

WITNESS STATEMENT

Katharine Rosemary WILKINSON

1. I am 62 years of age and live in [REDACTED] Victoria.
2. Copies of documents to which I refer in this statement appear in a folder which has been marked **Katharine Wilkinson MFI-1**. Where in this statement a number appears in bold, that is a reference to the tabulated number behind which the document appears.

Background

3. I began working as a radiation therapist in 1971. Since then, I have been a member of my union, the Number 3 Branch of the Health Services Union (**No. 3 Branch**), also known as the Australian Health Professionals Association.
4. For many years I was a workplace delegate at the Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre (**Peter Mac**). In the early 2000s I joined the Branch Committee of Management (**BCOM**) of the No. 3 Branch.
5. I became Vice President of the No. 3 Branch in the 2000s. There was no competition for that position. I volunteered when the vacancy arose and it appeared that no one else was keen to take on the office. I was Vice President at the time of the amalgamation of the HSU East Branch and HSUEast in 2010. During the HSU East period, until June 2012, I continued to hold the position of Vice President.
6. I was also on the Audit and Compliance Committee (**AC Committee**) of the HSU East Branch from the time of amalgamation until June 2012.

How the BCOM operated for Victoria No. 3 Branch

7. Members of the No. 3 Branch BCOM were usually appointed on an honorary basis from members at the various employer sites. It consisted of all kinds of professionals such as physiotherapists, social workers and radiation therapists like myself.

8. The BCOM met approximately every month or at least once a quarter. We would often have an extraordinary meeting if it was required with a particularly urgent matter regarding an industrial matter that required a meeting.
9. Throughout my time on the No. 3 Branch BCOM there was no discord within the BCOM and no sense of unrest or dissatisfaction amongst the members. On the contrary, my experience was that the members were happy with the way the No. 3 Branch was being run and the quality of representation that they received.

Disclosure of financial and other information to No. 3 Branch BCOM

10. Prior to No. 3 Branch BCOM meetings we would be provided with informal advice regarding anything that was extraordinary to be presented at the meeting.
11. We were advised of the meetings a couple of weeks in advance and would sometimes be provided with an agenda and a request for any additional items to be added to the agenda.
12. At the meetings, we would usually be provided with minutes of previous meetings, some outline of the financial statements and reports from organisers about their activities over the previous months so we would know what was happening as far as the members were concerned. We also received lists of new and resigned members.
13. We were allowed to retain all documents we were given at these BCOM meetings.
14. As I have recently retired I have not retained any of my documents from those meetings.
15. Aside from the annual auditor's financial report, we would get financial statements throughout the year at the BCOM meetings. These would show how much money the BCOM had.
16. I would loosely describe these financial statements as profit and loss statements. The BCOM would examine the statements and get advice on what they saw.
17. I recall that the statements would record income being received and record expenditure against various categories. It was a comparative document that showed the current year in one column and the previous year in the other.

18. Occasionally the BCOM also received a balance sheet showing where the No. 3 Branch stood in terms of its assets. I recall that we were always in profit.
19. The financial statements seemed very well managed from a bookkeeping point of view.
20. The BCOM members would inspect the financial documents. I recall that Mr Reuben Dixon (**Mr Dixon**) was forensic in terms of finding out what each of the accounts was on the financial statements. He would find any anomalies, but I do not recall any specific problems.
21. All of the members of the BCOM were very interested in the financials. However, Mr Dixon was the member who most often asked questions and instigated follow up discussion among the members. The discussions would be held until we were all satisfied that there were no issues of concern.
22. I recall that questions would often be asked regarding the No. 3 Branch's financials in comparison to the previous year's financials. The differences were often due to minor fluctuations in the membership, for example, when Enterprise Bargaining Agreement (EBA) campaigns were being run. Throughout my time on BCOM, from the early 2000s through until September 2010, our membership steadily increased.
23. Ms Kathy Jackson (**Ms Jackson**) would answer the questions about the financials. I do not recall any other employees of the No. 3 Branch present at the BCOM meetings unless we had specific questions for specific employees.
24. Ms Jane Holt (**Ms Holt**) would sometimes also be available to ask questions of, although, she was not available in person at the BCOM meetings.
25. On the whole, I do not recall the BCOM ever being concerned by any mismanagement or anomalies.

