

TRANSCRIPT

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ECONOMY AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE

Inquiry into the Impact of Animal Rights Activism on Victorian Agriculture

Bairnsdale—Tuesday, 20 August 2019

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WITNESS**Mr Graham Howell.**

The CHAIR: Welcome to the public hearings of the Economy and Infrastructure Committee. All evidence taken at this hearing is protected by parliamentary privilege; therefore you are protected against any action for what you say here today. But if you go outside and repeat the same things, those comments may not be protected by this privilege.

I invite you to address the Committee, but please allow us some time to ask you some questions. I understand that people in the gallery are having a problem with hearing. It is not because of this; this is just for Hansard. But I ask Members when they ask a question to try to make it a bit louder so people can understand. I am not asking you to be too loud, but to do your best.

Welcome, and state your name for the Hansard record.

Mr HOWELL: Graham Howell. I probably wear several hats. I am a livestock transporter. We run for livestock transports. I also own a farm. I have just stepped down over the weekend as president of the Livestock and Rural Transporters Association, which I have been for the last three years. I am going to start off with just a brief outline of myself and how I got into the industry. As you see, I have no notes. I am not good at that side of things. With everything I do, I just speak off the cuff, so I might go backwards and forwards or something a little bit, but bear with me.

I started off as a farmer's son, brought up on a family farm. I left school at 16 or something, worked in agriculture-related jobs—in shearing sheds, farm work—and at the age of 20 I was actually fortunate enough to get a job driving a truck, which I thoroughly enjoyed. I probably did that for six or seven months; two different jobs—one carting water to stock in the 1982–83 drought, then carting gravel. I liked it and decided to buy my own truck. I went into livestock because I really like stock. I like handling animals. I have just got a passion for that side of it, so that is why I did not go carting cardboard boxes down the road or something like that. It is a business that I have run for 36 years.

Probably our first instance of problems with activists or people who were impeding our business happened in 2017. I have got four trucks and I have got four drivers. I have a son, who I think was 23 at the time—pretty young. He had to deliver a load of pigs, which we do several times a week, to an abattoir in Melbourne, and I got a phone call, probably an hour or an hour and a half before he was due to arrive, from the livestock coordinator at the abattoir. They said that there were activists around, who was driving the truck? She has got all our telephone numbers anyway, so she contacted him and basically said, 'Just let us know when you are 5 minutes away. We'll tell you whether they are here, whether they are gone, what the best thing to do is'. I basically told him, 'Whatever you do, stay calm. Just do not get out of the truck. Let them do what they want to do, but just do not engage with them'.

I did not hear from him for probably 2½ hours, but when he was 5 minutes away from the abattoir he rang the livestock coordinator. She said, 'They're all on those entrances', because they have got several exits and entrances to the abattoir, and they were basically bringing the trucks in where there were no activists. They told him to go to the livestock gate, the gate that we were now coming in from, because it had been changed not that long ago, and as he got there he was waved by the security staff to keep going because there were some activists at that gate. He also had the livestock coordinator still on the phone. She told him to go round to the old entrance, and as he turned up the street, which is a pretty quiet street—it is not a one-way street, it is a proper street but it is a pretty quiet street—there were seven or eight, he told me, activists. They ran out and lay down on the road in front of the truck. There were no police, but the abattoir did have more security staff. He was within probably 30 metres of the gate. The security staff came out, but a couple of the activists who had climbed up on his bull bar were calling him a dog, 'Why would you want to do this? It's a scum job'. Other activists went down the side of the truck. They climbed up and they were all holding mobile phones. That seems to be what they do. They try and antagonise the driver and try and create conflict. I think they are dying to get that on film and send it to the media or something like that. I do not know what they want, but they seem very antagonistic or whatever word you like to use.

Eventually the security staff said, 'You're right to go'. He said, 'What about the one that's still laying down in front of me? There were seven'—or whatever—'and I can only six'. They said, 'No, you're right to go. That one will move', or, 'It's moved'. He was not quite sure what they said, but he was very apprehensive to move, and this was probably after 3 or 4 minutes. I was unaware of all this at the time until I got the phone call later, and it was a pretty confronting, disturbing phone call to get from a family member who is really visibly upset and shaken, who has been intimidated, and you are 200 kilometres away. You just know that he is stewing. It is really affecting him mentally—what they said, and what happened. He had delivered his job. He had gone, but he was still shaken up. He was to go and do another job, and I just said, 'I'll organise something; you just come home'.

