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**Official Report
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(Hansard)**

Wednesday 18 July 2012

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Mercredi 18 juillet 2012

**Standing Committee on
Public Accounts**

Special report, Auditor General:
Ornge Air Ambulance and
Related Services

**Comité permanent des
comptes publics**

Rapport spécial, vérificateur
général : Services d'ambulance
aérienne et services connexes
d'Ornge

Chair: Norm Miller
Clerk: William Short

Président : Norm Miller
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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

COMITÉ PERMANENT DES COMPTES PUBLICS

Wednesday 18 July 2012

Mercredi 18 juillet 2012

The committee met at 0835 in room 151.

SPECIAL REPORT, AUDITOR GENERAL: ORNGE AIR AMBULANCE AND RELATED SERVICES

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): I'd like to call this meeting to order and, first of all, point out to committee members that there's some information in front of you. First of all, there's a large blue binder that was delivered from Mr. Alfred Apps. There is one of those binders per caucus. It is fairly substantial; so, saving a little paper, there is one per caucus. There is also an update from the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care in terms of some more information. As well, there is a letter from Fasken Martineau, from Lynne Golding, providing an update in terms of providing the information and records that were asked for by the committee.

Our first presenter is not until 9, but we did start early because there were some motions that were tabled. I understand that one was tabled by Ms. Sandals, and you have comments about that, Ms. Sandals.

Mrs. Liz Sandals: Yes. I'm not going to read the whole motion, or at least the original motion. We had asked that some documents be tabled with the committee that were referred to in the Fasken's billing, so there is a list of the precise dates on which the documents were identified in their billing records which the committee previously received.

The motion that the committee passed on June 13 asked for those documents to be produced on July 13. They were not produced. We therefore tabled a motion on Monday, I think it probably was, with the clerk that that be reported to the Legislature, because when there is non-compliance with a direction of the committee, it would be the Legislature that addresses that.

Since then, we have received a letter from Ms. Golding specifying that they have about two thirds of the work done and suggesting that they will deliver the work that they have done this Friday. That would be two days from now.

I must say that we find this a little bit frustrating in that the documents were specifically identified. Ultimately, the taxpayer paid for this law firm to do the work, so these are documents that the taxpayer paid for with respect to their work on Ornge and Ontario Air Ambulance, as it was known at the time. Who am I to impute

motives, but it's a little bit odd that when we've asked them for documents that were more related to Liberal governments, they proceed quickly, and when we ask for documents that relate to Tory decisions, they proceed slowly. Who am I to impute motives? Mr. Klees was a member of cabinet at that time. Perhaps he knows what's in the documents; we certainly don't.

Given that Fasken's has identified a willingness to produce the documents, what I'm going to suggest is that we defer debating the motion until August 1. We're sitting, Chair, on August 1. That will give Fasken's an opportunity to comply with the motion, because obviously, if they comply with the motion, there's no need to pass a motion to go to the Legislature. So I would ask that we defer the motion until August 1.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Any other comments on this point? No? Okay, then at this point, we are going to go in camera for a few minutes, until our first witness comes before the committee. So I'd need to clear the room.

The committee continued in closed session from 0842 to 0907.

DR. CHRIS MAZZA

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): I call this committee back to order and welcome Dr. Chris Mazza before the committee this morning. I'm going to give him a chance to get settled there.

Welcome, Dr. Mazza. I just want to confirm that you've received the information for a person coming before the committee.

Dr. Chris Mazza: Yes.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Okay. Very well. Our clerk has an oath for you to swear. I see you have a Bible, so we'll proceed with that.

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. William Short): Dr. Mazza, do you solemnly swear that the evidence you shall give to this committee touching the subject of the present inquiry shall be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Yes.

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. William Short): Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Very well. We do have a lot of media in the room this morning. I would just ask the media to watch that they don't bump into any-

body, and please, don't be filming papers that are on members' desks, as well.

At this point, you have time for an opening statement, Dr. Mazza. Please go ahead and make your opening statement.

Dr. Chris Mazza: Mr. Chairman, just before I make my opening statement, on a point of order: Is it okay if I write down questions or points of questions when I hear them, so I don't forget them?

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Certainly. Whatever works for you, Dr. Mazza; if that's helpful for you, yes, please do.

Dr. Chris Mazza: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Good morning. Mr. Chairman, my lawyer, Roger Yachetti, has made reference to my medical condition, and I would like to state that it was my health circumstances that did not enable me to attend this committee previously. There are those that feel I have been using my medical condition as a shield, to hide. All I can say is that they are wrong.

When my son Joshua died, I felt enormous guilt about my inability to protect him. To assuage my guilt, I poured every ounce of my strength into building Ornge, to save lives, to make him proud. The public dismantling of Ornge has triggered deep-seated emotions related to my son's death that I am as yet unable to deal with effectively.

My intent today is to help this committee understand why we built Ornge the way we did, how it was going to fulfill its mission.

There may be areas of questioning that touch on possible lawsuits. As such, I may not be able to answer all questions, as I am mindful I am under oath.

At the outset, and with the benefit of hindsight, I acknowledge that although I might have done some things differently, I would have, and always have, acted with the best interests of the residents of Ontario in mind.

Much has been made of my compensation package. You will know that all executive compensation was a board decision made with the assistance of compensation specialist Cliste and global governance. My total compensation package may seem to be excessive. It is my understanding that those decisions were made using data that compared my responsibilities and obligations to other similar companies and their executives. I regret that it has been a lightning rod for controversy.

The board relied upon advice from legal counsel at Fasken's not to disclose compensation for senior management. In retrospect, this may have been ill-advised. The trouble it has caused is extensive and unfortunate.

I left a full-time, successful career as an emergency medicine specialist at Sunnybrook hospital in 2003 to help build the Ornge team. I believed and I still believe deeply in what we were doing. For me, Ornge was never about personal enrichment or personal gain. It was about the vital and urgent necessity to transform an antiquated and dysfunctional air ambulance system that everyone knew did not serve the interests of Ontario residents—a

system that ignored a critical marriage of cockpit and cabin, outsourcing the cockpit control to a private sector monopoly and consortium of providers with unreliable equipment and dubious operational standards.

This same system was also facing innumerable critical challenges. Amongst them were the following:

There was approximately 2% memory remaining on the dispatch system servers.

The analog phone system for the air dispatch system that was of questionable quality became completely dysfunctional approximately two weeks after Ornge assumed management.

There were no effective management information systems.

Approximately 60% to 70% dispatch reliability existed in the dedicated operating fleet.

Only 18% of flights were using the fixed-cost fleet, while a massive 82% were using the variable-cost fleet.

Over approximately 70% of flight legs had no patients.

There was little choice or control regarding aviation costs.

Working together with a very committed group of people, we began to build a modern, effective air ambulance system that has achieved the following milestones in enhancing transport medicine services for Ontario patients:

Firstly, Ornge successfully replaced the badly needed, seriously outdated capital assets on which the Ontario system relies. This includes information technology, communication and aviation capital assets.

Secondly, as a result of the internalization of fleet ownership and in-sourcing of aviation services, Ornge was able to apply newly acquired capacity and expertise to control the service delivery environment.

Thirdly, Ornge introduced a dramatically more efficient and effective hub and spoke approach to the assembly of infrastructure and the execution of patient transports.

Fourthly, Ornge significantly increased operational efficiency, which included but was not limited to a more optimized approach to basing and dispatching aircraft, which has already resulted in approximately 30% fewer empty legs and a reduction in not-service transports by 19% since 2006-07.

To be certain, Mr. Chairman, not everyone agreed with these changes, and you have heard from some of these people. But the changes that were implemented and continue today are paying dividends.