The Peter Mac Settlement

26. At the time of the Peter Mac settlement in late 2003 I was an employee of Peter Mac. I was employed in the Radiation Oncology Division.
27. The Divisions in Peter Mac were run and managed separately at the time.

28. I understand there were a number of discussions with regard to the research division having breached employee entitlements like wages, and these problems took some time to resolve. I was not privy to those discussions other than being advised by the organisers and Ms Jackson.
29. I believe the matter was being dealt with in proceedings in a Tribunal. A settlement was reached between Peter Mac and No. 3 Branch whereby Peter Mac paid the No. 3 Branch in the order of a couple of hundred thousand dollars.
30. I am unsure as to why the money was paid to the union for the breaches of employee entitlements. To the best of my recollection, it was because the underpayments had been happening for some years, making it impossible to pay back all the money to the employees, so a settlement was reached where some money was paid to the No. 3 Branch to help establish proper and correct ongoing entitlements.
31. It was a totally unexpected windfall for the No. 3 Branch.
32. The BCOM discussed the settlement money and decided that the money should be kept to further benefit the interests of the members. I recall that the BCOM passed a resolution approving the earmarking of the Peter Mac money as a fund that could be expended by Ms Jackson on a discretionary basis for union purposes including advancing the industrial and political interests of the union. I also recall that Ms Jackson was also authorised to spend for her own personal purposes because she had not been receiving sitting fees.
33. It was separated from the normal financial dealings of the union and put into a separate account. I do not recall what the account was called that the money was deposited into. Members of the BCOM always referred to it as the Peter Mac money.
34. Over the years, I recall Ms Jackson raising with the BCOM her intention to spend some of the Peter Mac money for a particular purpose and securing the consensus of the BCOM for that expenditure. Formal resolutions were not passed on these occasions because we proceeded on the basis that the original resolution continued to operate in relation to the Peter Mac money. These occasions were more a case of Ms Jackson keeping the BCOM informed and consulting with us about

decisions she proposed to make in relation to expenditure of the Peter Mac money.

35. I also recall that some other amounts were added to the Peter Mac money fund by resolution of the BCOM, for example, when a fine was received by the No. 3 Branch.
36. I do not recall if this discussion happened more than once, but I have a feeling that when any new members joined BCOM we would explain the Peter Mac money situation to them.
37. It would be explained to new members so that they would understand when it came up in discussions about the accounts or when anyone mentioned the Peter Mac settlement.
38. As far as I am aware, the Peter Mac money sat in the bank.
39. I cannot recall any specific discussions or approvals. I recall the Peter Mac money being used for holding functions for members at workplaces and similar activities.
40. I also recall a time when the HSU No. 1 Branch needed a loan due to some financial difficulties, so we agreed to loan them some money. I am not sure whether this came out of the Peter Mac money, but I understand it probably did as there was no other money. The members' money (their union dues) was used to keep the union running.
41. I do not recall the Peter Mac money ever being used to fund candidates in parliamentary elections. I also do not recall any proposals to fund candidates in other union election.
42. I vaguely recall a proposal to use money to fund another union's fund-raising activities, but I cannot recall the details.
43. When Ms Jackson would propose a particular spending item she would talk the BCOM through that proposal.
44. I can recall situations where Ms Jackson's proposal got voted down by the BCOM. For example on one occasion Ms Jackson proposed an advertising campaign against the Howard government's Work Choices legislation. It came across to the BCOM as a campaign of support favouring the ALP and opposing

the Liberal Party. The BCOM knew the members would not look upon this spending kindly because on the whole, the membership is a conservative group.

45. The proposals Ms Jackson made were made orally and were not put into written proposals or onto the meeting agendas.
46. I recall that the minutes for the meetings would record a summary of the discussion that took place regarding the approval or disapproval of expenditure.
47. When the financials were then circulated at the next meeting people would ask about where money had gone in light of the discussions at the previous meeting.

National Health Development Account

48. I was not aware of the National Health Development Account (NHDA) until I read recent media reports and do not recall ever seeing or hearing reference to the NHDA.
49. I recall discussion about the Peter Mac money, but I do not recall any discussion of an account named NHDA.