In the weeks after that the footage started coming out on social media, obviously taken by one of these people on a mobile phone—and that sort of thing. We do not hide our name; our name is on both doors, the top of the truck and the back of the trailer. In one of the bits of footage they have all got their arms and everything inside the crates, so they are actually putting themselves in danger. Pigs do bite, believe it or not. If they had their hand against the side, they do push up against the side. But the other thing is they are friendly, the way they have been bred and brought up, but they do push away. They do push to the other side, a bit like the chicken farmer and the turkey farmer were saying. But in one instance they had a plastic bottle and they were actually tipping it in the pig's mouth. It must have been water, but you would not know what substance they were actually trying to give to these animals. So that to me is something. We are carting the animals; we are trying to deliver the animals the best we can.

So that was the first instance that we had with animal activists, and then probably later—2017—it was getting towards Christmas, say, start of December or something, we got told that the animal activists were planning a week-long blockade of the same facility, and because we go in there several times a week, that is what is going to happen. 'We'll talk to you on the days you're bringing them in. We'll work out a plan. The police have been notified'. We got all that information from the livestock coordinator. On the first day I was not able to go, so I sent another of our drivers. He is still pretty young. Probably at the time he was 28, just a little bit more mature. He had also started with me when he was 22 or something, so he had had a few years experience. He is very laid-back, does not get upset. I thought, 'He is the bloke to send in'. A similar thing: he rang the abattoir when he was not far away. They told him to go to a certain spot and wait, the police will come. A police car turned up, he was escorted to the abattoir.

All the protesters were camped there. They were there for, I think, the whole week or basically the whole week. They all ran out, they stopped the truck. The police were actually also camped inside the abattoir. They came out, they formed a wall 25-m wide, the whole width of the street, and then basically just pushed all the protesters down past the truck but, yes, they were climbing on the truck, chanting at the driver with a lot of intimidating things, and then the next day I had to do the same.

It was a similar scenario: ring before you get there, go to a designated spot, the police will come. Two police cars came. I got a brief from the police and they said, 'Just follow us. We'll escort you in, one in front, one behind'. I turned up the street to go to the abattoir and got round the corner and up the street probably 50 metres. The police car stopped in the middle of the road, so I had to stop. The protesters came running in, surrounded the vehicle, the police car drove off. The police started to filter out from inside the premises, but in the meantime they were climbing up on my bull bar—a similar thing, 'You're a murderer', 'You're a scum', 'You're a dog'. Just intimidating things. They were climbing right up to the top of the crate, which is 4.6 metres high, so they are actually endangering themselves, putting their hands in trying to touch them, pat them, whatever else they could do. I could see in the mirror.

And one thing that really got up my goat at the time is we look after our vehicles. They are very expensive, you know? Not much change out of \$100 000 on a B-double stock crate and prime mover. We treat it like your pride and joy, and they actually climb up with their boots on all over your bull bar scratching it, and I class that as exactly the same as someone walking all over the bonnet of your car with their boots on. You spend a lot of time washing and polishing and looking after your vehicle to try to keep it the best you can, and I know one driver who will not even let me use a broom on his bull bar. You have either got to use, well, chemicals, but just perhaps a sponge as well. That is how much pride that take in their vehicles.

Eventually the police came out, formed a wall, the same thing—pushed them down past the vehicle, and eventually we were allowed to go in and unload. So that was the second instance that we had with activists.

Then on the third occasion and that was probably January 2018—mid-January, a beautiful sunny day, two of us, Saturday morning. We were actually going to Cooma to pick up sheep. We left home I am thinking 8, 8.30 in the morning, pulled up at Officer, had a break, a drink, went to toilet break, just a fatigue break, you know, so you can keep your logbook ridgy-didge, and we meandered off out the road, up the freeway towards Bairnsdale coming out of Melbourne. Most of you people probably drove, so you know that road.