Utilizing expertise developed by our Ornge team, we realized that we could commercialize the Ornge concept around the world. Ornge Peel and, later, Ornge Global were created with a view to Ontario taxpayers obtaining the financial benefit from systems developed in Ontario. The testimony of former counsel Alf Apps clearly indicates that the first call on any profits derived from exporting Ornge technology and systems would go to taxpayers and would then be used for the domestic funding of Ornge in Ontario. These plans were in the public interest, and they were fully and regularly dis-

closed to government and to senior officials in the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. As Mr. James Sinclair, direct of legal services in the Ministry of Finance, testified, taxpayers were not at risk, and like the sale of Teranet decades ago, this would ultimately have been a win-win for taxpayers.

There are those who want to focus on what I was paid or a boat to be used in the promotion of injury prevention among youth or a motorcycle intended to raise awareness and then generate revenue as an auction item. These concerns are not misplaced but should be fairly viewed in the context of what Ornge is achieving. There are those intent on turning the clock back, wiping out Ornge and going back to outsourcing to private sector monopolies with dubious operating standards. Such changes would be ill-advised and not in the public interest.

I feel very badly for the people who have been affected by what has happened here, especially the dedicated staff at Ornge, and for those, who through no fault of their own, have lost their jobs. I also feel badly for the vision that could have been beneficial to Ontarians and was destroyed, with little regard for the consequences.

I will try to answer your questions now to the best of my ability, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the opportunity to speak.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Thank you for your opening statement. We're going to start 20-minute rounds of questions with the three parties. I would just say that we do have a long day planned today. If you find that you need a break, we can recess the committee at that point, if that's required.

We'll start with the official opposition. Mr. Klees, please go ahead.

Mr. Frank Klees: Mr. Mazza, Mr. Yachetti was quoted as saying that you're very interested in setting the record straight. As you know, this committee has been looking forward to hearing from you for that same reason. I'm sure that you also know that you're making history here. This is only the second time in the history of this Legislature that a witness had to be compelled under a Speaker's warrant to come forward. Have you seen the warrant that was issued?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Yes, sir, I have.

Mr. Frank Klees: I'd like to, for the record, read the substance of that warrant: You are required to attend and give evidence before the Standing Committee on Public Accounts, in room 151, Legislative Building, Queen's Park, Toronto, at 9 a.m. on Wednesday, July 18, 2012, and to remain until your attendance is no longer required. The committee is considering the 2012 Special Report of the Auditor General of Ontario on Ornge Air Ambulance and Related Services. You are required to bring with you and produce to the committee all documents, records or things related to the committee's consideration of the 2012 Special Report of the Auditor General on Ornge Air Ambulance and Related Services. If you disobey this warrant, you may be subject to punishment, including imprisonment.

As we've indicated, we certainly want to be sensitive, Mr. Mazza, to your circumstances, but this committee has a responsibility, as well, to get to the bottom of this issue, and we certainly expect that you will be able to cooperate with us. Is there any reason why you feel you may not be able to attend with us throughout the course of this scheduled day?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Mr. Chairman, I am under ongoing treatment for a medical condition that has compromised me severely. I am here today to do the best that I can to attend to my duties to the people of Ontario and to this committee. I am here to do my very best. My medical condition is a reality that I live with, and I will do my best.

Mr. Frank Klees: Thank you, Mr. Mazza.

Mr. Mazza, have you met the Auditor General?

Dr. Chris Mazza: No, sir, I have not.

Mr. Frank Klees: I'd like to introduce you to him; he's sitting at the head of the hearing table. As you know, it was the work of the Auditor General that has brought us to this committee here. He and his team did an extensive audit of Ornge. He tabled that report in March 2012. Have you read the Auditor General's report?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Yes, sir, I had an opportunity to read it.

Mr. Frank Klees: We have had more than 30 witnesses come forward who have given us their perspective on the Auditor General's findings, and I must say that while there were those who took some exception, the vast majority of those witnesses confirmed and supported the Auditor General's findings, so we're going to be interested in your perspective.

0920

There's a great deal of interest in this hearing today. Many people have been waiting to hear from you, beyond this committee. Sir, you've affected a great many lives over the past few years, and for many, this is the first opportunity they have to hear directly from you.

In the hearing room today are some of those lives you've affected: former friends and colleagues. One of those former friends is Mr. Jacob Blum. Do you consider Mr. Blum a friend?

Dr. Chris Mazza: At one point in my life, Mr. Blum was a friend and a colleague. I have lost touch with Mr. Blum over the years.

Mr. Frank Klees: He's going to be very interested in your responses to questions today.

Among the many representatives of the media here today observing these proceedings is Mr. Kevin Donovan of the Toronto Star, who has invested a great deal of his time in researching your career. Among those watching this proceeding, Mr. Mazza, are people from across the province, literally hundreds, who have been affected by the decisions that you made as CEO of Ornge. They include employees of Ornge, both current and former; employees who have lost their jobs because of decisions that you made; paramedics who have experienced the frustrations of having to turn down critically ill patients

because the helicopter interiors on which you signed off couldn't accommodate administering CPR.

Mr. Roger Yachetti: Excuse me, Mr. Chairman. Is there a question here?

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Mr. Klees can use his time as he wishes, Counsel, and please allow him to.

Mr. Frank Klees: There are pilots who are watching these proceedings who have left Ornge because they lost confidence in the administration at Ornge. There are suppliers and former aviation executives who lost their businesses because of your strategy of creating a private sector monopoly. There are families who are watching these proceedings, families and friends of patients who died under circumstances where an Ornge helicopter was not available for a response because of a downstaffing policy that originated with you, never knowing whether that life could have been saved if a timely response had been available.

Mr. Mazza, given the revelations contained in the Auditor General's report, given the fallout and the information of more than 30 witnesses and, quite frankly, the reports that we have had of incidents that resulted from Ornge not being able to perform, do you feel any guilt?

Mr. Roger Yachetti: Is that a proper question, Mr. Chairman? With the greatest of respect, Mr. Klees is making speeches here. Dr. Mazza is here to answer questions.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Please allow Dr. Mazza to respond to the question.

Dr. Chris Mazza: What is the question, sir?

Mr. Frank Klees: Do you feel any guilt?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Mr. Klees, I feel that at all times, to the best of my ability and with my entire focus and effort from the time that I took my responsibilities at Ornge, I worked in the best interests and for the patients and citizens of Ontario—to the best of my ability at all times. That is what I feel.

Mr. Frank Klees: Mr. Mazza, to your right is a document entitled Investigations Concerning Air Ambulance and Related Services. This is a confidential document that all members of the committee have. I presented a copy at your table. This is a confidential document that is updated periodically for cabinet. It enumerates incidents that were reported.

I won't go into any detail, but suffice it to say that this is a document that has numerous examples of patients who died, patients who were not able to be responded to by Ornge because of interiors that were designed under your watch, because of policies that were made. Because of downstaffing policies, paramedics were not available, pilots were not available. Do you feel any responsibility, Mr. Mazza, for these incidents?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Mr. Klees, every death that has ever occurred in my career, either in emergency medicine or as an expert in transport medicine or within Ornge, has been of grave concern to me. I feel great pain and sorrow with every death that I have ever encountered.

I am not aware of deaths directly related to interiors, nor was I aware of deaths directly related to interiors. I have not seen medical analysis to that effect. I do not have the capability of answering your question to that degree.

Death and preventing death, Mr. Klees, was always first and foremost in any decisions I made at Ornge. There were people dying long before Ornge and the things that changed at Ornge came into being. In fact, Ornge was built on the premise of improving efficiency and effectiveness and trying to decrease those issues. It was a focus of our entire executive team to try to find ways to improve on the effectiveness and efficiency, the safety and the patient safety, as well as the crew safety, for anything that Ornge did—

Mr. Frank Klees: And yet, Mr. Mazza, we heard from people from your executive team—

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Mr. Klees, he was still speaking.

