

Coal Mining and Safety Health Act 1999 (Qld)
QUEENSLAND MINING BOARD OF INQUIRY

STATEMENT OF REECE CAMPBELL

I, Reece Murray Campbell, Coal mine worker of C/- One Key Resources Pty Ltd 324 Queen Street, Brisbane in the State of Queensland, state as follows:

- 1 I am a Coal mine worker employed by FES Coal Pty Ltd, a subsidiary of One Key Holdings Pty Ltd (**One Key**), and I make this statement to the extent possible, from my own knowledge.
- 2 In a letter issued by the Queensland Mining Board of Inquiry and said to have been formulated by senior Counsel Assisting to the Solicitors for One Key on my behalf dated 10 September 2020, my comment and evidence concerning a number of topics was identified and I was requested to provide a statement which dealt with them.
- 3 I have prepared this statement to respond to the topics and the issues in that letter to the extent that I am able to do so.
- 4 There are matters which are dealt with in this statement which may be commercially sensitive and confidential to One Key.

Background and length of employment in mining, relevant qualifications and what substantive position occupied

- 5 In my position of employment with One Key, I am employed as miner driver which is to say that I operate mining equipment known as a continuous miner underground.
- 6 I am in my 11th year of participation in the coal mining industry. Prior to being in the coal mining industry, I was a leading hand supervisor in tunnel construction for approximately two years and I was also a leading hand in civil construction works. Before that, I did an apprenticeship in carpentry, after I completed my carpentry trade I sub-contracted for a few years before taking on a position as a Site Manager.
- 7 My participation in the coal industry over the last 10 years has been primarily in operating the continuous miner in the development stage of mine development. I started to do this in or about late 2013 or early 2014. That required me to become familiar with what was required to run or supervise a face crew, which was a position effectively below that of the deputy.
- 8 I worked for some 12 months on the longwall as part of a prerequisite required for my Deputies certificate and I had been working on the longwall at the time of the events in May 2020 at Grosvenor Mine under review by the Board.
- 9 When I started work at Grosvenor Mine it was a greenfield site and I had been at Grosvenor more or less continuously since the time when the mine was first in development. When I arrived, the mine was in the process of completing the driving of the conveyor drift but there was no underground work. The drift had been cut by the TBM, I then assisted in the retraction of the TBM from the Conveyor Belt Drift. They

took the TBM over to the M&M drift whilst that was being set up. Mining commenced from pit bottom in the conveyor drift. I was initially employed by Redpath Australia, then went over to be employed by Mastermyne and started there in October 2014. At that stage the mine was still a greenfield site and I was employed at Redpath, which had the contract to construct the two drifts. I understood that Redpath was contracted to provide a product or outcome, it was not a labour hirer per se.

- 10 Prior to commencing my studies for my Deputy's ticket, I had been identified in what was described as a "Future leader program" to upskill. As part of the deputy's course, I was required to study a risk management assessment program, legislative requirements, gas certificate, first aid and other matters.
- 11 I have completed the Certificate IV and recently reached the stage where I have been notified that I have passed my Explosive Risk Controllers Oral by the Board of Examiners, and that I have achieved my Certificate as a Deputy.
- 12 I have also had significant experience and responsibility as a member of Mines Rescue. I have been part of the competition team for mines rescue since 2015, and have participated in Mines Rescue events and activities for almost seven years. Our Mines Rescue team has been very successful, having won three State titles and podiumed three times at the Nationals and it won the Australian titles in 2019.
- 13 To be in Mines Rescue, one needs a specific set of core requirements, which includes first aid, surface fire operations and things of that nature, use of air breathing equipment, knowledge of gases and the like.
- 14 I was directly involved in the re-entry at North Goonyella because the mine had engaged Mines Rescue to give them assistance. My role in that re-entry process was over several weeks.
- 15 In 2014 I also assisted QMRS with work in irrespirable workings, which was involved in the BMA Crimun Mine. A section of the mine had previously been sealed and it sought to reopen that section and it required that it be inspected, and I was involved in that.

My role as SSHR / history, motivation and training

- 16 I was elected to be an SSHR at Grosvenor Mine in 2018 and held that position with Mr Richard Everest who was my counterpart. I ended the role as SSHR in January of this year.
- 17 My original motivation for standing for the position was to make a difference to ensure that people who might be reluctant to raise issues because they are embarrassed or don't for whatever reason feel that they are comfortable speaking their mind because they are not used to speaking publicly or they do not like communicate their issues. I wanted to ensure that those people were able to speak privately and confidentially to a person who would action any concerns or information that they had. In my experience some miners get a bit anxious or lost for words when they want to get something across, and I felt that I was better able to articulate some of these things in a calm way and get things across. I thought essentially that I could improve the way in which communication occurred.