A nice sunny day, just a beautiful day. I was probably a kilometre, perhaps a kilometre and a half in front of the other truck, and most of the truckies work on channel 40 on a UHF. They can talk to each other. You have probably got 4 or 5 k's distance that you can hear and then it gets a bit scratchy, so we try to stay in close enough proximity that if something is going on, you can talk to each other or say something just to keep acknowledging each other that you are actually there. You might not say anything to each other for an hour, but if there are any problems or something on the road, you hear. The driver behind me was another one of my sons, younger, and he said, 'I don't know what's going on here'—this is on the two-way radio—'This woman's coming up the side of me, she's flashing her lights, she's tooting the horn, she's waving her arms, she's holding the camera up through the sunroof of the vehicle'. I said, 'Oh, I don't know'. He said, 'Well, I do'. I said, 'Well, have you done anything?'. He said, 'No. She was coming up behind me and all of a sudden she just started doing that'. I said, 'Well, I don't know what's happened. Just keep driving and see what reaction you get'. And next thing, she went out around the front of him, stood hard on the brakes that caused him to have to brake really heavily so he didn't hit her, and then she took off again up the road. And that happened two or three times.

Then she left him and eventually caught up to me, and by this time I was out around Darnum, if you know the area. We were far enough apart coming through that stretch—we could not see each other—and she did a similar thing to me. She came up beside me tooting and flashing the lights and all that sort of thing. Because of what he had told me, as soon as she went to pull across in front of me, I actually shot out to the right, and as I was pulling out to the right, she jammed on the brakes, but luckily we were far enough. I have got a little peeper window in the door—all our trucks have—so that is about where she braked heavy enough that I had actually gone past her and I could see the roof of the car out through the door. All I could see was that it was a female—green P-plates.

With all the talk that was going on on the radio, there was actually another truck, which I could visually see quite often—a fridge van or something—in front of us, and as we were coming up to Yarragon, the first little town that has got a set of traffic lights, he said, 'I'll block this sheila in and we'll find out what she's up to'. I said, 'Oh, good'. So luck happened, the lights changed at the right time and he shot across into the right lane in front of her and she pulled up behind him, and I managed to be able to come down the left-hand side. I did not even have to open the door to get out. This girl stood up through the sunroof, called me all the names, everything like that, 'You're scum, you're a murderer', and I am trying to say, 'What am I murdering, I've got nothing in the back. I'm empty'. And I kept getting the bird, the finger, all that sort of thing. The lights changed and she took off and we never heard from her again, but she had been part of something. I do not know where they get it from, but she was part of that similar sort of thing.

We quite often now, particularly on freeways and that, have vehicles that come down the side of you, filming you. They sit behind you for a while, they come down, and if it is the driver on their own they are usually holding a phone like they are filming you as they come down. They quite often get in front of you and do the same thing. They seem to brake heavy so that you have got to brake heavy, and if you have got livestock on, you are actually putting them off balance, and if they are from that demographic, animal activists, which I am sort of thinking because they seem to film you when that is happening, when you brake heavy you knock the livestock off balance and it could cause them to go down or something like that. So that is quite often happening as well.

I will put another hat on just for a second. I do get—or have been getting—a lot of firsthand accounts from drivers because I was President of the Livestock and Rural Transport Association. They spend a fair bit of time—not so much in the colder months but in the warmer months—on Swan Street Bridge, where trucks have got to go around the tunnel and that sort of thing. They run out through the traffic when the trucks get pulled up

at the stoplights and they climb on them. They put their hands in with phones and that amongst the cattle and that sort of thing. So apart from the climbing and that aspect that is dangerous—animals in trucks that they do not know anything about—they are endangering themselves.

The CHAIR: We have to start asking questions. Sorry, Graham. Thanks for that.

Mr HOWELL: No, you are all right.

The CHAIR: Time is very limited.

Mr MEDDICK: Thank you, Graham, for coming and for your testimony. I hear the pain in your voice about your son and all those sorts of things, and I am truly sorry about that. I get that.

Mr HOWELL: And, you know, the same thing happened. It really gets to you when they are calling you all those things and they do not even know you.

Mr MEDDICK: Of course.

Mr HOWELL: It is pain, it is hurt. It—

Mr MEDDICK: Of course. It may not surprise you that I suffer from the same thing sometimes.

Mr HOWELL: Yes. It upsets you mentally and all that sort of thing, you know? It is really—

Mr MEDDICK: I understand.

Mr HOWELL: It is not very nice.

Mr MEDDICK: I do understand, and you have my sympathies in that respect. But I just want to call you back to your submission if I can.