BCOM Sitting Fees

50. Members of the No. 3 Branch BCOM received modest sitting fees to defray the costs associated with attending meetings.
51. The amount received was usually \$100 cash per meeting. I recall that the BCOM had resolved for the payment of higher sitting fees than this amount and that the BCOM members had agreed to contribute the difference towards expenses associated with protecting and advancing the interests of the union.
52. In this way, amounts would be withdrawn from time to time in cash. Some of the cash was used to pay the \$100 sitting fees and the balance, representing the donated portion of the sitting fees, was retained by Ms Jackson.

HSU East Branch and HSUeast

Audit and Compliance Committee

53. Before No. 3 Branch amalgamated into HSU East, BCOM meeting material was sometimes emailed to the members, however this never included financial information.

54. During HSU East days, things were very different. Financial information was limited to AC Committee meetings only. At the AC Committee meetings, we were handed spread sheets and profit and loss statements. I cannot recall the nature of the documents very well as we were told to return the documents.
55. The financial documents handed out at the AC Committee meetings were numbered so that they could be collected. We were not allowed to retain the documents.
56. There were about ten people on the AC Committee. These included representatives from the three amalgamated branches plus the accountant, Mr Barry Gibson (**Mr Gibson**). There were two to three representatives from each branch.
57. All the members of the AC Committee were supposed to be rank and file members from the larger HSU East Branch BCOM.
58. The AC Committee consisted of myself, Ms Iris Knight (**Ms Knight**) who was vice president with me at the time, Mr Stephen Pollard (**Mr Pollard**) who was the president at the time, Ms Jenny Dunlop (**Ms Dunlop**), Mr Michael Williamson (**Mr Williamson**), Mr Peter Mylan (**Mr Mylan**), Ms Jackson and a few others who I cannot recall.
59. Mr Mylan and Mr Williamson were both paid officials of the union rather than rank and file members.
60. Ms Jackson was the only other representative from the No. 3 Branch. Mr Marco Bolano (**Mr Bolano**) was not on the AC Committee.

First amalgamated General Council meeting

61. To the best of my recollection the first meeting of the amalgamated union was held on 3 September 2010 at Brighton-Le-Sands. This meeting was a general meeting outlining the way forward for the new amalgamated union. There were no financial documents handed out at this meeting as I recall.

First AC Committee meeting

62. The AC Committee met for the first time on 27 October 2010 at the Sports Centre in Melbourne. I recall this meeting because we were very surprised about having

to hand back the financial documents at the meeting. This was the first time I had experienced being asked to hand back documents at a meeting.

63. Mr Williamson told us that we had to hand the documents back. I believe Mr Pollard may have also told us to give the documents back.
64. It appeared that there was an expectation that that was how things are done in NSW, and the Victorians were expected to fall into line.
65. I did not query it at the time with Mr Williamson or Mr Pollard. However I did discuss it with Ms Jackson and Ms Dunlop. I said to them, "*What was that all about?*" They expressed surprise about what happened at the meeting.

AC Committee meeting 25 November 2010

66. The next meeting of the AC Committee was held in the union's Sydney office in the afternoon of 25 November 2010. The same procedure with regard to collecting all documents at the end of the meeting was repeated. Mr Williamson then took the Victorian members on a tour of the Sydney offices and TV studio.

AC Committee meeting 7 February 2011

67. The third meeting of the AC Committee I attended was held on 7 February 2011 in Melbourne at the union offices. Before the meeting we were not given any details or documents.
68. At this meeting I was sitting next to Ms Jackson. We were handed an outline document of about ten pages in length. It was provided for information and it was not discussed. Ms Jackson pointed out a part in the document where Mr Williamson indicated that he was a stakeholder in an IT business. I believe it was a company called United Edge, but I cannot be sure.
69. On being shown this by Ms Jackson, I became alarmed as this was very unusual. I was alarmed because I knew it was an organisation that was dealing with the union and providing IT services. As far as Ms Jackson and I were aware the arrangement with the union had not been put out to tender and that there were issues of conflict of interest.
70. I attempted at this meeting to keep the documents handed out to us, but Ms Knight would come around and collect them.

71. I did not challenge anyone at the meeting to keep the documents, as I was still dumbfounded and shocked at the events.

