

Commission of Inquiry into the CFMEU and Misconduct in the Construction Industry

Section 5(1)(d) of the *Commission of Inquiry Act 1950* (Qld)


WITNESS STATEMENT OF JAKE REID

I, Jake David Hamish Lennan Reid, former Service Manager of Global Hire & Services Pty Ltd, affirm:

1. I make this statement in response to a notice issued by Stuart John Wood AM KC, the Commissioner appointed pursuant to the *Commissions of Inquiry Order (No. 2) 2025*.
2. For the purposes of this statement, a reference to the 'CFMEU' is a reference to:
 - (a) the Queensland and Northern Territory Divisional Branch of the Construction and General Division of the organisation registered under the *Fair Work (Registered Organisations) Act 2009* (Cth) that at all material times has been known as the 'CFMEU' (or from 2018 to 2023 as the 'CFMMEU'); or
 - (b) the Construction, Forestry, Mining & Energy, Industrial Union of Employees, Queensland, registered under the *Industrial Relations Act 2016* (Qld).

Background

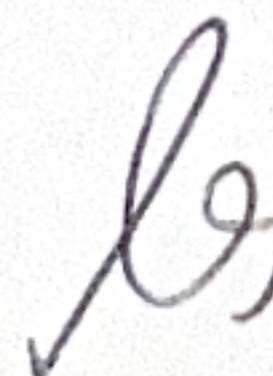
3. In 2007, I started my automotive mechanical apprenticeship with a Cairns based company called "Smithfield Car Diagnostics". I completed this apprenticeship in 2011.
4. Also in 2011, I started my automotive electrician apprenticeship with the same company and became qualified in 2013.
5. In 2013, I started working for Downer Engineering, who was building iron ore mine sites. With Downer I started working with elevated work platforms (**EWPs**). I have worked solely on EWPs since that time. An EWP is a type of lifting equipment designed to lift workers so that the worker can work at height.
6. In February 2020, I started working for Global Hire Services Pty Ltd (**GHS**) as a field services fitter. GHS was a dry hire equipment provider specialising in EWPs. I worked for GHS for around three years. In that time, I was promoted to Workshop Supervisor and then Service Manager. As the Service Manager, I looked after GHS's workshops in Cairns and Townsville.
7. As mentioned above an EWP is a type of lifting equipment. A crane is primarily used to lift material or equipment whereas the primary use of an EWP is to lift people. EWPs have a very regimented service and maintenance schedule. An EWP must be inspected every 90 days. One of those 90-day services coincides with an annual service and that is a more extensive service.
8. My job at GHS was to perform the 90 day and annual inspections and services and do any other maintenance or services tasks which came up on an ad hoc basis. Occasionally machines would breakdown on site, and I would go to site to fix them.



9. The 90 days service and the annual service are done according to particular regulations and must be logged. I would log the service in a yellow logbook that would go inside a yellow pouch that is mounted on the side of the machine. Every machine has a yellow pouch on it for this purpose. GHS would also keep a copy of these records on its internal systems.
10. The annual service would also be recorded on a Grey Card that goes on the front of the yellow pouch. The grey card is replaced every time you do an annual service and it shows the name of the person who did the service and inspection, the date and their signature.
11. In February 2023, I left GHS and started my own company doing machinery repairs, maintenance and inspections.

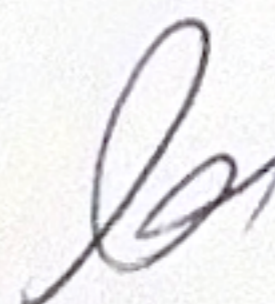
Cairns Convention Centre Expansion and Refurbishment Project

12. The Cairns Convention Centre Expansion and Refurbishment Project (**CCCER**) was a \$176 million government project which started in 2020. The Managing Contractor for CCCER was Lendlease. The CCCER was in my experience a large project and certainly the biggest one I had experienced with GHS. For Cairns it was a significant project by any measure. As far as I am aware, most of the workers were locals and it was a good opportunity for local workers and local industry.
13. GHS supplied EWP's to various contractors working on CCCER. Almost every piece of EWP that was on CCCER came from GHS. I do not remember exactly, but my best estimate is that at any given time GHS would have had around 60 pieces of equipment hired out on CCCER on a long-term basis. These are the machines that were consistently required for work and were hired out for months at a time, if not longer.
14. On top of that, GHS would also have around 10 machines on site at any given time that were hired out on a short-term basis or for a particular piece of work.
15. GHS site technicians were usually on site once a day on most days servicing machines. Sometimes this was because of genuine faults or breakdowns with the machines. But a lot of the time, it was user error, and I would go on site just to confirm the machine was fine and show the workers how to use it properly.
16. GHS hired to a lot of big jobsites in Cairns. However, CCCER was the first site where I saw the CFMEU be very active on a site in Cairns. I had seen CFMEU flags waving above other projects, such as the social housing project (**SHP**) at Woree but I had never seen CFMEU representatives actively walk around a site before and look for problems like I saw on CCCER. To me it seemed like an active campaign by the CMFEU to cause trouble on CCCER. I say this because of the experiences I had, and I set out some examples set out below.