Mr HOWELL: Yes.

Mr MEDDICK: Just on a few points that I am a bit confused about—and you will forgive me for that as well. On page 13 you have a photo here of a truck with what appears to me to be a sheep with a leg sticking out—

Mr HOWELL: Yes.

Mr MEDDICK: And you say here that:

Isolated incidents do not constitute cruelty ...

That is one of your statements there.

Mr HOWELL: Yes.

Mr MEDDICK: But you also say, preceding that:

... commonplace situation of animal stretching or placing leg outside the crate.

So which one is it? Are these instances isolated or are they commonplace?

Mr HOWELL: No, it is—

Mr MEDDICK: And there is also a suggestion then, that you make, that an isolated incident is not inherently cruel. Well how do you make that assumption? Because there are plenty of things that might be considered cruel. Just because they are done as a one-off does not mean they are not cruel. So I am struggling to understand that concept.

Mr HOWELL: Right. Well, sheep crates, their panels are about 1500 millimetres high with a 1500 millimetre gap for ventilation. So sometimes when you are carting sheep you will see a sheep just—as they move around the crate they do not realise that that is the end of the partition, and they have actually got their leg up. They might just put it out and pull it back in. At other times they might put it out for a minute if you have gone around a corner and all the sheep have pushed and they have sort of got it out. It just takes a little bit of time for them to get back on balance and pull it back in. For most stock trucks—if you ever follow one—it does happen. You do not see legs poking out here, there and everywhere all the time, but it does happen that stock, especially lambs, with the way the crates are made, do put their legs out. And I do not think it does upset them much, because it is very rare that they have them out for a few minutes so that you have actually got to pull up and get them back in. Most times they do it voluntarily.

Mr MEDDICK: Okay. And also in your submission here there are photographs—I just want you to explain to me—of a number of people that appear to be giving liquid. In your photos there is a description you have given, to say:

... unspecified liquid (water?) ...

Mr HOWELL: Well—

Mr MEDDICK: Now, I just want to ask, because it—

Mr HOWELL: And I did refer to that a minute ago. I presume it is water, but they could be giving them anything.

Mr MEDDICK: But why would—I am struggling with that concept—people who profess a love of animals and for the lives of animals want to give an animal something that would harm them? That seems to me a completely alien concept.

Mr HOWELL: Yes, and I understand that. But I do not know whether their agenda is actually protection, because they would be actually trying to help us sort out some issues in the livestock transport industry if it were—such as effluent and lack of truck washes and that—and if animal welfare was all their agenda. I know it is for some of them, because actually, in my seat as ex-president of the livestock and rural transport association, I did see some work, and it was not work that I had ever heard of. They do a lot of good work and bring some issues to the table, but they are not out there campaigning. They do it quietly and they take it to what I feel are the right places to get their points across. But I really do have concerns because they could actually be doing anything.

All the livestock carriers I know do it because they love animals. You could not do the job if you hated animals. Livestock transport I would probably say is the hardest of any transport profession. We have got to manually load and unload the vehicles ourselves. Most other places would have forklifts or front-end loaders or augers or something else, and we are out in the harshest of weather. We do not do it inside a building or whatever—it is always done out in the open air.

Mrs McARTHUR: Graham, I am particularly interested in the aspect of welfare—the welfare of you, your son and your employees first and foremost, and of course your animals. I want to say at the outset that I am horrified to hear the story you have just relayed to us about how your son and your other employees have been impacted by this appalling behaviour. It is totally unacceptable, and I cannot believe that there would be any workplace where anybody could possibly condone such behaviour. Every employer has to provide a safe workplace. I cannot believe that anybody could walk onto a building site, a construction site or any other normal workplace and treat people as you have been treated. So I am concerned that this activism is incurring costs to your own and your employees' mental welfare and your ability to operate a business and keep people in a job. I ask you to comment on that, but also about the welfare of the animals being impacted by people who climb on your trucks, and potentially do what they have been doing, and frighten animals. I know animals can get stressed by strangers behaving in an odd way. It is not normal for them to be treated in this way. How is their welfare being impacted with this sort of behaviour?