Please finish your response.

Dr. Chris Mazza: So when you ask me if I am upset and concerned about deaths, I may illustrate one particular example that comes to mind, sir, that drove me forward with great fervour. It was prior to Ornge, but it is exemplified in many cases in the history prior to 2006, Mr. Klees.

A young man tobogganing on a hill north of Alliston, the young man 15 years old at the time, hit a tree, his injuries not severe enough that he couldn't walk down the hill with his friend. They were severe; he just wasn't aware. As the family that received them at the bottom of the hill became aware that there was a problem, they called for local ambulance service. Errors were made. A helicopter scene response was not requested. The child was then taken to a local facility. He continued to deteriorate. He required a trauma centre. A call was made. A helicopter was not available because it was in action. Unfortunately, processes did not exist and staff did not exist that had the appropriate competency to make the decisions that were necessary. The helicopter was never taken from where it was attending to a broken leg to come five minutes to attend to this boy who was dying, and the boy died in an ambulance racing for St. Michael's trauma centre.

I received a call, Mr. Klees, to look into that situation. This was 2005, sir. I received a call from the Premier's office to look into that situation. When I did so, it was clear that there were a great many problems associated with it, and I got to know the parents very well.

Ornge's focus, Ornge's obsession—the executive team at Ornge were absolutely committed, sir, committed every day that they came to work, believed intensely that we were trying to prevent such occurrences. Perfection? No, sir, we were not. But we were doing the best that we could and had every intent to continue to improve every day that we worked.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Mr. Klees?

Mr. Frank Klees: Mr. Mazza, you were entrusted with an awesome responsibility by the government of

Ontario to oversee and to reorganize Ontario's air ambulance service and to provide essential emergency services that the more than 13 million Ontarians could count on. Yet under your watch, we heard of numerous incidents where, contrary to what your vision may have been to improve our air ambulance service, the stories that we have and the information that we've received is that instead of improving our air ambulance service, millions of health care dollars were wasted, public funds were siphoned into for-profit entities and under your watch more than \$300 million of debt was incurred that the taxpayers of the province now are obligated to repay.

0930

My question to you is this. As a medical doctor, not only did you allow these things to happen but, according to witnesses before this committee, you personally directed and orchestrated those decisions that have resulted in the scandal that we're investigating today. How could you allow this to happen?

Mr. Roger Yachetti: Excuse me, Mr. Chairman; I'm going to interrupt. This is unfair questioning. Mr. Klees has put a number of premises forward that are clearly false. The province is not on the hook for the \$300 million, and if you'd read Mr. Apps's report, you'd understand why.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Please allow—

Mr. Frank Klees: He's the last person we're going to believe at this committee, sir.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Allow Dr. Mazza to respond, please. And you're not to respond to questions—

Mr. Roger Yachetti: I understand, and I'm trying hard not to.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Please allow Dr. Mazza to respond.

Mr. Frank Klees: Chair, with all due respect to Mr. Yachetti, we have 20-minute rotations here. With his constant interruptions, he is interfering with the work of this committee. I would ask you, as Chair, to caution Mr. Yachetti in terms of his interference.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): I've just said that Dr. Mazza is to answer the questions, not his counsel. Dr. Mazza, if you could respond, please, to Mr. Klees's question.

Dr. Chris Mazza: Mr. Chairman, I'm just not sure what the question is. I'm hearing a lot of different things and I'm not really sure what the question is. If I could get a question.

Mr. Frank Klees: I will repeat the question.

Dr. Chris Mazza: Yes, sir.

Mr. Frank Klees: As a medical doctor, with the vision that you say that you had in the best interests of patients, how could you allow and, in fact, how could you direct the many decisions that ended up siphoning precious health care dollars from the front-line emergency services into for-profit entities and into a scheme that did nothing to improve patient care in this province?

Dr. Chris Mazza: There are several questions in there, Mr. Chairman. I'm going to try to answer the first one.

Mr. Chairman, I never made decisions and directed issues alone. I had an excellent board of directors that provided very solid governance and oversight. I had a strong team. Those decisions were made in a team-like manner but, most importantly, the decisions were overseen and approved by my board of directors.

Mr. Klees indicates that I orchestrated, that I engaged, and I flatly deny that fact. I had a board. I took my issues, as appropriate and good governance would dictate, to the board of directors. We made decisions, and we believed and still do believe that those decisions were in the best interests of Ontarians and in the best interests of providing more effective, more efficient air ambulance care.

Mr. Klees mentions the debt that the taxpayers are responsible for. That is not my understanding, Mr. Chairman. That debt was incurred with the full knowledge of the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, with the full knowledge of the Ontario Financing Authority, and with the full support of both. It was incurred not as sovereign debt. It was a rated bond that was incurred by Ornge, and I understand that the testimony here from the Ministry of Finance has backed up that position: that the taxpayers of Ontario are not on the hook for that debt. That is my understanding.

Mr. Klees also refers to siphoning. At no time was anyone siphoning dollars to for-private schemes. The mandate of Ornge, that started back in 2006 and went through four cabinet ministers and two deputy ministers, two associate deputy ministers and three assistant deputy ministers—always had to generate revenue outside the tax base in order to improve the sustainability and improve the infrastructure of the systems in Ontario, which were, in the view of those of us who built the systems in 2006, not sustainable.

I hope I'm answering the questions. That's the best of my ability.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): You have a minute and a half left, Mr. Klees, in this round.

Mr. Frank Klees: In that case, I will defer the balance of my questions for the next round.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Very well. Who would like to go for the NDP? Ms. Gélinas.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Good morning, Dr. Mazza. It goes in rotation, and I'll be asking questions with my colleague for the next 20 minutes.

I was most interested: When you did your opening comments, you did mention that you fully and regularly disclosed everything that was going on to the ministry. As well, when you answered my colleague, you repeated that you had full knowledge and support from the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Finance.

I would be interested in you taking me down: How did you brief them? How often? Who knew? Was there a schedule in place where you would update the ministry as to what was going on at Ornge, how things were progressing?

Dr. Chris Mazza: If I may ask, just for clarification, do you mean from inception and regarding anything and everything, or on particular issues?

M^{me} France Gélinas: Well, let's start it broad.

Dr. Chris Mazza: Okay. The primary contact at the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care would have been the emergency health services branch. In the beginning, my staff—I don't actually recall which staff. I believe it was shared between one of my operational chiefs, Mr. Lepine, and, at the time, Mr. Blum, but Ms. Renzella was always involved as well in briefing the ministry as required. In 2006-07, it was not as regular as it became. It was sort of more, as I recall, haphazard, but it was certainly many times per month, and obviously often many times beyond that per year.

In the internal audit and review that was performed by Meyers Norris Penny, one of the recommendations was that those reviews, interactions, communications become regular and formalized. We moved to continuing to speak to them, in some cases, on a daily basis, but certainly, again, many, many times per month, but then with formal quarterly meetings regarding all issues and challenges that Ornge may or may not be facing, and that of course would relate to any strategic plans or strategic initiatives that we were undergoing.

During times of major projects, though, ma'am, we would move outside of even that briefing schedule and move into a far more intense format of briefing. For example, in the moving towards the bond offering and the movement into aviation, we were absolutely up front with the ministry as to why we felt strongly that we needed to move into aviation, why we felt strongly that we needed to replace the fleet, what the economic analyses were behind that and so on and so forth.

But we went beyond that. We were engaged, with the help of our financial adviser, which we achieved in an RFP, and corporate counsel for Fasken's, Mr. Apps, in briefing and ensuring that the Ontario Financing Authority not only understood the tenets, the tone, the type of deal that was on the table, but supported it. And it was our understanding that there was broad and widespread support for this.