Direction to stop work

17. The first time I went onto the CCCER site to fix a machine was to fix a breakdown on a rough terrain scissor lift.
18. This was some time in 2021. The scissor lift was on the bottom floor of the build, where there is now a drive in entrance to the Convention Centre.
19. The work area was entirely undercover. About 30 metres from where I was working was the loading bay which opened onto the Wharf Street entrance to the site. There was, at most, three people working in the loading bay area. The loading bay was not undercover.
20. I had pulled apart the control box to fix the machine and was in the process of putting it back together when I was approached by two male CFMEU representatives. I do not remember their names, but I remember one had dark-hair and the other had red-hair.. I believe they were CFMEU representatives because they had CFMEU branded shirts and I remember being able to spot them a mile away because they wore black hard hats whereas everyone else on site wore white hard hats. I did not know who they were and cannot recall what they looked like.
21. The dark-haired CFMEU representative came up to me and we had an exchange to the following effect:
- CFMEU: You've got to crib up. It's raining.
- Me: Nah mate. I've got a job to do. I'm going to finish my job and I'll be out of here in about 5 minutes.
- CFMEU: Nope. That's not going to happen.
- Me: Mate, it's not even raining.
- CFMEU: Yes, it is.
- Me: Well, stay there for a second.
22. I walked out onto the loading bay and held my hand out. The CFMEU representative and I were staring at each other the whole time. I held my hand out for 5 seconds and then walked back and showed the CFMEU representatives that my hand was dry. I said something to the CFMEU representative like *'It's not raining. How can you kick everyone off site? That makes zero sense.'*
23. I do not remember exactly what the CFMEU representative said back to me, but he kept going on about it raining and how everyone had to down tools.
24. I finally got sick of it and told the CFMEU representative that I did not work for him, and that unless someone from Lendlease came and told me I had to stop work I would finish my job.
25. The CFMEU Representative did not like this and stormed off.



26. I was not the only person that the CFMEU representatives told to stop work. They were going around to everyone in the work area and telling workers to stop work. Everyone else that the CFMEU representatives spoke with stopped work and went inside.
27. I kept working and finished my job in a couple of minutes. It took less time to finish my work than it did to argue with the CFMEU representatives. I did not feel like I was at any risk from 'wet weather' by finishing work. It was not raining. However, even if it had been raining, I was undercover, working well back from the loading bay and there was no water coming inside from the wind or by flooding the floor.
28. The entire experience was very frustrating because it delayed me in finishing my work. It also made a joke of safety on site which I did not appreciate. As Cairns is in the tropics, we get accustomed to dealing with rain. It can absolutely bucket down with rain for five minutes and then clear up and be fine for the rest of the day or be fine one minute and then turn to rain for the rest of the day. Of course, if wet weather causes a risk to any particular type of work the work needs to stop. But that is not always the case and certainly on this occasion it was not raining at all and this was an example of the CFMEU interrupting work to cause trouble and delay.

Spider lift boom incident

29. One of the EWP's needed on CCCER was a spider lift boom. GHS did not have a spider lift boom in its fleet at the time, so it had cross hired one from a company in Townsville called Stick'Em Up Hire. The owner of Stick'Em Up Hire would come to CCCER regularly to do the 90 day and annual service on that machine, and another machine GHS had cross-hired from him. Neither I nor the other GHS fitters had much to do with the machine. GHS also did not keep a record of its service paperwork because it did not own the machine.
30. Towards the back half of the job and I'm not sure when, I got a call from Mr Dan Brady, the Site Manager for Lendlease at CCCER about the spider lift boom.
31. When I got the call, it was already dark, and I think it was around 7:00pm. Mr Brady asked me to come and do the inspection on the spider lift boom immediately because there was apparently some issue with it.
32. When I arrived at CCCER, the spider lift boom was in the foyer upstairs on a mezzanine level. There were two guys from Status Signs standing around, plus Mr Brady, another guy I think was from Lendlease, and the same two CFMEU representatives I referred to above. There was no one else on site to my knowledge.
33. It was weird to see the CFMEU representatives and Mr Brady (as the site manager) hanging around so late. It was not normal for nightworks to be done on CCCER and there would have had to be some planning to do the night works. I assume someone from Lendlease would have to hang around, but it did not make sense that the CFMEU representatives were hanging around.
34. I believe the guys from Status Signs had been scheduled to do night work tinting the windows. However, one of the CFMEU representatives had discovered that the spider



lift boom was a day over its annual inspection so it could not be used until that was done. I agreed to do the service so the work could start and went back to my car to get my tools.