Mr HOWELL: I will probably answer your last question first if you like. Yes, I think especially cattle and that, if there is unfamiliar noise like people yelling and chanting and those sorts of things, probably all animals

do stress. There are no worries about that. You can actually see fear and that. I do not know whether you have heard of—what is the word for it?—low-stress animal handling. Most of our blokes are pretty quiet and casual. You are loading stock. You just go about it quietly. You are not rushing and yelling and roaring. You just go about it as quietly and as compassionately as you can. We have still got to do the job—you have still got to be able to get the animals on—but yes, you go about it. I have seen the other side of it—I have seen people yelling and roaring and that, and I think it has a detrimental effect. If you go the other way—if you go the quiet, low-stress handling way—animals seem to react better.

Mrs McARTHUR: And yourself, your staff?

Mr HOWELL: You have just got to keep talking to them and just try and avoid it. A lot of it is on social media now. When they had the thing early this year, I think it was April or something, we were told they were going to be at all of the abattoirs and that—or some of the abattoirs. We were not quite sure where they were going to turn up. All we knew was that they were going to turn up. The one that I said was really disturbed about it said, ‘I’m not going to Melbourne. I’m not going to any abattoir that day. Send me up the bush somewhere. I don’t want to go anywhere near them’. He is that paranoid. I feel he probably shies away from crowds.

Mrs McARTHUR: Thank you. I am sorry for what you have had to endure.

Mr BARTON: G’day, Graham. Thank you for coming in, mate, and it is a difficult story when you talk about your kids. There is an art in handling animals, putting them on and off trucks. People do not really appreciate it. The quietness and how you deal with the animals is very important. So I just wanted to say that, because I am aware of these things. I have got very strong views about road safety, and I am very concerned a young person wanting to try to pull up in front of a B-double with a load full of stock on board.

Mr HOWELL: Yes, well, that happens, but the one I said out here on the Princes Highway, we were empty on that one when they were braking heavy. But we quite often do see it on freeways. The traffic is moving at 100 kilometres an hour or 80 kilometres an hour and we are driving at the same speed. It might be a 100 kilometres zone, but if the traffic is moving at 80 you do not try and go any faster, especially with livestock. You try and hang back, especially in a truck. You know if something happens, you have got to stop. You try and keep a stopping zone. I feel comfortable with nothing less than 100 metres, but in the city that is not possible because cars do cut in and out. When there are no other vehicles in front and someone comes in front of you for no reason, or no apparent reason, everyone else is still going—no-one else is standing on the brakes. Why do they brake heavily in front of you? I do not know.

The CHAIR: I think Rod wants to keep going on another point.

Mr BARTON: They are not terribly bright is one of the reasons for that happening. Did you have cameras in your car? Did you get the registration number of that girl? Did you report it to the police?

Mr HOWELL: At the time I did write it down. I did not report it to the police because my thing was that it will be, ‘I said, she said’, and I am not big on—the police have enough to do. I do not want them out for tinnack things.

Mr BARTON: That is a serious matter, Graham.

Mr HOWELL: I know that, but that was the thing—she drove off into the distance and that was the last we saw of her.

Mr BARTON: She put herself in danger and she put you in danger and other road users in danger.

Mr HOWELL: From the first instance to when we last saw her was probably 10 or 15 kilometres.

Ms BATH: Thank you very much, Graham, and if I take up Mr Barton’s point, do you believe that that person who did that on the road was an animal activist?

Mr HOWELL: I think so. They sort of did all the same things. They all have a mobile phone on video. They all hold them up. When they went past holding the camera up it just got your suspicions up straightaway. Then to be pulled up beside her, she just flew into a tirade—just all this stuff, and it was all due to animals. She did not say, ‘Look, your truck flicked a loose stone up and it’s hit my window and cracked my windscreen’, or something—there was none of that. It was all mainly about, you know, animals—well, it was not about animals; it was just ‘murder’, ‘scum’, ‘dog’. But it was mainly, ‘You’re a murderer, you’re a murderer’ sort of thing.

Ms BATH: So, Graham, some of the contention—that I do not hold, but some of the contention—is that animal activism is not as bad as some people are making out because there have not been a lot of reported cases of it. But what we have heard from your very compelling testimony, and I thank you today, is that actually it is happening and it is happening in a variety of formats—but you are not reporting it per se, so it is not getting on the ledger, and therefore some can use it to say it is all a big kerfuffle.

Mr HOWELL: Yes.