If at any time, ma'am—if at any time—the ministry had indicated to us that “We do not want this to happen,” or “We do not like the way the strategic direction is going,” there is no question that we would have changed tracks. They were our principal client. They were the reason we existed. They were who we were trying to please.

0940

Much has been made at this committee about the inability to affect our operation. I must say I've been quite puzzled by that, because while I've read Ms. Golding's testimony—and certainly there are any number of legal means that the ministry could use to effect change in something they didn't like. But I think it's more important that the committee understand that there was an unbelievable moral and ethical power that the ministry had over Ornge. We were there to serve them. That was

our belief. That I say from my heart, from my soul, from who I am and from my chairmanship. That was why we were there. I hope I answered you.

M^{me} France Gélinas: No, that was pretty good. You went from broad to—and you also went from 2006 to, I take it, more recent.

Let's talk about some of those briefings that you've done with the help of Mr. Apps. There was a briefing note that was widely circulated, where you came to the ministry and briefed them on the new corporate structure and the strategic direction of Ornge. This document has been circulated at this committee, and I take it that you know what I'm referring to.

Dr. Chris Mazza: Yes, ma'am.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Was this well received?

Dr. Chris Mazza: First, I would qualify that I wasn't involved in those briefings. The briefings, as I recall, were carried out by lead counsel, Mr. Apps from Fasken's, Mr. Beltzner and Mr. Lepine. I believe those were the attendees.

Unequivocally, yes, the briefings were well received in what was communicated to me. Inasmuch as it was communicated to me, in fact, the briefings were so well received and so well supported that it was communicated to me that one of the deputy ministers—I cannot remember which one, whether it was finance or health; I thought it was health, but I don't recollect that absolutely—indicated that in this restructuring and the bringing in of private investors, would the government be able to invest? They thought that the business plan and the opportunity were so positive that they would like to look at the potential of investing.

They also talked about a number of other potentials down the road, that they thought it was a brilliant piece of public policy. That was why we went ahead with it. Again, to say that in those briefings, if the ministry had said, “We don't want you doing this. We think this isn't appropriate,” we would have gone ahead? Absolutely not.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Would there be a chance that the ministry did say “We're not happy,” and this information never reached you? You thought that the ministry was onside, but really, they were not?

Dr. Chris Mazza: It's a hypothetical question. I can't imagine that—

M^{me} France Gélinas: Scenario.

Dr. Chris Mazza: I can't imagine that, no. But it's hypothetical.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Do you have any example at any point in time where the ministry advised you, “Don't do what you're doing,” or, “We have an issue with the way you're proceeding or with your vision,” anything of that sort? Was there ever any input provided from the ministry that was basically, “Don't do what you're doing”?

Dr. Chris Mazza: No, sir. I was very proud of what we were doing and I was even prouder that my ministers—because there had been, as I said, four, which started with Minister Clement, who was actually extremely supportive of the directions that we were going

in and the concepts that we were espousing; moving on to Minister Smitherman and Minister Caplan, both of whom I had opportunity to brief on the fullness of the concepts. I had meetings with both of those ministers; meetings with ADMs later. No, sir: At all times, people supported it and told me that they thought it was great public policy.

The only minister whom I never met with was Minister Matthews. I asked, over two years, for a meeting with Minister Matthews. I requested a meeting because I had hoped to be able to brief her on the concepts of Ornge. As was my practice when a new minister took office, I wanted to meet and make sure they understood the ideas.

I was told by my corporate communications staff that the minister didn't require a briefing, didn't require a meeting, and was comfortable that Ornge was managing things to the ministry's satisfaction, and, moreover, I gathered, was busy with other issues. So I—

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Would you be able to table any formal requests that you made of Minister Matthews for meetings? Do you have records of—

Dr. Chris Mazza: No. As a matter of fact, sir, I have none of my records; I have none of my materials at all. I haven't been at Ornge since my medical leave in December, and I have access to nothing.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Were they formal requests made in writing or by email, or were they telephone requests, for a meeting with Minister Matthews?

Dr. Chris Mazza: I don't know the answer to the question. I know that I delegated the requests to my VP of corporate communications, who would then have been in contact. Whether it was an email contact or a verbal, I don't know the answer.

M^{me} France Gélinas: All right. I want to take you back to January 2011. Mr. Apps, your board chair, as well as Mr. Lepine, did the briefing. It was extremely well received, well received enough that they saw a piece of policy that really made sense, that maybe the government should invest in. But yet we have the Minister of Health on record saying that when that briefing was done, red flags went up; they tried to get information out of Ornge and were stonewalled.

Did the ministry ever ask you for follow-up information after the briefings were done?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Not to my knowledge, ma'am. I have no knowledge of that or understanding of that. I can't imagine a circumstance at Ornge where we would stonewall the minister.

Our interest in those briefings was twofold. It was to fulfill a board obligation that indicated in the minutes that we ensure that the ministry is supportive. Actually, that is very well outlined in a document that I believe Mr. Apps has circulated with this committee. So that was the first premise.

The second premise was more of a moral obligation on our part to ensure that our principal client, and, quite frankly, for those of us on the executive team, our principal reason for doing what we were doing, was happy

and thought it was a good piece of policy. So I don't know why—there would have been no reason to stonewall with them. We were proud of what was going on. So I don't know why that would be said.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Neither do I.

You opened up talking about your compensation and how your compensation came to be.

Dr. Chris Mazza: Yes, ma'am.

M^{me} France Gélinas: I'm with the NDP, and when we reviewed the sunshine list, we knew you and had realized that you were no longer on the sunshine list, so we filed a freedom of access of information with the Ministry of Health to find out what your salary was and what your compensation was and why you were no longer there. They told us that they got 13 documents about this, but they could not share that with us.

Did the ministry ever ask you what your compensation was?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Me, personally? No, ma'am. My compensation was always the purview of my board of directors. I had no input into my compensation. I had no opinion that was ever—my opinion was never requested about my compensation. My board of directors utilized third party compensation advisers that used data and a fairly exhaustive process to establish compensation, and I would be informed as to what my compensation would be.

Similarly, if there were issues or questions from outside about my compensation, those would have gone to my chairman and the chairman of the compensation committee, and I would not have been informed.

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In fact, in one particular instance I remember—I don't remember the circumstances, but I remember Ms. Hawkins calling me and asking if she could speak to my chairman because she had a question to go over. I said that certainly she could speak to my chairman and asked what it was about. She indicated that she could not tell me because, of course, it was about my compensation.

So I don't know. I don't have any information about that, ma'am, nor would I have on any matters regarding me; I was kept out of it, as is appropriate in a good governance system.

M^{me} France Gélinas: With your knowledge—I mean, you knew your board—

Dr. Chris Mazza: Yes, ma'am.

M^{me} France Gélinas: I was an executive director, similar to you. You get to know your chair pretty good, and you get to know your board members pretty good. If the ministry had asked your board for compensation, how do you figure they would have reacted?

Dr. Chris Mazza: It's a hypothetical point. I don't want to speak for my board, ma'am, particularly under oath, because it's an opinion I'm offering.

I can say that the entire issue of disclosure was one that the board dealt with in 2007, I believe. It was when the organization moved to create Ornge Peel, which was to begin to move on its for-profit initiatives, and many staff were moved into Ornge Peel. The board obtained an

opinion from Fasken Martineau as to whether they were to disclose or not, and the opinion was, no, they were not to disclose. I was not privy to the debate that went on about that. I was only aware that there was an opinion that was from Fasken Martineau. There was a board meeting that was in camera that I was not allowed to attend. The conclusion out of that board meeting was that they were not going to disclose because that was the advice they had been given.

On a hypothetical basis, ma'am, knowing my board chair and knowing my board, if the ministry had indicated a strong desire for disclosure, my chairman's only concern would have been, I think, privacy and liability issues, which the ministry could have dealt with by taking on those liability issues.