- 18 To stand for election for this position I had to be nominated by someone else. It was not possible simply to put one's own name up. A number of individuals had come up to me and asked me if I would do the SSHR role and I said that I was happy to do so, if I was nominated and voted in, to get in and get the job done. I understood that I had a reputation as a person that people could approach and ask about any matters on people's minds.
- 19 In relation to the training for that role, as part of being competent to hold that role, one must have an S1, S2 and S3 qualification. I have those and I also have a G2 qualification.
- 20 I was sent information which showed the pre-requisites for the role. I already met the pre-requisites for the role when I stood for election. If one doesn't have the pre-requisites and you come to be elected, you are put through a training package, which included a legislative course requiring familiarity with the Act and Regulations. This is external training which I attended.

Participation in the annual conference or other training by the CFMEU / CFMMEU

- 21 I am not a member of the CFMEU I have never participated in any CFMEU annual conference. I have not been asked to undertake or been offered training by the CFMEU.
- 22 The only correspondence I'd ever received from the CFMEU was after I had been in the role for several months and there was a new SSE onsite. On this occasion, I recall on the 15th May 2019 being invited via email very late and close to the end of registration to attend a week-long conference being put on by the CMFEU and registration forms had to be in by midday the 17th May 2019 or it was going to be cancelled due to low numbers. I was working at the time and had two days to get my affairs in order if I was to attend the conference in Mackay for the week. I would have had to have paid my own way to it since I was not a union member.
- 23 As I can't recall it, the conference did in fact proceed. I recall being emailed by the person I was dealing with who was managing the conference that if they did not get the numbers to hold the conference it would not proceed and that I was more than welcome to attend an open cut conference some months later. I never received any correspondence about the open cut conference.

Whether being an employee of One Key Resources poses any issues for the performance of the SSHR function?

- 24 I do not consider that being an employee of One Key in any way posed any issue for me in the performance of my functions as SSHR. The role of the SSHR is what it is, and regardless of who you work for, you are expected to and required to discharge the legislative requirements of the role. I received no pushback or impediment of any kind from One Key or the mine operator because I was the SSHR.

Whether there are difficulties or challenges in combining the SSHR function and my normal job

- 25 I do not consider that there were any difficulties or challenges in combining the SSHR function and performing my normal job. There were never any issues around me being released to perform any of the SSHR functions.

- 26 My own experience has led me to think that to do the SSHR role efficiently and productively, it might well be made into a full- time role. The responsibility to discharge of the obligations under the Act to expose unsafe work practices and review relevant documentation can involve a review of thousands of documents onsite that are continuously under review and changing, and to be able to get around the site both underground and surface can sometimes be difficult.
- 27 It was never expressly or impliedly suggested to me by the mine operator or indeed anyone at the mine that I could not go anywhere or do anything in the performance of my role. And it was well understood by all that under the legislation I could not be impeded in that role in any way. But I never had any personal issues in performing those tasks for the SSHR role whilst also performing my own job.

Any difficulty getting time away from my normal position to attend to SSHR affairs?

- 28 As is mentioned already I had no difficulty getting away from my normal duties to attend to my SSHR affairs.

Performance of the SSHR function and coordination with the other SSHR?

- 29 I had a good relationship with Ritchie Everest who was the other person in the SSHR role. He has since left the mine on a voluntary redundancy.
- 30 At a practical level we would work together to coordinate our tasks. Ritchie Everest and I were in fact good mates. I would generally catch up with Ritchie every morning. He worked a Monday to Friday roster. I worked the 7/7 roster. On my first day back I would always go to catch up with him and we would debrief on what had gone on at the mine. If something was going on and I was not at the mine he would ring me at home and vice versa. We would talk about general business even when I was not at the mine site.
- 31 Ritchie Everest would come up to me if anything concerned him and say for example that he had been looking at documents and he was going to review them. He would keep me up to date on what he was doing. He was all over the safety and health management system because he was a training officer. He ran the annual PHMP reviews and things of that nature, so he was very knowledgeable about the systems on both surface and underground areas.
- 32 We would generally have points of interest or places of interest that we wanted to conduct our inspections about, and if there was some specific thing being pointed out to us, we would always go and have a look at that and incorporate the outcome in our inspection.
- 33 If we had inspected an area of concern, we would revisit that area and ensure that what had to be done was done.

Manner of carrying out functions under s 99 /the performance of monthly inspections program (surface and underground)/ Determination of what areas are to be inspected

- 34 I have already described above some of the details surrounding the conduct of monthly inspections. Ritchie Everest and I would discuss what we might want to look at. I might say I wanted to look at the conveyor drift because there had been issues with it at the

start of a shift. For the first six months in the role we had to keep re-actioning things in relation to the conveyor drift.

