



MEDIA RELEASE

FEBRUARY 2021

Cedar Meats Contributes to Parliamentary Inquiries

Cedar Meats recently gave evidence at two Victorian Parliamentary Inquiries into COVID-19. The Inquiries were set up to understand the State Government's response to the first outbreak and the pressure points at a systemic level.

Cedar Meats submitted detailed evidence to the Public Accounts and Estimates Committee's (PAEC) Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic and the Upper House Joint Committee into COVID-19 Contact Tracing System and Testing Regime.

"I was called to give evidence at the Contact Tracing Committee in December and the Committee was very thankful for the detailed and frank account of our organisation's experience that I outlined" Tony Kairouz General Manager Cedar Meats said.

"From the moment we knew we had our very first case of COVID-19, I have always said we need to work with the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and follow what they say. From this time on, myself, my senior management and my family have done everything we can, not just to protect our own Cedar Meats family, but our community and to share what we know and what we have learnt to contribute to a safer Victoria."

"I couldn't be prouder of how we collectively responded to the unprecedented health crisis of COVID-19 during 2020 - not just during the event but financial investment afterwards to keep our people safe and the additional policies and procedures we introduced having learnt what we did in April and early May last year.

"That's why I was so happy to invest a significant amount of time sharing the Cedar Meats experience and learnings with both Parliamentary Committees. Our input to the Inquiries is clear from the reports published and tabled in parliament.

Findings from the PAEC Final Report (page 37-38)

FINDING 20: Cedar Meats were responsive to all requests for information by the Department of Health and Human Services regarding the COVID-19 outbreak that took place at the Brooklyn Cedar Meats facility.

FINDING 21: The Department of Health and Human Services did not request information that would allow comprehensive contact tracing of all staff and visitors to the Cedar Meats facility until 11:53pm on 7 May 2020, 13 days after the first case was identified.



The PAEC report also noted: *At the public hearings on 15 December 2020, the Chief Executive of WorkSafe Victoria advised the Committee that an investigation of Cedar Meats had not found evidence of any breaches of the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004.*¹⁴⁸

“I will continue to represent Cedar Meats if and when asked by Parliament or the Government if it is believed that our experience and knowledge can help keep the community safe or people working in industrial settings safe from health crisis in the future,” Tony said.

Stay Safe.

Read the PAEC Report here The Public Accounts and Estimates Committee has today presented the [second report](#) for its inquiry considering the Victorian Government’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Read the Contact Tracing Report here The report into the *Inquiry into the Victorian Government’s COVID-19 Contact Tracing System and Testing Regime* has been tabled out of session and is now available online. The report can be accessed at our website here: <https://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/lsc-lc/article/4574>

- ends-