At all times, I suppose my answer would be that my chairman and my board were interested in pleasing the ministry; those requests were never made.

More importantly, it is important to understand that in the internal review and audit of 2008, the Ministry of Finance's internal audit group was aware that Ornge Peel was not on the sunshine list. No issues were made. No discussion came out of that. There were no concerns, and there was a full report and review of the report and debate.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): You have about two minutes left.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: We're looking at the Ministry of Health's involvement and interaction with Ornge. What did the Ministry of Health do to oversee or provide oversight of Ornge? Would you be able to summarize your experience of the Ministry of Health's oversight?

M^{me} France Gélinas: Did they do inspections on-site, that kind of stuff?

Dr. Chris Mazza: As I said, the ministry, I thought, were attentive to their obligations in the quarterly meetings, in being regularly aware of what we were doing and what was going on, evaluating any instances of patient occurrences or aviation occurrences. There were formal processes that they had in place—inspections, we could call them, but the ministry has a specific term, and it escapes me right now—land ambulance review and air ambulance review. They're fairly extensive processes. From what I saw, they were attentive.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: How many reviews do you recall occurred?

Dr. Chris Mazza: I don't recall.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: That's fine. Were there any spot audits or spot checks where the ministry would come in unannounced and investigate what was going on or just do a quick review and say, "Hey, listen, we're here to check out what's going on"?

Dr. Chris Mazza: I don't recall, but more importantly, I wouldn't know, because those things would be occurring at a far different level than where I was. They may have been occurring at an operational level and I wasn't aware, or they may have been occurring in the field and I wasn't aware. I don't know the answer.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Thank you. We'll move on to the government members. Ms. Sandals?

Mrs. Liz Sandals: Thank you for appearing this morning, Dr. Mazza. As a member of the committee, I am in one way pleased that you're here to answer our questions because there are so many people of Ontario who have been awaiting the outcome of your testimony to get some sense of the answers to the questions that they have been asking.

In other ways, I'm very much saddened, because what we're coming to understand is that there are a lot of people who have really suffered because of this incident. We've got the paramedics, who feel a loss of their reputation. We have the pilots, who feel a loss of their reputation. We have the dispatchers, who feel a loss of their reputation. I am not saying that they deserve to have that loss of reputation, but that's what they feel: that they are under attack. It's very sad to see such an organization which should be so good and which has provided in the past good service—to see those front-line people who have worked so hard for the people of Ontario feeling as though they're under attack.

I'm saddened, too, for those of us who are members of the Legislature, appointed officials, who've entrusted Ornge with providing a service which is, after all, a life-and-death service. I think that when I listened to my constituents, the reaction I get from my constituents is that the people of the province are very much concerned with what they view as their taxpayers' dollars being wasted on greed and excesses and some form of secrecy that they can't figure out what's going on. Their sense is that it was your leadership that led us into this mess. Quite frankly, a lot of the reaction that I get from my constituents is that they're quite outraged by this whole story from what they read in the media. I think that's because literally what has unfolded was outrageous. What has certainly become clear, as we've listened to the testimony that we've heard at the committee here over the last many months, is a sense that you broke faith with your employees, with the public who are paying the bills, with the members of all parties of the Legislative Assembly and ultimately with the people who matter the most, who are the men and the women and the children who are the patients, the clients, of Ornge who rely on Ornge for services.

The impression that we have certainly gained through the testimony that we've had at the committee and from the stories that we've heard here at the committee is stories about lavish perks, stories about misplaced priorities, stories about looking at your personal gain ahead of the interest of Ontario patients and a sense that it wasn't really until the Auditor General and the government stepped in that this all came to a halt. We've covered a lot of territory already today, but as you yourself mentioned, your compensation has certainly, for the public, been the lightning rod. I think that's because, to the public, the matter of compensation symbolically represents everything that has run amok, so that it has, as you said, become the lightning rod. So I think, given that

your compensation is a lightning rod, I'd like to begin there, if I may.

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If we go back to April 2007, at that point your name did appear, Dr. Mazza, in the annual sunshine list. The April 2007 sunshine list was for 2006 earnings. Do you recall how much you earned in 2006, what your compensation was?

Dr. Chris Mazza: No, ma'am. I recall it was probably around \$400,000 or \$300,000-and-something. But I don't recall; it's a long time ago.

Mrs. Liz Sandals: Oh, that's interesting, because what was actually reported was \$284,000.

Dr. Chris Mazza: As I said, ma'am, I don't recall.

Mrs. Liz Sandals: Your employer at that point in time would have been—

Dr. Chris Mazza: This was—

Mrs. Liz Sandals: In 2006.

Dr. Chris Mazza: It would have been Ontario Air Ambulance Services Corp., I believe—

Mrs. Liz Sandals: So whatever the name at that particular point in time—

Dr. Chris Mazza: Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. Liz Sandals: —at that point, the non-profit was your employer.

Two years later, when you look at the 2009 sunshine list, your name has disappeared. It would appear that that level of salary has also disappeared. Because we don't have access to that information, we have to rely on the testimony of other witnesses. Luis Navas, who I believe was on the board at that point in time, informed the committee that he believed your total compensation by that time was about \$550,000. Does that seem about the right ballpark to you?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Again, ma'am, there was a lot going on in my life in the last six years, and I do not recall my compensation numbers. You asked about 2006 earlier. I was struggling with a fair bit in 2006. I had just lost a child. There was a heck of a lot else that went on over those years. I don't recall the numbers, but I'm certain there's data to support these questions regarding those numbers.

What I do know is that my compensation was always defined by my board of directors. It was defined using third party compensation advisers. I'm not an expert in compensation.

Mrs. Liz Sandals: I didn't ask you how it got to be that. I'm just trying to figure out what on earth it was, because quite frankly, the public has never received a full accounting of what your salary was at various points.

Dr. Chris Mazza: Yes, ma'am, and I'm not sure I can help them in this committee, because I don't recall those numerics.

Mrs. Liz Sandals: Even though, as you said, it's the lightning rod, you haven't even checked your own tax records?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Ma'am, I actually just got out of hospital a little while ago. I have access to nothing. I've

recently moved; everything I own is in boxes. So, no, ma'am.

Mrs. Liz Sandals: Okay. So let's assume, then, if you don't have the information, that Mr. Navas, who was on the board at the time, was correct. Given the information which was on the sunshine list, which is public record—and he was on the board, and you say the board was responsible—it would appear that in a matter of a few years, your compensation increased by a quarter of a million dollars. That is, from my taxpayers' point of view, a pretty significant increase, to have your salary increase by a quarter of a million dollars.

Who was your employer in 2009?

Dr. Chris Mazza: That would have been Ornge Peel.

Mrs. Liz Sandals: At this point it's Ornge Peel, so we've now moved from Ornge—

Dr. Chris Mazza: Excuse me, ma'am. I believe from 2007 onwards, it would have been Ornge Peel.

Mrs. Liz Sandals: Okay. So when your name disappears from the sunshine list, you've moved from non-profit to for-profit—

Dr. Chris Mazza: Yes, and that fact was made known to—the Ministry of Health was aware of that, as was Meyers Norris Penny, who were the Ministry of Finance's internal audit group, who completed a full and complete review and audit in 2007-08, which the government has possession of, and that fact would have been well known. In fact, I remember having a conversation with the lead auditor at the time, defining the purpose of Ornge Peel and the business purposes.

Mrs. Liz Sandals: Are you telling us that the private auditor had access to information that the Auditor General of the province of Ontario couldn't get access to? That's very odd.

Dr. Chris Mazza: Ma'am, it was the internal audit group from the Ministry of Finance. They hired—I don't understand the process behind that, ma'am, but it would have been the internal audit group in the Ministry of Finance, not the government.

