

BUNDABERG HOSPITAL COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

Statement by Joan Dooley – 16 August 2005

1. What is your full name?

Joan Ellen DOOLEY

2. What is your date of birth?

3. What is your residential address?

4. Have you been Peter Leck’s secretary? If so, for what period? Were you his secretary in March and April of 2005?

I have been Peter Leck’s Executive Support Officer from his commencement of employment at Bundaberg Health Service District on 23 November 1992 until his departure on 14 April 2005. During this period I was seconded to other positions within the Health Service:
25 March 2002 – 20 July 2003 – Community Network Support Worker
25 February 2004 – 23 July 2004 – Project Officer Consumer and Community Participation

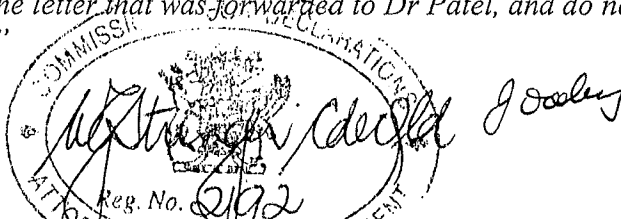
5. Did you attend meetings of the Bundaberg Health District Council (“the Council) in March and April of 2005. If so, do you recall any suggestions being put forward at those meetings that a letter of support should be sent to Dr Jayant Patel? If so, what are the details of those suggestions, and who made them?

I attended District Health Council meetings as Executive Support Officer for the District Manager to take minutes of meetings, and was present at meetings on 23 March 2005, 25 May 2005, and 15 June 2005.

At the meeting on 23 March 2005, the following resolution was made “*Moved Councillor Powell, seconded Councillor Pyefinch, all in favour, that the District Health Council forward a letter of support to Dr Jay Patel.*”

At the meeting on 4 May 2005, the following resolution was made “*Dr Michael Daly to bring this request to the attention of the ESO, and these will be amended at the next meeting.*”

At the meeting on 25 May 2005, the following resolution was made “*Moved Councillor Jensen, seconded Councillor Cleary “That Councillors are deeply distressed with the letter that was forwarded to Dr Patel, and do not agree with the content”*”

The image shows the official seal of the Bundaberg Hospital Commission of Inquiry. The seal is circular and contains the text 'COMMISSION OF INQUIRY' and 'BUNDABERG HEALTH SERVICE DISTRICT'. In the center of the seal is a coat of arms. Overlaid on the seal is a handwritten signature, and to the right of the seal, the name 'Joan Dooley' is written in cursive.

At the meeting on 15 June 2005, the following resolution was made *“Moved Councillor Powell, seconded Councillor Pyefinch that item number 02-03/05 from the minutes of 23/03/2005 be corrected to reflect “That the local Medical Community expressed regret at the media exposure of the Dr Patel issue(s), and they considered it denied the opportunity of natural justice given that an investigation was already occurring.”*

6. **Who usually drafted and who usually signed off on the Council’s correspondence? Can you recall what kinds of Council correspondence were usually drafted by Peter Leck and signed off by Viv Chase? Can you recall what kinds of Council correspondence were usually drafted by Viv Chase personally? Was it the usual practice that Council correspondence, drafted by Viv Chase, be marked with the direction, “Enquiries to: Peter Leck, District Manager.”**

There were two (2) different processes utilized for preparation of District Health Council correspondence.

- a) The Council would request Peter Leck, District Manager Bundaberg Health Service District to draft correspondence on their behalf, which was then faxed to Viv Chase, Chairperson, for his approval/changes. Once approved I would prepare a final version, and notify Mr Chase that it was ready for signature. Mr Chase would then present to Executive Services and sign the relevant correspondence. Once signed I would mail the final version, and place a file copy on the relevant file.
- b) Mr Chase would prepare draft correspondence on behalf of the District Health Council, and on occasion ask Peter Leck to proof read and if necessary, suggest changes. As far as I am aware, the final version of correspondence drafted by Mr Chase was typed by me as Executive Support Officer, and put on health service letterhead for signature by Mr Chase. Once signed, I would mail the final version, and place a file copy on the relevant file.

I am unable to identify any specific patterns about who drafted what type of District Health Council correspondence. It was discussed at the meetings who would do what, and Peter Leck, Viv Chase and myself were then involved with preparation of same.

All correspondence from the District Health Council was marked “Enquiries to: Peter Leck, District Manager”.



J. Orsley

7. **Was it usual practice that Mr Chase be given access to the Bundaberg Base Hospital's computers and administrative staff when he drafted Council correspondence personally?**

Mr Chase was not given access to Bundaberg Base Hospital computers. It was usual practice that he worked with the Executive Support Officer to the District Manager of the Bundaberg Health Service District for preparation of District Health Council correspondence.

8. **Attached herewith is a copy of a letter from Viv Chase to Jay Patel dated 5 April 2005. Did you first become aware of that letter before it was publicised in the media? If so, how did you become aware? Were you involved at any stage in the preparation and sending of the letter? If so, how were you involved? Was the letter dictated to you? Who drafted the letter?**

I was aware of the existence of the letter from Viv Chase to Jay Patel dated 5 April 2005 prior to release by the media. As far as my recollection the letter was drafted (hand written) by Peter Leck as a result of the resolution passed at the District Health Council meeting on 23 March 2005. I typed the draft correspondence, phoned Mr Chase to advise the draft was ready for his perusal, approval/changes and signature. As I recall when Mr Chase presented to Executive Services to sign the correspondence, he stated "*It is probably not exactly what I would have said, but that will do.*" Mr Chase signed the letter and I put it in the external mail for posting. Copy was then filed on relevant file.

To the best of my recollection I would have collected the draft letter from the District Manager's out tray.



J. D. O'Leary