my personal ---**
- Q810. **b dot ---**
A **lehrmann at hotmail.**
- Q811. **Yeah. And this was in January this year?**
A **Correct.**
- FRIZZELL:**
- Q812. **Who has access to your personal emails?**
A **Ah, well, if people who know me, like I knew a lot of people.**

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Q813. Is it publicly accessible like is it - - -
A Oh, not publicly accessible, no, I mean, you know, it might have been on things like my Twitter Bio, like so, prior to the fifteenth of January, receiving this email.

BOORMAN:

Q814. Mm-hmm.
A Um, I was sent a Friend Request on Twitter by David SHARAZ, who – I’ve only now subsequently found out that he is her partner.

Q815. Right.
A Through media reporting.

Q816. Mm-hmm.
A Um, I’ve never really known him, oh, it’s possible that I met him over the course of my career when he was a journalist.

Q817. Mm-hmm.
A Um, but he sent me a Friend Request on Twitter. I got an In-box on Twitter that said, “Hi, Bruce, um, thanks for adding me. You may remember me from your days working with Linda REYNOLDS.”

Q818. Mm-hmm.
A I’ve gone, oh, okay.

Q819. And that was in January?
A Yep. Yep, before the emails.

Q820. Mm-hmm.
A And I’ve gone, okay, yep, I probably did.

Q821. Right.
A The next day I was going to reply to his message but he had blocked my account and I couldn’t message him back.

Q822. Mm-hmm.
A Um, and then I have Twitter, um, support evidence that, um, there was a numerous attempts to impersonate my account.

Q823. During what period?
A Um, early – early January, so, just the first half of January.

Q824. Mm-hmm.
A Um, various accounts being created, “Bruce the rapist.” “You’re a rapist.” Trying to follow me, tag me. Oh, I mean, I can get them from Twitter.

Q825. Yeah, yeah, yeah.
A Because obviously I – I didn’t think much at the time.

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- Q826.** Mm-hmm.
A Except I thought, oh, this is a hack job. So, I did the right thing, changed passwords, reported it.
- Q827.** Mm-hmm.
A The same thing, blocked that email address.
- Q828.** Mm-hmm.
A Um, so – so, that was with Twitter.
- Q829.** Mm-hmm.
A And then that's when I said, when I was handing my phone over, I got rid of Twitter because it was just this relentless, just impersonating, using my photo, my bio and then they would send out Tweets, they'd have no followers, but they'd Tweet at me.
- Q830.** Mm-hmm.
A Just with disgusting things.
- Q831.** Mm-hmm.
A And that's why I got rid of Twitter because I would report it and this person would then create another account.
- Q832.** Did you ever think of reporting it to police or?
A I didn't feel – I didn't think that my life was in danger and I thought it's a key-board warrior.
- Q833.** Yep.
A And I thought I was doing the right thing changing passwords and things and securing everything.
- Q834.** Mm-hmm.
A Um, um, so, I didn't think anything of it. I didn't – I certainly didn't make as I mention here.
- Q835.** Yep.
A Till after the fifteenth of Feb, when I found out about all this, so.
- Q836.** And then you say you found all about this. Are you talking about the allegation?
A The sexual assault I meant, yeah, yeah.
- Q837.** On the fifteenth of February. How did you find out?
A At around about two o'clock, um, Rosie LEWIS from the Australian, emailed my, um, boss at BAT
- Q838.** Mm-hmm.
A And he called me in and, um, sat me down and said, you know, he'd got – he sent me the email that someone at BAT emails, which I don't access to anymore.
- Q839.** Yep.

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A But to the effect that we've heard from government sources that Bruce is the alleged person.

Q840. Mm-hmm.

A That, you know, does he want to respond?

Q841. Mm-hmm.

A Um, of course I didn't and that's how I found out and on that day.

Q842. What did you think?

A Oh, I – I was ready to go.

Q843. Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

A Yep.

FRIZZELL:

Q844. How come?

A I'd had it. Yep. So - - -

BOORMAN:

Q845. It's all right.

A - - - um, that week, I wound up everything and just kind of go. My single mum was going to be okay, she can get my super.

Q846. Mm-hmm.

A Um, just – just journo's and just shit in the media.

Q847. Mm-hmm.

A Like just some of the articles and people just taking apart of years of me advising. Um, you know, I didn't get relentless phone calls from journalists but it was hurtful when I got them or my sister was getting them in the US. So, my family in the US, who I've never spoken to, have been contacted over Facebook.

Q848. Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

A Um, there's a lot of things, like Channel Nine, a person named Keith O'KEEFE, I understand has got footage of me, you know, trying for the first time, trying to access mental health because I'm – you know, I'm at my wits end because I – I know politics that when this – something like this happens and – and you're shut off from everyone, that you're – you're done.

Q849. Mm-hmm.

A Like from a – from a PR perspective. Like and I thought that there's – I can't, there's no – I can't get a job, nothing.

Q850. Mm-hmm.

A And so that's how – and I've – I've finally been able to – I've got support now.