Mrs. Liz Sandals: And Ornge Peel, the company of which you were CEO, would release information to one place but not to—

Dr. Chris Mazza: What information are you talking about releasing—

Mrs. Liz Sandals: Well, your salary. You just told me that they fully audited your salary.

Dr. Chris Mazza: No, ma'am. I told you that they completed an audit and they were aware that we were not disclosing on the sunshine list. That's what I said, ma'am. And I told you that they were aware of the business reasons for the creation of Ornge Peel, and I am not aware as to whether they asked at all about compensation.

Mrs. Liz Sandals: So the internal audit didn't show up your salary either, then?

Dr. Chris Mazza: I'm not aware. I don't know whether it did or not.

Mrs. Liz Sandals: So we've got the move, then, from 2006 to 2009; your salary increases by a quarter of a

million dollars, from what we can find out, which we all agree isn't the best source of information; and you've switched employers. Could you take a minute to explain to us how you can defend a quarter-of-a-million-dollar increase in three years?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Ma'am, I think that's a question best asked to my board of directors and the third party compensation advisers. I did not derive my salary, I did not derive that increase nor did I demand that increase. That was what I was told I would earn. My responsibilities were going up on an exponential basis. I believe that was taken into account. But those are questions better served to the board of directors and to the third party compensation advisers.

Mrs. Liz Sandals: So your salary went up by a quarter of a million dollars and you didn't really notice and you really didn't ever discuss it with the board chair?

Dr. Chris Mazza: No, ma'am, you asked me a question on defending or defining it and I—

Mrs. Liz Sandals: I didn't ask you how the board arrived at it. I asked you what you thought of it. Do you think that was greedy? Do you think it was excessive to have a public sector employee have their salary go up, during a recession, I might add, by a quarter of a million dollars?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Thank you. I think that I would answer by saying, again, that my opinion was not asked during the—

Mrs. Liz Sandals: But I'm asking your opinion. Do you think that was appropriate—

Dr. Chris Mazza: I don't think my opinion is as relevant as is the analysis by compensation experts, ma'am. I think the compensation advisers advised the board, the board accepted the advice, and I was told, "This is what your salary would be."

I know I worked very hard and I endeavoured to the best of my ability at all times to quite literally pour my heart and soul into what I was doing.

Mrs. Liz Sandals: Okay. So let's move on to 2011. What we have finally found out is that in 2011 your salary was \$1.4 million. Is that correct, sir? Or at least your compensation was \$1.4 million.

Dr. Chris Mazza: Again, this may seem odd to the committee, but at this point and after what I've been through lately, I'm not going to be able to reflect on what the number was. I know that's what's been reported, yes. What is the question, though, ma'am?

Mrs. Liz Sandals: So now your salary has gone up by—if we look at the amount that your salary has gone up over that time, over a few years—during a recession it's gone from about \$300,000 up to \$1.4 million. That's a \$1.1-million increase. And you've got no opinion about that increase? Is it greedy? Is it excessive? Is it appropriate?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Ma'am, what I would answer—and again, I will not offer opinion, but what I will answer is that when I started I had, in 2003-04, probably 20 employees and when I finished I had 600—a little north of 500 and soon to be a little north of 600 employees. When

I started, I was running basically a medical oversight group. When I finished, I was effectively running a small hospital as well as a rotor-wing airline and a fixed-wing airline, as well as a communications centre. In addition, I had been asked to run and move forward on a global consulting initiative and the potential of a global operation initiative.

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My other point on this would be: The board, again, would have made those decisions with third party advisers. They would have been looking at private sector comparables, I believe. The other point I would make, and something that really I have not often read or heard: Well over half—in fact, three quarters—of any compensation I received would have been based on performance. There were goals and objectives, hard goals and objectives, that I had to meet. If I didn't meet the goals and objectives, then I didn't get paid that. And the goals and objectives had to be approved by the board of directors, by the compensation chairman and then, whether I met them or not had to be agreed to by the board of directors and by the compensation chairman, at which point the performance pay would be forthcoming.

Mrs. Liz Sandals: So you don't have any opinion, but I think that was quite a defence of why you should get \$1.4 million. As the CEO of all this enterprise, when you do the calculation, \$1 out of every \$150 that was supposed to be providing air ambulance service to the people of Ontario was going into your pocket. As a CEO of an enterprise, do you think it's appropriate that funding for Ontario's air ambulance service, \$1 out of every \$150, should go directly into your pocket?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Ma'am—

Mr. Roger Yachetti: Chair, may I interrupt for a moment? Could you please make the witness understand what the 150 represents? Is that the \$150 million—

Mrs. Liz Sandals: That's \$150 million in annual funding which was received from the taxpayers of Ontario to provide air ambulance service to the people of Ontario. At \$1.4 million, that's a ratio of about \$1 out of every \$150 going into your pocket, sir.

Dr. Chris Mazza: Ma'am, I would go back to my position on salary, which is that it was not my decision. The decision was made by a board of directors. They were made with the advice and counsel of third party advisers. I have nothing further to add to my answer, ma'am. I do not have an opinion on this issue. I have nothing further to add.

Mrs. Liz Sandals: Okay. Perhaps you do have an opinion on some of the interest-free loans that you were provided with. As we move forward, you're the CEO of Ornge Global when we get up into the period in 2010 and 2011. It would appear from the work that the auditor has done that over that about 18-month period, you were provided with approximately \$1.2 million in personal loans by Ornge Global. If I could work my way through that, is it correct that you received a \$500,000 loan in July 2010? This appears to be in some way related to the purchase of a house in Etobicoke.

Dr. Chris Mazza: Ma'am, I am aware of one simple loan that I received. The other issues, are not, as you've put, in fact—the one simple loan that I received was for \$150,000 due to difficult housing circumstances. The other item that you mentioned was a reflection of a long-term incentive plan that had been enacted years before. The final issue, which people have spoken—

Mrs. Liz Sandals: Just let me clarify this: The \$1.4 million includes your performance bonuses—

Dr. Chris Mazza: Ma'am, if I may finish.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Please, Mrs. Sandals, let him finish.

Dr. Chris Mazza: I'm not able to go into complete detail on these issues, ma'am. I'm sure there's paper, both at Ornge and otherwise, to demonstrate it. The long-term incentive plan occurred over years. What you're speaking of, the \$500,000, represented paying out, at the end of those years, some element of that. So it is not a simple loan, ma'am. That's my only point.

Mrs. Liz Sandals: But you did receive \$500,000 in addition to the \$1.4 million.

Dr. Chris Mazza: Over time.

Mrs. Liz Sandals: And then—

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): You're just about out of time.

Mrs. Liz Sandals: I'll borrow from my next round, if I may.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Yes.

Mrs. Liz Sandals: You also received at some point, then, a cash advance of \$250,000?

Dr. Chris Mazza: That is not correct, to my knowledge. I received a special bonus for ongoing—

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Excuse me, can I ask that cameras not be photographing any materials on the tables, please? Thank you.

Continue, sir.

Dr. Chris Mazza: Mr. Chairman, I realize it's probably inappropriate to ask, but I can't even hear when they're right behind me.

I'm sorry.

Mrs. Liz Sandals: The \$250,000 cash advance: You were explaining what that was for.

Dr. Chris Mazza: Yes. That was not a cash advance; it was a special bonus, as is my understanding and my recollection. Certainly, it has been my understanding, from the moment it was offered by the compensation committee, that it was offered for work done to date, because I had been working substantively, both with institutional investors and, later, private investors, and the strategy had changed multiple times. It was for going forward on the equity, the private placement.

Mrs. Liz Sandals: So that was also in addition to the \$1.4 million in basic compensation and routine performance bonuses?

Dr. Chris Mazza: In the subsequent year. That would have been in 2011.

It's also important to assess that I am not guaranteed in any year any amount of money. As I said, more than 75% to 85% of whatever I receive is not necessarily

coming my way. It depends on meeting performance guidelines.