- 35 Then he would tell me about other things that he thought that should be inspected and we would both go down and have a look in specific areas of the mine. We would look at the standard in the mains and the level of housekeeping. We would try to cover as much as we could without simply brushing over it and then the next inspections would be looking at areas that we had not already looked at or we might alternate between surface or underground.
- 36 We would also go around and inspect the pit periodically, and also action anything directly pointed out to us. We had all kinds of mine staff approach us to raise issues, staff members, normal operators, deputies and others.
- 37 These inspections, if on foot, might take five to six hours. If you could drive, that was an improvement, but we were still on foot for hours.
- 38 I have been asked to comment on a surface inspection report of 3 September 2019 AGM.004.001.0007 – Surface inspection September 2019. I have also reviewed AGM.004.001.0005 - UG inspection September 2019
- 39 I am familiar with the documents and what was involved. The work was conducted by Ritchie and Alesha Penrose who was a safety officer. At the time, Richard Everest couldn't go underground so he conducted a surface inspection with a safety officer. In those circumstances, Wouter, our Underground Mine Manager, would accompany me if he was available, or the under manager at the mine for the underground inspections. Ritchie conducted his inspection on the 3rd on the surface and I did mine two days later the 5th with the Mine Manager. The fact that these inspections were conducted two days apart was not out of the ordinary or a matter of any concern.

How are corrective tasks identified in such inspections allocated?

- 40 Corrective tasks are usually identified by us raising them at a monthly meeting so there would be a meeting between the other SSHR and three of the SLT members. We would go through all of the issues, we would look at the tripper rate for incidences, the HPIs, any injuries, whether there was any update from the Mine manager, issues raised by the SSHR. We would then go through actions and our inspection reports. Out of the inspection reports I would identify corrective actions for working together. We for example would work together to conduct a review of the current roadworks strategy, particularly focusing around the handing over of roads from development to the outbye maintenance team. This was therefore well beyond me just going up to superintendents and indicating what we needed to fix. There would be discussion with the SLT members about corrective tasks and how they would be achieved.

Role in reviewing procedures?

- 41 A part of our functions was to review procedural documents. There are a large number of safe work instructions on the database. It is not the SSHR's function to be across all of those documents. It's the mine's function to review those procedures. My

understanding was that the Mine Operator's staff were to review the documents and its SHMS every year. We would however be involved in reviewing the relevant procedures. We would also however review a document brought to our attention by persons with concerns.

Role in detecting unsafe practices and whether according to some method or program, or responsive to observation?

- 42 In my experience, the working teams on production were very close to each other as people. They were tight knit and there was an absolute willingness to speak up if there were any unsafe practices. In my experience, coal mine workers generally did not put up with anything that was unacceptable or unsafe.
- 43 There were multiple levels of supervision in there between the deputy, the miner driver and the experienced coal mine workers. If anything that was done was not inherently safe, in my experience people would speak up and things would be corrected.
- 44 There was also a high level of training of workers to identify risks in the workplace and all kinds of risk analyses conducted including risk analyses at the start of and during the shift itself. These assessments were supposed to occur before each task was done or any task change, or even if the same task was being performed but the conditions changed.
- 45 The detection of other unsafe practices could occur by the Deputy's inspections.

Role in receipt of complaints records of complaints/ confidentiality

- 46 As an SSHR I did receive individual complaints or reports from coal mine workers about concerns they had. I would have individuals come up and point out things that they thought were tardy areas of the mine or there was spillage and ask if I could go and have a look to see if things needed to be fixed. I would ask if they had put in a hazard report and if they had not I would insist on that occurring.
- 47 Everyone has the obligation to ensure that anything they see of concern is rectified and if it's not safe they were not to work in that area. In my experience everyone understood that it was each individual's responsibility to ensure that the mine was safe and people would readily make complaints or draw matters to my attention. It would be fair to say that some workers approach their supervisor directly and pointed out issues and others would just complaint to themselves that no one was doing anything about things. I always encouraged the reporting of any concerns.
- 48 During my time as an SSHR at Grosvenor, there was a way reporting confidential complaints. The process was that, if I had heard anything that was of concern to the workers, I would bring it up at the monthly safety meeting with the SSE or immediately if it was of grave concern. These concerns would then be noted in the monthly minutes without the use of names. However, most concerns were always what I would consider to be minor or third hand information, and I never discussed a concern that I would consider a major safety issue requiring a formal MRE. I do consider this process to be an important way for the SSHR to raise issues that workers may be concerned about.