35. When I went back to my car, I called Mr Creighton and explained what was happening. I explained that the CFMEU representatives were also there and would probably be going over everything I did with a fine-tooth comb. Mr Creighton told me to do the inspection.

36. I went back inside to do the inspection and told everyone that they would have to wait while I did that. The annual inspection requires more work than the 90-day inspection, I had the necessary experience to perform this inspection. By this point I had been doing my job for 13 years and I was pretty quick at it. I finished the inspection and filled out the relevant paperwork and Grey Card in about 45 minutes.

37. When I explained to everyone that the machine was good to go, the two CFMEU representatives came up to me, stood in my way and we had an exchange to the following effect:

CFMEU: You haven't done your job properly.

Me: What are you talking about?

CFMEU: You can't do it that quick.

Me: How do you know? You don't know anything about the machine. How would you know how quick it takes?

CFMEU: You didn't even start the engine on the back.

Me: Mate, it's a petrol engine. Do you want me to start a petrol engine inside?

CFMEU: No.

Me: Then I am not going to start it then. I don't need to start it to sign it off and I'm not going to do it inside.

38. The spider lift boom was a hybrid model with both a petrol and electric powered engine. The petrol engine would be used as a manual override to get the machine down if someone is hurt, but you would not otherwise use the petrol engine inside and would rely on the battery.

39. The CFMEU representatives kept giving reasons why I had not done my job properly and why the machine could not be used for a while. I do not remember the other reasons and complaints they raised with me. They were all nonsense.


40. Eventually, I got a text message from Mr Brady who was standing behind the two CFMEU representatives and watching the exchange. The text message was something like 'Jake, tell them to fuck off'.



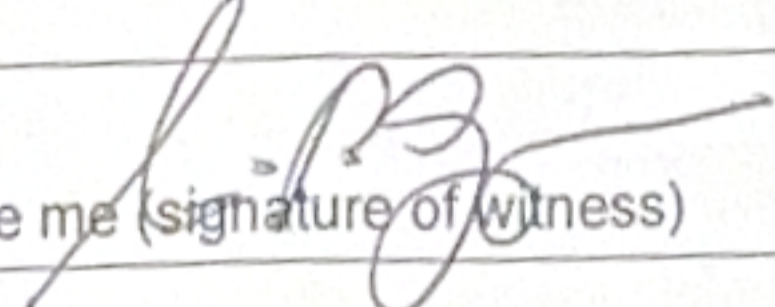
41. Once I got that text message and realised Mr Brady was happy for me to challenge them, I told the CFMEU representatives that they were not going to tell me how to do my job, that me and the PCBU were the ones carrying the liability and it was my name in the logbook. I started getting really angry because I know how to do my job, and I would never give a machine that is unsafe to someone. I was also angry because the CFMEU representatives could not properly explain to me what the problem was and they did not seem to have a good understanding of safety or what was required to get the machine going.
42. I was not making any headway with the CFMEU representatives, and they maintained the machine was not safe. At some point, they said they were going to shut down the site until the machine was inspected "properly" which could not be until the next morning. I left angered by this. I rang Mr Brady the next day and he told me that the CFMEU did shut down the site for the night with the result that none of the works that should have been done, were done.
43. I do not know what happened the next day, but I never got a call back to inspect the machine and I am confident that no one else inspected the machine after me. I say this because after that night GHS started doing the services on Stick'Em Up Hire's machines, and when the spider lift boom was off hired about two months later, my name was still on the Grey Card. Had anyone else done the annual service, they would have completed a new Grey Card and replaced the one I did. I made a point of looking at the Grey Card because of how the CFMEU representatives carried on that night.



I affirm the contents of this statement are true.

Signature of Deponent 

Place CARRYS Date 13/5/2026

Before me (signature of witness) 

CHRISTOPHER PAUL SARONER
Full name of witness (please print)

- Justice of the Peace (JP #)
- Notary public
- Lawyer
- Other authorised person (specify)