Mrs. Liz Sandals: Then, there is also a record of \$450,000 received in 2011.

Dr. Chris Mazza: I already spoke to that.

Mrs. Liz Sandals: No, because the first \$500,000 was in July 2010. It would appear there was another \$450,000 in 2011.

Dr. Chris Mazza: I understand. I'm saying, I spoke to that earlier. That was, in fact, an interest-bearing loan, that helped me with housing circumstances, yes.

Mrs. Liz Sandals: So it does add up to about \$1.2 million, in addition to the \$1.4 million.

Dr. Chris Mazza: My only disagreement with you was in characterizing them all as loans.

Mrs. Liz Sandals: Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Mr. Klees.

Mr. Frank Klees: Mr. Mazza, I'd like to pick up where Ms. Sandals left off.

First of all, with regard to the shifting of salaries to Ornge Peel—I believe that was the private sector company that you began getting paid out of. Is that correct?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Yes, sir.

Mr. Frank Klees: You said very clearly, earlier in your testimony, that it was Fasken's who advised you that the salaries that were paid out should not be disclosed. Do you recall that?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Yes, sir.

Mr. Frank Klees: When Ms. Lynne Golding was testifying under oath before this committee, she said this on this topic—and I'll quote from Hansard:

"Mr. Giorno and I did conclude that while Dr. Mazza was employed by Peel, he was not subject to disclosure of his salary under the act. Now, if I may, that wasn't the end of our advice. Our advice went on to say that Ornge should be aware that the ministry could, with the stroke of a pen, pass a regulation designating Ornge and its subsidiaries—Ornge was already subject to it, but its subsidiaries—as entities that would be required to comply. We also urged them to voluntarily disclose the salaries...."

That was Ms. Golding's testimony. Was she telling the truth?

Dr. Chris Mazza: As I've testified, I was aware that there was an opinion by Fasken's regarding the sunshine list. The issue was for my board of directors to debate. It was not within my purview to enter into that discussion or debate. It was an issue for compensation. It was an issue that affected me directly. I was not privy to the debate nor was I privy, Mr. Klees, to the details of the opinion. In fact, I stayed out of it. I was obviously in conflict; it was about me.

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Mr. Frank Klees: Ms. Golding went on to say that she suggested that Ornge obtain the consent of the ministry before shifting your salary and others over to the for-profit company. I'm assuming you don't know anything about that either?

Dr. Chris Mazza: No, sir. That would have been a decision undertaken by the board of directors, and that advice was being fed directly to the board of directors and the debate that occurred there.

Mr. Frank Klees: Given the fact that you provided this committee with inaccurate information earlier today, would you agree to withdraw the statement that you made that you received—

Dr. Chris Mazza: What inaccurate—

Mr. Roger Yachetti: Excuse me for a moment. Mr. Chairman, may I ask that Mr. Klees identify the inaccurate information?

Mr. Frank Klees: The inaccurate information was that Mr. Mazza made it very clear—

Mr. Roger Yachetti: Dr. Mazza.

Mr. Frank Klees: —that Mr. Mazza—sir, I will refer to Mr. Mazza as Mr. Mazza because, based on what I know about his track record, I am not prepared to use a very honourable designation in the context of this hearing.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Okay. We don't need to get into this—

Mr. Roger Yachetti: Step outside of these privileged circumstances and say that, Mr. Klees.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Please, if we could just continue with the question.

Mr. Frank Klees: The misinformation to which I referred was the fact that Mr. Mazza stated to this committee that it was on the advice of Fasken's that they withheld the information regarding his salary. That is not the advice. Ms. Golding very clearly said that while they don't have to, it was her recommendation that they do, and I don't think Mr. Mazza wants to leave that inaccuracy on the record. So I'm giving him an opportunity to withdraw or correct his statement.

Dr. Chris Mazza: Mr.—

Mr. Roger Yachetti: Excuse me, please. I'm still having trouble, and I'm sure the witness is having trouble, understanding what the inaccuracy is.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Do you wish to restate the inaccuracy, Mr. Klees?

Mr. Frank Klees: I'll say it one more time.

Mr. Roger Yachetti: Please.

Mr. Frank Klees: The record will show, when we have an opportunity to read Hansard, that Mr. Mazza made it very clear that it was his opinion that it was Fasken's who recommended that they not disclose the salaries. That is not true. Based on Ms. Golding's testimony, the advice was they don't have to; however, they recommended that they do, and they also recommended that they disclose to the ministry.

Dr. Chris Mazza: Mr. Klees, in answer to your question, I was only aware of the Fasken's opinion indicating that we did not have to disclose salaries from Ornge Peel.

Mr. Frank Klees: So you were not given the full opinion?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Mr. Klees, if I may finish: I was only aware of the fact that Fasken's indicated that we did not have to disclose salaries. I was not part of the debate

or the decision process around whether Ornge Peel would or would not disclose on the list. It was not within my authority nor within my purview to be part of such a debate. That is my recollection. It is not an inaccuracy, sir; it is my recollection, to the best of my ability.

Mr. Frank Klees: Who conveyed the information about Fasken's opinion to you?

Dr. Chris Mazza: I do not recall, sir. That was quite a long time ago. I do not recall.

Mr. Frank Klees: You know, for someone whose resumé is only larger than Mr. Rainer Beltzner's, and who had a reputation—I say “had” a reputation—of being an astute executive, a driver of a major corporation, as you put it, your memory is very questionable. I'd like to ask you: Is that a selective loss of memory?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Mr. Klees, I have been in a hospital with a medical condition for approximately three months. I've had a significant amount of difficulty with my health lately, which I believe is a matter of record at this committee. I told the committee that I would do the best that I can. I am not being selective on purpose. I am recalling and offering information to the best of my ability and will continue to do so.

I would prefer, though, Mr. Chairman, that I not be accused of withholding or incompetence based on my challenges with memory. It has been nine months—eight months—since I sat in chairs at Ornge. It has been around the same amount of time that I have not been able to look at anything from my past or my history. It has only been in recent weeks that I've been able to even read any of the material that I needed to read.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Very well, and I would ask members to be sensitive to Dr. Mazza's condition.

Mr. Frank Klees: Mr. Mazza, do you recall that it was you who actually advocated to route your salaries through Ornge Peel?

Dr. Chris Mazza: No, sir. Ornge Peel was not created to route my salaries through Ornge Peel. Ornge Peel was created to begin to deliver on the mandate of Ornge, which it was from its inception. It was not just my salary; it was staff that were moved into Ornge Peel. The idea was to begin to generate revenue, to begin to generate a revenue flow and business development that would inevitably allow us to improve the sustainability of the Ontario system. Our initial focus was on consulting. We were looking at various other endeavours, including tuition and education, and could not do that from the charity structure that we were in. This was not done to route my salary anywhere, nor would the board have approved that, sir. They would never have done that.

Mr. Frank Klees: No, of course not.

I would ask you this question: When did your board decide—because certainly you never made a request—that you should have a mortgage or a loan to buy a house? Did Mr. Beltzner come to you and say, “You know, Chris, I think you should have a half-a-million-dollar mortgage. We put it into you”—was that a

surprise when that showed up all of a sudden, that big loan?

Dr. Chris Mazza: I do take offence, Mr. Chairman, to the tone, but I'll answer the question. The board of directors knew that I was having significant challenges in my housing circumstance, and the compensation chair and the board chair offered that they might be able to assist me with an interest-bearing loan. That was how that occurred.

Mr. Frank Klees: How did the board become aware of your housing challenges?

Dr. Chris Mazza: I believe through regular conversation. I was in some distress. I don't remember who asked in an aside conversation how things were going. It was really that simple. They then came back to me and said that they might be able to assist me.

Mr. Frank Klees: A very sensitive board, indeed.