Further meetings of the AC Committee

72. I believe the next meeting of the AC Committee was held in May 2011. This was the meeting when Ms Jackson, Ms Dunlop, Ms Milica Nenadovic from HSU No. 1 Branch and the other Victorian members started to say, *"We want to hold onto this. We want to hold onto these documents."*
73. The response from Mr Pollard and Mr Williamson was to the effect of *"Oh, you know, this is confidential material. We don't want it getting out."*
74. Set up in the room were about 40 lever arch folders of documents containing what I believed were the entire accounts of the union. They were lined up like a wall of lever arch files. When meetings were held in Melbourne, these folders would be transported to Melbourne, unpacked, and set up in the meeting room against the wall.
75. When Mr Williamson was challenged about retaining the documents handed out at the meeting, he would motion towards the 40 lever arch folders and say words to the effect of *"Look, there are the books. You're welcome to go and look at any of the invoices and documents."*
76. Finding any material in the folders would have been like finding a needle in a haystack. It seemed to me that the folders were put into the meeting rooms to intimidate and deter anyone from challenging the accounts.
77. This pattern was repeated at all AC Committee meetings going forward, even when the meetings were held in Melbourne and the lever arch folders had to be brought down from Sydney.
78. At the AC Committee meetings, after September 2011, I asked to see various items in the files. Specifically, I wanted to see documentation associated with Communigraphix, United Edge and Access Focus as I had seen these companies mentioned in reports from the media, namely in The Sydney Morning Herald and The Australian and located behind **Tab 1 of Wilkinson MFI-1.**
79. At the meeting in Sydney on 13 November 2011, I asked to be shown actual invoices and documents from the files as listed in the financial statements. A

number of these were missing and I was advised by the bookkeeper, Mr Gibson, that they had been removed by Mr Ian Temby (Mr Temby) and his assistants. I queried why the AC Committee had not been advised of these removals and if there was a list of all the removals from the files. I did not receive an answer. I asked Mr Gibson for copies of the missing items to be provided to me. Someone in the meeting advised that, according to the rules, such requests were required to be fulfilled within 24 hours. I did not receive any copies of the files at any stage; neither within the next 24 hours nor later. I believe I emailed Mr Mylan a week later advising him of this omission. A copy of this email is located behind Tab 2 of Wilkinson MFI-1. I do not recall receiving a response from him.

80. At the next meeting of the AC Committee on 7 February 2012 in Melbourne, I noted in the minutes for the meeting of the AC Committee held in Sydney on the 13 November 2011 and located behind Tab 3 of Wilkinson MFI-1, an item under 'General Business' which read: "... Mr Mylan has made enquiries of the Union's Lawyers who have advised that in light of the current Police investigation and the internal Governance review that it would be inappropriate for such documents to be released." This was news to me.

No. 3 Branch concerns over members' service from the amalgamated union

81. Prior to the amalgamation, No. 3 Branch had been working satisfactorily. However, following the amalgamation, No. 3 Branch people were very concerned about the members getting good service, and we felt that was being eroded. We felt that the service the members were receiving was going to hell in a hand basket.
82. Subsequent to the amalgamation, changes were made to operations of the Union and the way members communicated with officials. Within the first months after the amalgamation, Victorian members raised concerns about the deterioration in access to and quality of industrial advice, liaison and representation. When communication with members was centralised through the Sydney office, this resulted in miscommunications, delays and failure to act. All union memos, letters, emails, communiqués and other material were required to be authorised and distributed centrally through the General Secretary, Mr Williamson. Access to

membership lists and email distribution lists was now denied to Victorian officials and councillors.

83. The eight Victorian Health Professional (VHP) Councillors consisting of myself, Ms Lia Agoustakis, Mr Shane Brasier, Mr Dixon, Ms Dunlop, Mr Mark Hindson, Ms Lisa Magnusson, and Mr Stephen Sigismondi of the HSU East (previously members of BCOM No 3 Vic Branch), grew concerned about the conduct of council meetings as well as the issues mentioned above and requested a meeting with Mr Williamson prior to the Council Meeting on 8 February 2011. A discussion paper was given to Mr Williamson on 7 February 2011 which outlined the issues the VHPs wished to address and is located at **Tab 4 of Wilkinson MFI-1**.
84. The outcome of the meeting with VHP council members was inconclusive and unsatisfactory as Mr Williamson gave no clear undertaking to address the matters raised. I, and the other VHP Council Members at this meeting, considered that our concerns and needs were being dismissed without due consideration. Mr Williamson was clearly irritated by our deputation and I felt intimidated by his responses and his body language.
85. At Council meetings throughout the first half of 2011, the VHP Council Members continued to raise these matters by attempting to get them on to the agendas for these meetings, but with limited success.
86. These concerns had started well before Mr Williamson had been charged. These concerns were being put to the amalgamated meetings from the Council meeting of 8 February 2011 held in Melbourne.
87. Whilst the Victorians did raise concerns about access to information and the processes in place throughout the time between September 2010 and September 2011, at no stage was there any evidence of so-called power struggles or factional problems within the HSU East of the kind that erupted after September 2011. Nor was there any mention of demerger of the HSU East before September 2011.