Ordering suspension under s 101 and was there any occasion for the exercise of this power?

- 49 As an SSHR at Grosvenor, I never had occasion to order a suspension under s 101. In my view, ordering a suspension under s 101 is a significant power that should be reserved for when someone is in immediate, life threatening danger.
- 50 There has been one instance where I stopped work due to a non-life-threatening unsafe practice. In this instance, there were workers performing a rock fill task. The recognised standard for this task shows that the pump must take in fresh intake air. However, on this particular day, the pump was taking in return fumes due to an unforeseen short circuit in the ventilation system during the Longwall take-off. I identified this hazard and had a discussion with the pump crews, the deputy and the long wall co-ordinator. We then stopped work and had all of the pump and equipment relocated to a separate vent splint. We later amended and changed the workers SWI's and hazard management plan so that they came into alignment with the Recognised Standard 16. This is an example of stopping unsafe work but not under s 101.

Role of SSHR's with ISHRs – interaction

- 51 My relationship with the ISHRs was entirely professional. I have had no particular reason to have contacted any ISHRs whilst I was an SSHR. At the time of the Incident I do recall discussing with one ISHR asking if I could help him with anything or provide him with any documents. I was told no and that it was not necessary to provide him with any documents.
- 52 It was only after the incident in May 2020 at Grosvenor that there was any significant presence by the ISHRs and when they came to the site after that I sought them out and offered to be of assistance to the best of my ability. I had not met any ISHR onsite and to my knowledge they had not been to the site except possibly in early 2020 when Steven Watts came to site and met with Ritchie Everest. I believe that to be the case because I would have expected to be notified if an inspection was being conducted by an ISHR. After the incident I accompanied three ISHR's underground.

SSHR contact with inspectors /participation in inspections or audits by inspectors?

- 53 Once again, I had a good professional relationship with the inspectors. I had regular meetings with inspectors. I recall specifically one relating to dealing with panel 103 and purging. I have never had any particular cause to contact the inspector with any concerns that I'd had. If there had been anything I was concerned about, the inspector should have been notified about that and they would have known it in any event. The type 1A forms that are issued circulated to me as well as to all of the others, so this was a robust system.
- 54 A monthly inspection led me to feel comfortable with the outcomes of those inspections. I picked Inspector Dobson's brain regularly and had a good relationship with him. I also received the Inspector's reports and read them.
- 55 When the inspectors were onsite I would go and touch base and have a conversation with them and see how they were going and escort them to where they needed to be for their investigation. I would accompany them to the face to assist with pre-curing of evidence for the Investigation.

- 56 I would be involved in inspections or audits from the inspectors if I was onsite. I am aware that there were a number of inspections or audits by the mechanical and electrical inspectors, which they were doing inspections onsite but I was never rostered on when that occurred. I believe Ritchie Everest had gone to a few of them.

Monthly meetings with SSE et al /regularity framing the agenda/content

- 57 I have already described in some detail in this statement the methodology of meetings with the SSE.
- 58 Generally it was the SSE that decided what was on the agenda for the discussions at these meetings. There was quite a large group that participated with generally representation of each department. After the current SSE took over as SSE, the group was cut back somewhat and it was a monthly meeting then between himself, the underground mine manager, the safety manager and the two SSHRs. It would take place once a month, and our inspections had to be completed before that meeting.
- 59 We were given a schedule of the issues that were to be discussed at the monthly meeting and how it was to be run, which could have involved a wide range of topics. Kate the Safety Manager would give a review on what had been occurring. We would then go through the SSHR monthly reports and there would be general discussion about any issues arising out of those.
- 60 The SSHRs raised any concerns ourselves or those arising from suggestions from coal mine workers. The meetings were very open.

Is oral and written notification is made to SSHR as required in HPIs/ Is any active response required by SSHR to such notification of HPIs

- 61 Oral and written notifications were made to me as required in my SSHR role of HPIs in the form of the 1A form.
- 62 No active response was required by SSHRs to those notifications in the OFI process.

Opinion on the efficacy of the function of SSHR/ How the function of SSHR could be improved

- 63 I have already mentioned that I thought that the function of the SSHR was effective but that it might be improved by making it a full time position.
- 64 You also need to have persons who are knowledgeable carrying on the role. For example, of the two new SSHRs, I'm aware that each of them has been underground for decades and have vast experience and knowledge. It is important that the SSHR is a person that workers think that they can just walk up to and start talking to, and also that they have a good working relationship with management.
- 65 I had a good working relationship with those at the mine I dealt with and I believe I always conducted open and honest discussions. I think that would be essential to the function of SSHRs and to ensure that there is better communication between SSHRs, management and the inspectorate that they work collaboratively.



30 March 2021