Transcribed but not recorded by Epiq

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The transcript was checked for accuracy by DLSC Madders on 05/05/2021.

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- Q851. Yep. Mm-hmm.
A But it was a very tough sort of fortnight I suppose.
- Q852. Mm-hmm. Yep.
A Um, and who I could talk to and trust.
- Q853. Mm-hmm.
A Because, you know, I was hearing at, you know, Channel Nine took the footage of me and whatever, so.
- Q854. Mm-hmm. And you're getting that support now?
A Yeah, it's – yeah, I am.
- Q855. Yeah.
A I mean this – going through this process, like I was getting stronger.
- Q856. Mm-hmm.
A Um, you know, and I think I mentioned to you like I'd – you know, I haven't – I hadn't spoken to my counsel in – in weeks.
- Q857. Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.
A Because I just thought – and they kept saying, "Well, what do you want us to do?" Because nothing happened like, so.

Mm-hmm. Bruce, I'm going to – I'll be very blunt and I'll put it to you in relation to this allegation. You know, the allegation is that on the evening of the twenty-second, twenty – twenty-third.

FRIZZELL: Yep.

BOORMAN:

- Q858. Of March, two thousand and nineteen. You had – you had sexual intercourse without consent with Brittany HIGGINS in Parliament House.
A Mm-hmm.
- Q859. Is there any truth in that allegation? Did you, at any time have intimate sexual intercourse without consent with Brittany HIGGINS on that date?
A No, no.
- Q860. Is there anything that you can offer me in relation to an explanation as to why Miss Brittany HIGGINS would make this allegation if it was not true? If you're saying it didn't happen, if you're saying you didn't do it, what reason would Miss Brittany HIGGINS have to make this allegation?
A I – I don't know but I suspect it goes beyond just me.
- Q861. Mm-hmm. What do you mean by that?
A Well, I'm – I'm strongly of the view that there are political factors at play here.

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Q862. Mm-hmm.

A I – I have been out of politics for a very long – a period of time.

Q863. Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

A And I have – I have progressed into two other jobs where I was conducting government relations, going back to Parliament and meeting with ministers.

Q864. Mm-hmm.

A In the same building as her. Um, I don't - - -

Q865. Yeah, go on.

A - - - I just don't know, I don't know, I've got my suspicions, I just don't want to sit here and go theorizing everything because that's not the point of it, so.

Q866. Is there anything about the evening of the – you know, the twenty-second, twenty-third of March, two thousand and nineteen, that you – you haven't, you know that you haven't disclosed to me or discussed here tonight, that you can recall?

A Not – not that I can remember.

Q867. Mm-hmm.

A It was a long time ago. Um, it was dealt with as a security breach and I was certainly concerned about AFP involvement in those couple of weeks after that.

Q868. Mm-hmm. Yep.

A Um, ah, so, that's - - -

Yep. Mm-hmm. Have you got anything else you want to discuss at the moment?

FRIZZELL:

No.

BOORMAN:

Q869. Bruce, you know, over the course of the next few weeks or so, I would like to – you know, there may be things I need to clarify and discuss with you again.

A Yeah, yeah.

Q870. Of course, we'll work out after the interview the best way of communicating that with you, whether it's through Mr KORN or yourself.

A Yeah.

But, you know, this is an opportunity and I appreciate you coming in to give your recollection of events. Um, we've got a lot of things that we need to work

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through. And again, like I say, at this point in time, you're not under arrest, you are not being charged with anything. And we have further investigations to conduct. Okay.

FRIZZELL:

Q871. I might – sorry, have you had conversations with anyone about what's been alleged?

A Yes.

Q872. In detail.

A Um, um, only – I think you met him, Lyndon up in Toowoomba.

BOORMAN:

Q873. Mm-hmm

A Yep. My mum – my mum, not in detail.

Q874. Mm-hmm.

A But Lyndon, yes.

FRIZZELL:

Q875. And what about after - - -

A And he's been a big support.

BOORMAN:

Q876. Yep.

A Yeah.

FRIZZELL:

Q877. For the night out on the twenty-second into the twenty-third of March, did you talk about that night with anyone afterwards? Did you talk about it with Alex, with Austin?

A Oh, I've – yeah, probably only to the extent that it was the Defence drinks.

BOORMAN:

Q878. Mm-hmm.

A Um, and they – they were useful and I met who I needed to meet.

Mm-hmm.

FRIZZELL:

Q879. Yep. Who would you have spoken to about that?

A Oh, oh, yes, Alex. Um, oh, no, um, possibly Daniel WARD in the Prime Minister's office.

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BOORMAN:

Q880. Mm-hmm.

A Um, ah, I was very close to him. Um, he was – like he – he was sort of helping me like, you know, if an opportunity there at Parliament the week before.

Q881. Yep.

A Um, ah, I just – like I can't remember people – like it's – those are sort of definite ones I would have discussed it with, at that time, about the – you know, the drinks and yeah.

Q882. All right. Is there anything further, at this point that you wish to tell me about this matter?

A No, um, no. It's – I think you can tell I've – yeah, my world has been rocked, so.