Ms Jackson's concerns regarding Mr Williamson

88. In August 2011, Ms Jackson came forward to the union with concerns over the behaviour of Mr Williamson. Not Mr Williamson's general behaviour regarding the members or meetings, but corrupt behaviour.

89. In June 2011 Ms Jackson and I had a private meeting where she expressed her concerns to me, and informed me that she was going to hire a private investigator to look into Mr Williamson's affairs. At the time this was separate from my concerns about the membership receiving good service.
90. I recall saying to Ms Jackson, "*Look, it sounds dreadful. Yes, let's find out what's really going on,*" because there was no assistance from anybody else. We were also aware that we could not trust anyone from NSW. They would defend Mr Williamson rather than help with any disclosure.
91. After the meetings of 7 and 8 February 2011, I became increasingly disturbed about the behaviour and conduct of Mr Williamson and the NSW officers and members on council.
92. It appeared that the Victorian branches of the HSU East were being stripped of governance with regard to members' needs, non-replacement of officers and administrative staff, centralisation to Sydney, downgrading policies such as the professional indemnity insurance for members, as well as moves to appropriate assets within Victoria, such as the office building in Park Street South Melbourne. Through discussions, both face-to-face and via email, the other Victorian councillors and officials indicated that they shared my concerns.
93. Ms Jackson requested a meeting with me in early June 2011. Following on from various concerns we had shared, such as the possible conflict of interest issue identified at the AC Committee meeting of 7 February 2011, Ms Jackson voiced her concerns to me at this meeting about anomalies with regard to Mr Williamson's pecuniary interests and possession of many items beyond his known income.
94. It appeared that there was a pattern of systemic corruption over many years. I asked if she had brought these matters to the attention of senior officials within the union. She affirmed that she had discussed it with several people, but she was concerned that she could not trust people who were associated with Mr Williamson. Ms Jackson was concerned that she would be subject to attack and smear within the union, the ALP and the media. However, she was insistent that she could not turn a blind eye to corruption and misconduct.

95. She proposed that she would seek assistance from an independent investigator to explore the affairs of Mr Williamson. I agreed with her and suggested she proceed.

HSU East Council Committee meetings after Mr Williamson was charged by the police

96. Ms Jackson took allegations of serious corruption against Mr Williamson to the NSW police on 12 September 2011.
97. After Ms Jackson raised her concerns about Mr Williamson to the union, things began to get very unpleasant within the union.
98. The Council meetings (both teleconferences and face-to-face) I attended after 12 September 2011 indicated to me that the NSW councillors and NSW officials were angry that Ms Jackson had reported Mr Williamson's alleged misconduct to the police and regarded her as a traitor by going outside the confines of the Council and that she deserved punishment for transgressing the 'invisible' code of conduct.
99. Subsequent to 12 September 2011, the NSW councillors voted as a block against resolutions and proposals submitted by Ms Jackson and Mr Bolano and invariably voted in favour of resolutions moved at the initiative of Mr Mylan and his NSW associates.
100. On 17 September 2011 the Union Council had a teleconference meeting which was extraordinarily heated. I believe Mr Williamson was at the 17 September 2011 teleconference.
101. The No. 1 Branch people and No. 3 Branch people were sitting together in the same office in Melbourne for the teleconference, and were joined by NSW on the other end of the line.
102. During the teleconference the NSW people were claiming that Ms Jackson wanted to take over the union. They were also talking about wanting to disamalgamate.
103. We had no idea what they were talking about by disamalgamation as this was the first time it had been mentioned to us.
104. It appeared that after concerns about Mr Williamson's behaviour came to light, the NSW people started to claim that the amalgamation was terrible and that all

the problems were the fault of the Victorians. They were calling us Mexicans in the teleconference.