Ms BATH: So I guess my other question relates to back in early and late 2017 when you were going into the abattoirs and there was a police presence. Do you know if there were any arrests? And by that I guess I am asking: do you know if there are cases that are now on the books in terms of data around this, or whether there were not and therefore these are in effect more unreported or unquantified incidents? Does that make sense?

Mr HOWELL: Yes. I do not know of any arrests, for one. I did not see any arrests, but the police seemed to let the activists have their time to say goodbye to the animals or whatever—gave them 2 or 3 minutes to just say a prayer or whatever they like to do to them. They seemed to give them that amount of time before they moved them on, but there were definitely no arrests at that time at that facility that I know of.

There was one other point that I sort of did not get around to earlier on, and that in our industry is the number of backdoor pins that are pulled. So if you know of livestock transport, they have got their backdoor and you always put a pin in. They do not come out. They physically do not bounce out, they are that long. They are usually on a chain or something. They do not come out, but that seems to be happening a lot. I will just relate a driver’s one-on-one story to me not that long ago of how it happened and what happened to him. He had actually loaded in south-western New South Wales going to the other side of Melbourne. He sort of stopped a couple of times, and it was not dark but it was getting late in the day and he pulled up at a little parking bay toilet facility just out from Gisborne on the Calder Highway. He got out, checked his stock, went to the toilet and thought, ‘Oh, I might just have a power nap for a few minutes and let the traffic go in front of me a bit—you know, let it sort of spread out because I have got to go through the city’. He laid down in the bunk. He did doze off—he said he was probably there half an hour tops from the time he stopped to the time he left. He got up the road about 2, 3 or 4 kilometres—not very far—and he looked in his left-hand mirror, and because he has got a road train back trailer on with a wider door, someone had pulled the pin out on his door. He said they would have actually had to pull the pin because it is not a new trailer—it had been backed into a few ramps, so the back door is a bit twisted. He said you have actually got to put your hand on the back of it, push it forward but pull it to the right at the same time to actually be able to get the pin out. He said if you do not do that, you just cannot pull it out. He looked in his mirror, his door was hanging out to the left. He said 4 feet, so I am saying a metre or something. If he had have pulled out to pass a car or something, he could have just about taken the door out over the top of the car. Luckily he had sheep on and he had his blocking gates in, so the animal did not get out.

I have heard of it happening at a roundabout in a particular town on at least two occasions. I have been told by two different drivers it has happened. On one occasion the bloke saw it happen. He pulled up in the middle of the roundabout, raced back, pulled the door shut, put the pin in and took chase. He chased this bloke for a little bit of a distance and then thought, ‘I’d better get back and get my vehicle out of the way’. That is a common occurrence. It seems to be happening more and more now. I cannot say it is absolutely related, but these sorts of things are starting to happen.

Ms TERPSTRA: Just a very quick question. On page 7 of the submission that you put in there is a picture of a truck with—

Mr HOWELL: Could you just hold it up?

Ms TERPSTRA: Yes, so I just had—

Mr HOWELL: That is the one, I would say, at the abattoir where the police—my glasses are over there, sorry.

Ms TERPSTRA: So my question really is about the truck. You are in transport, so the question really is about the style of truck, I guess, that is used to carry the animals.

Mr BARTON: Crates.

Ms TERPSTRA: Yes, crates—thank you. Are there any regulations around what you have to use to transport the animals or not? Could you just give us a bit of an idea very briefly about this?

Mr HOWELL: Well, if people are carting cattle all the time, instead of the slats down the side like you see in that photo, they are usually filled in from down near the bottom, with just one little space up, probably a couple of hundred millimetres, so that you can actually see in and for a little bit of ventilation. But they are basically filled in until you get up closer to the—

Ms TERPSTRA: But there is no regulation that says you have got to have a particular type of—

Mr HOWELL: No, but they are two-deck cattle crate only so that if you did put sheep in it, you would only have two decks where these other ones that are carting goats, sheep, pigs—whatever. They are all built for purpose. Apart from the odd farm crate, they are all built by reputable trailer and crate manufacturers.

The CHAIR: Graham, on behalf of the Committee I would like to thank you for your time and contribution. In a few weeks you will receive a copy of the transcript for your proofreading. Thank you very much.

Mr HOWELL: No worries. Thank you.

Witness withdrew.