Q883. Mm-hmm. Have the questions you've answered here today been of your own free will?

A Yes.

Q884. Has there been any threat, any threat to make you answer any of my questions here today?

A No.

Q885. Has there been any inducement made to you to answer my questions today?

A I'm surprised youse have to ask that. (laughs)

Q886. Has there been any promise made to you to answer my questions here today?

A No.

Q887. All right. Well, Bruce, thanks for coming in and participating in this record of interview. Is there anything further you wish to say?

A No. I suppose, um, in terms of my movement, am I able to go back to Toowoomba and - - - ?

Q888. Absolutely.

A Okay. All right. Well, I've got my psychologist up there and things, so. Oh, well, no, I haven't – when you say, have I been talking about the allegation specifically, like they – they – my psychologist knows, I don't talk in detail and that's obviously been on the advice of counsel.

Q889. Yeah, yeah. Yes.

A Because I'm aware that you could subpoena them, so, yeah.

FRIZZELL:

Yeah.

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BOORMAN:

Q890. Yes, yeah. Yep.
A The Twitter, do you want the records of me reporting the Twitter?

Q891. Yeah. Anything you can do that you believe may be able to assist us
in our investigation that would be appreciated, um - - -
A Okay.

FRIZZELL:

Q892. I can give you my email.
A Okay, yeah.

BOORMAN:

Q893. Yeah. So, you know, what's – what's going to happen now. Like I
said, we've got further inquiries of investigation to undertake. Let
me be very clear, you're not under arrest. You can, you know, you're
not restricted in any movement or anything like that.
A Okay.

Q894. And the investigation is on-going. As I said, there may be – you
know, we may want to speak to you again to clarify things or if we
have any questions. And we'll be in touch.
A Yeah, that's fine, yeah. I – I didn't try to avoid flying.

Q895. Yeah, that's fine.
A Um, because the media thing is - - -

Q896. Yeah, we can come to you, we can come to you, that's fine.
A Um, the only thing that you've skipped out, um, I don't – well, I don't
know, that's probably the wrong way to put it. But a week after that
meeting with Fiona, there was another round of discussions that I
had with her.

Q897. Mm-hmm.
A Um, and a gentleman called Reg CHAMBERLIN. Um, but that was via
telephone, um, where she just confirmed my version of events.

Q898. Mm-hmm.
A Um, and I think he now works in the Prime Minister's office, um, but
he was working with the Special Minister of State and handling staff
matters, so, they were finalising my – my particulars and obviously
with the Department of Finance to – to leave.

Q899. Did they give you anything in writing, Bruce?
A They did.

Q900. Mm-hmm.
A Um, an email which I've – because I specifically asked at that point to
do it in writing.

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- Q901. Mm-hmm.
A Um, because of the fact that, um, I wasn't allowed to do notes and things, so, I thought if they're going to be alleging a security breach
- - -
- Q902. Was that common practice?
A Um, unfortunately, yes.
- Q903. Mm-hmm.
A Fiona BROWN, um, um, like I'm – she was just a bit difficult to work with.
- Q904. Mm-hmm.
A And in terms of her ways of working in the office was unorthodox.
- Q905. Mm-hmm. Right.
A I found.
- Q906. Yes.
A Um, in terms of being improper, um, but so, and when I said, like I wasn't allowed to bring phones or even a notebook in, I found that quite peculiar.
- Q907. Mm-hmm.
A Um, but that second – that happened when I'd already left the building that phone call, yeah.
- Q908. During your time at Parliament House, had you been – was there any incidents prior to this incident that you were spoken to about?
A No, no, not formally, no.
- Q909. Mm-hmm. All right.
A No. no. Um, not – not – no, by a superior or by a minister.
- Q910. Mm-hmm.
A In the ordinary course, ministers are shouting at me all the time, but, you know, "Bring me this or bring me that."
- Q911. Mm-hmm, mm-hmm, yeah. All right. Is there anything else you want to tell me or bring up at this point?
A Ah, no, I – I apologise I didn't – I missed that.
- Q912. No, that's fine, that's – thank you.
A I – I, um, ah, but that's – that's all. I mean my recollection of that was in similar with the first Fiona BROWN meeting, just confirming that meeting.
- Q913. Yep.
A Reg didn't say much at all.
- Q914. Mm-hmm.

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A Um, yeah, and then I got my notice from the Department of Finance, so.

Q915. Yep.

A Which – which detailed, it just said the, “security breach,” so.

Mm-hmm. All right. Any further questions at this point?

FRIZZELL: No.

BOORMAN:

Q916. All right. I’ve told you that the investigation is on-going. We may need to reach out to you again. You’ll be given our contact details and everything like that. I’m waiting to speak to my colleague in relation to – to your telephone.

A Yeah.

Q917. All right. Do you agree the time is now six thirty-seven pm in the evening?

A Yep, yep.

All right. Thirty-seven. All right. Bruce, this record of interview - - -

ROI CONCLUDED AT SIX THIRTY-SEVEN PM