105. From that time onwards, NSW Council Members began to talk of the union's demerger. I believed this to be their way of excising the Victorian elements to protect and quarantine the NSW section and personnel from further scrutiny.
106. At the teleconference on 17 September 2011, the NSW Councillors used their numbers to out-vote the Victorian call for an independent enquiry into Mr Williamson and the NSW union's activities and finances. It was proposed by the NSW Councillors that any such review be conducted in-house and lead by Mr Gerard Hayes (Mr Hayes) and Mr Mylan. Ms Jackson and Mr Bolano advised that they would initiate a plebiscite of members to call for an independent review into this matter because of concerns of a cover-up.
107. A week later, on about 20 September 2011 another teleconference was held where it was agreed that Council would support the appointment of independent reviewers. Subsequently Mr Temby and Mr Robertson were appointed. I believe that the NSW Councillors and officials were extremely reluctant to agree to this matter, but acquiesced because to resist would indicate their compliance with a cover-up.
108. I believed I recognised a few people's voices on the NSW end of the line during these teleconferences that were abusing us. I thought I recognised Mr Hayes' voice, Mr Mylan's voice, Mr Pollard's voice and I think Mr Williamson's voice at the 24 September 2011 teleconference but I am not sure if he was in attendance.
109. Prior to this September 2011 meeting, Ms Jackson had been marginalised. This was done by not filling vacancies in the Victorian branches so they were in effect running on the smell of an oily rag. In addition, at meetings, issues about setting KPIs for the organisers were being given precedence over actual members' needs, such as members' OH&S problems in the workplace. The organisation had become very Sydney-centric and both Ms Jackson and Mr Bolano had taken issue with this.

Pay rises

110. Pay rises for the Officials of HSU East were approved in late 2010 or early 2011 at a Council meeting at the Radisson Hotel in Sydney before Mr Williamson had

- stood aside. The Victorian members opposed this salary hike however they were pushed through by Mr Williamson, Mr Pollard and the NSW members who all voted in a bloc.
111. The justification for the salary increase was said to be a report of Ms Beth Jensen (Ms Jensen). However, at the meeting where the resolution was proposed, the report was not made available to councillors and several of them, I recall in particular Dr Anthony Llewellyn being one, questioned the direction to accept the report unseen. I recall that a resolution was put forward that Ms Jensen's report on remuneration be provided at the next meeting of Council in February 2011 in order that Council could make an informed decision on this matter. Mr Williamson and Mr Pollard (Chair of the meeting) were clearly agitated by these challenges to their direction.
 112. At the meeting of Council on 8 February 2011 in Melbourne, Ms Jackson and I attempted to defeat the approval of salary increases. I asked the Chair, Mr Pollard, to allow this to be considered *in camera*, without the presence of officers, observers and staff, in an attempt to put this matter on hold. I was unsure of correct procedure and the Chair ignored my request. The Victorian councillors and Ms Jackson were concerned about the huge salary increases and we considered them to be unprecedented, unacceptable and wrong.
 113. The recommendation that the report be accepted was passed. This meant that the General Secretary now had full, singular discretion regarding the setting of salary levels.
 114. A resolution to accept a new performance management process followed shortly after this item. This time I was successful in having the matter held *in camera*, although it was too late to block the salary increases. All officials, including Ms Jackson and Mr Williamson, and observers had to leave the room. Mr Pollard (Chair of the meeting) and other NSW members were surprised by this action, but they ensured that the status quo was maintained. After the meeting, Ms Jackson told me that Mr Williamson was ropable because of my action and he told her she should keep her Councillors under control.
 115. Ms Jackson was beside herself with anxiety over the pay rises. Both Ms Jackson and Mr Bolano opposed the rises.

116. The rise ensured that all the officials were being paid the same for their level of seniority. Mr Williamson was on more money than everyone else at about \$390,000 per year.
117. To the best of my recollection the pay rises approximately doubled Mr Williamson's pay.

Meeting prior to the Centenary Convention

118. On Sunday 13 November 2011, prior to the HSU Centenary Convention commencing on Monday 14 November 2011, I attended a meeting of the HSU East Council. Everyone from the HSU Executive was there except for Mr Williamson.
119. Ms Jackson and Mr Bolano were present at the meeting.
120. It was a normal committee meeting of the HSU East Branch Committee. The meeting was chaired by Mr Pollard.
121. At the meeting there were no confidence motions being moved against Ms Jackson. It was just an awful meeting. It was the NSW people sort of taunting the Victorians, including and especially Ms Jackson and Mr Bolano. The meeting was just a farce.
122. The NSW members all lined up on one side of the room. There were rude exchanges passed between some members of the NSW and Victorian sides. I remember comments from the NSW members such as *"Go back to where you came from. We don't want to be amalgamated with you anymore and you're trying to take over the union."*
123. The attitude of the NSW people came as a surprise to us. We were aware that they were angry with Ms Jackson and Mr Bolano because they had blown the whistle on Mr Williamson – Ms Jackson in particular.
124. I recall one NSW person saying to me, *"Look, leave Michael [Williamson] alone. He's doing a really good job for us. You know, don't rock the boat."*
125. I was very surprised by this and replied, *"But if he's done something wrong, you know, you've got to – we can't let it happen. It's just not, you can't do that. It's wrong."*

126. The person replied, "*Oh, you don't understand. You have no idea how much good he's done for our union over the years here in New South Wales. You Victorians, go back to where you came from.*"
127. I was shocked at these comments as people do not usually talk like that.
128. I cannot now recall who the person was who made the comments.
129. I do not recall any specific conversations Ms Jackson had at that meeting. It was really quite a rabble. I recall her trying to say to the NSW councillors, "*Look, it's not about taking over the union or anything like that. It's about the fact that, you know, we've got somebody who's been very dodgy and we need to have an independent inquiry to find out what the hell is going on with this activity within the union.*"
130. From what I recall, the meeting ended in disarray. It was a real shouting match. I do not specifically recall how it ended. It was extraordinarily hostile.
131. Following the meeting I went back to work in Victoria on the Monday. I only heard reports of what happened at the Centenary Convention.

Mental Health Workers Issue

132. In late November, I attended a meeting of the HSU National Council in Sydney. Mr Brown was the acting National President (replacing Mr Williamson in this role). Mr Brown and non-Victorian Council Members of the National Branch, including Mr Lloyd Williams (**Mr Williams**) from the No. 2 Branch began the mental health workers issue in Victoria.
133. I saw the issue Mr Williams raised about "owning" certain members to be an orchestrated, pre-planned move to shift some members between branches in Victoria so as to delay a particular and high-profile EBA which Ms Jackson was associated with.
134. I took it as a vexatious ploy to try and discredit Ms Jackson and Mr Bolano so that the members who were due to get pay rises would have them delayed.

General concerns

135. In the early days we were keen about, and Ms Jackson was very enthusiastic about, the benefits through amalgamating. However within a few short months

after the amalgamation, it became apparent that the NSW branch was controlling everything.

136. It was not until the second meeting in Sydney in November 2010 that I began to become concerned that the Victorian contingent of the Council were being railroaded into complying with the direction of the NSW officials of the Union. I was also forming the realisation that the NSW Councillors would support, without opposition, any proposal from Mr Williamson and the NSW executive members of Council.
137. Any questioning by Victorian Councillors of any agenda items was treated patronisingly, with the implication that we were 'Johnny-come-lately' in the new 'big world' of union matters. This made it difficult to have matters of concern dealt with in a reasonable way. I began to form the view that Victorian issues would not be given due consideration and weight.
138. I also began to form the view that the Victorian branches' inclusion in the amalgamation was to bolster the numbers for the NSW section in order to increase numbers, power and money to influence political outcomes. I did not see any advantage (as had been anticipated) in the advancement of our members' workplace entitlements, representation and rights. I felt disillusioned.
139. Also, this meant that our members were getting the short end of the stick as far as getting access to, and timely access to what they paid their fees for. This was the case up until August 2011.
140. Then the revelations as to Mr Williamson's behaviour came out, after which the NSW attitude to the amalgamation completely changed to one of wanting to disamalgamate and get rid of the Victorians.
141. I believe they wished to disamalgamate to protect Mr Williamson and to keep him quarantined from the people who were blowing the whistle from Victoria.

SIGNED:



KATHARINE ROSEMARY WILKINSON

DATED this 13th day of June 2014