Mr. Mazza, does November 14, 2005, stand out in your mind?

Dr. Chris Mazza: No, sir.

Mr. Frank Klees: That was a day on which you and the esteemed chair of the Ornge board, Mr. Rainer Beltzner, signed the performance agreement with the former health minister, George Smitherman. You don't recall that?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Sir, I don't recall the date; I recall the event.

Mr. Frank Klees: Who else was present at the signing of that agreement?

Dr. Chris Mazza: I don't recall.

Mr. Frank Klees: Where was the agreement signed?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Mr. Klees, I do not recall. I presume it would have been at Queen's Park, but I cannot recall.

Mr. Frank Klees: Was there a celebratory event following that historic occasion?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Members of the committee: In 2005, there are black spots in my memory. I apologize to the committee for this, but I can explain that those black spots exist because my son died March 5, 2006. A lot of my memory stopped, and events previous became grey for me. I do not recall.

Mr. Frank Klees: In the time leading up to the signing of that agreement, did you make any commitments to George Smitherman regarding contributions to election campaigns or support for him in any way?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Absolutely not.

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Mr. Frank Klees: Was it ultimately George Smitherman, obviously, who made the decision to approve your proposal?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Actually, sir, it began in Mr. Tony Clement's office. It was during Mr. Clement's time as Minister of Health. I was introduced through some folks from Fasken's. Well, specifically, Mr. Blum introduced me to some folks at Fasken's. We then were enabled to meet with staff from the minister's office. The staff from the minister's office then allowed us to meet with the minister. We met with Minister Clement on a proposal to

move into an arm's-length organization. The minister suggested that he was supportive of the concept and would like to see us go forward on elucidating this with the bureaucracy. We then began to work towards that.

In March 2003, SARS came to Toronto, and nothing happened in health care for months afterwards. Then, there was an election. Following that election, we then tried to introduce ourselves to the staff of the new Minister of Health, George Smitherman, to bring the issue forward again. We were introduced to his staff; we made the position to the staff. We then made our way through to Minister Smitherman's office, who also liked the concept and asked us to work with the bureaucracy to bring the concept to fruition, and then we worked through 2005 to do so.

Mr. Frank Klees: Did you get any help in making those representations to the new health minister or the new government of the day?

Dr. Chris Mazza: I'm not sure what you mean. Can you clarify, please?

Mr. Frank Klees: Did you retain the services of a consultant or a lobbyist?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Well, no. We had already met with Guy Giorno and Lynne Golding at Fasken Martineau to talk about the concept, to talk about how it looked. I believe the meeting with the minister's staff was organized by Mr. Blum. I don't believe that we utilized a lobbyist, but at the time, that would not have been inappropriate, by my recollection. I just don't think that we did.

Mr. Frank Klees: Mr. Mazza, this is the cabinet document, dated November 15, 2004, that was used to try to convince cabinet to accept your proposal. When that went to cabinet, did you get any advice in terms of lobbying other cabinet ministers or the Premier?

Dr. Chris Mazza: This is 2004?

Mr. Frank Klees: Yes, which is when the proposal went to cabinet. George Smitherman was the minister.

Dr. Chris Mazza: Most of the issues surrounding the movement, through 2004 and through Minister Smitherman's tenure, were managed by, certainly, myself with the Minister of Health and his staff, making them aware; working with the bureaucracy, making them aware. I believe we were advised—I don't know whether it was cabinet—by the emergency health services branch folks to bring other ministries onside. I don't believe that we utilized a lobbyist to do that. I believe that folks at the emergency health services branch assisted us in that regard.

Mr. Frank Klees: I've arranged to have a copy of the original agreement, referred to as the performance agreement. It's at your desk. That agreement was subsequently negotiated after receiving cabinet approval, under the direction of George Smitherman. You must be intimately aware of that agreement, I would expect.

Dr. Chris Mazza: No, sir. I am not intimately aware of that agreement anymore. I am familiar with its principles. As a senior executive and leader running an organization such as I was, I was intimately familiar with

the principles, with the processes, but not the details of an agreement such as this or many others.

Mr. Frank Klees: Did you ever read the agreement under which you assumed responsibility for our air ambulance service?

Mr. Chris Mazza: Yes, sir. I read it back when we started. In sincerity, I then depended greatly on my executives in finance and in legal as well as the regulatory group to ensure that we were always meeting the compliance aspects of the contract.

Mr. Frank Klees: So then you'll recall that there are extensive references to quality assurance and improvement programs, standards of care, compliance and reporting obligations—

Mr. Chris Mazza: Yes, sir.

Mr. Frank Klees: —a comprehensive list of schedules, schedule K, which refers to performance indicators.

I'd like to ask you: Where in that agreement is there any reference to the creation of for-profit companies for the purpose of building up an international business?

Mr. Chris Mazza: The agreement is silent on any number of things. It is not a prescriptive agreement whereby it dictates every single element. What was clear and what was always clear is that our mandate was to improve the efficiency, the effectiveness, the safety and the sustainability of this program. What was also clear always was that the mandate—and the cabinet submissions would reflect that—included all that I have just mentioned, as well as increasing awareness, as well as generating revenue outside the tax base through fundraising and through for-profit initiatives. That is reflected in the documents that went to Management Board of Cabinet that I am aware of.

Mr. Frank Klees: You refer to cabinet documents. The cabinet documents that are tabled with this committee make it very clear that as they were reviewing their proposal to approve your proposal, one of the key principles was that oversight and accountability were central; that Ornge would always be accountable to the government of Ontario. Do you recall that?

Mr. Chris Mazza: I recall that oversight and accountability was a key component for the operations in Ontario, yes, sir.

Mr. Frank Klees: I'd like to ask you: At what point did Ornge depart from the intent of that agreement, which was to remain accountable to the government of Ontario, and at what point did Ornge decide that it no longer needed the approval of the government of Ontario to do as it chooses to do? At what point was that conscious decision made to ignore the terms of the actual agreement under which you assumed responsibility and you started to go off as a rogue organization to do your own thing?

Mr. Chris Mazza: At no point did this organization ever depart from the tenets of the performance agreement or compliance with the performance agreement. At no point did the organization Ornge stop informing, engaging and working with the ministries and informing

them and keeping them abreast of what Ornge was doing. At no point did we become a rogue organization.

Mr. Frank Klees: Chair, I'd like to borrow five minutes from my next round, please.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): I believe that the other members are hopeful to stay on time. We went just a minute or a couple of minutes extra, so you have a couple of minutes.

Mr. Frank Klees: I'll take that. Where in that agreement was there any reference to a mandate siphoning \$8.7 million of public funds into the Ornge Foundation?

Mr. Chris Mazza: I'm not—

Mr. Roger Yachetti: Do you understand what the question is?

Mr. Chris Mazza: Yes. Mr. Klees, I'm not aware of the siphoning of money for—

Mr. Frank Klees: Well, let's use a different term.

Mr. Chris Mazza: Excuse me, sir, if I may finish. I'm not aware of "siphoning" any money. It's the term you wanted to use. Moreover, I am aware that in that particular transaction—I don't recall the details—ministry staff were made aware that the funds were being earmarked for information system upgrades and a number of other upgrades that were multi-year in nature and that this was an effective legal and appropriate means of doing it. The ministry accounting groups were informed. That issue was later looked at by the internal audit group of the Ministry of Finance. So, once again, Ornge did not do that unilaterally. Ornge began to look at doing that—it was in the interests of improving Ornge and Ornge systems and Ornge technologies—and then informed the ministry that it was going to do so.

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Mr. Frank Klees: Who was the Ministry of Health staff person who approved the transfer of \$8.7 million into the Ornge Foundation?

Mr. Roger Yachetti: Excuse me, sir: You said \$8.7 million, and earlier you said, \$7.8 million.

Mr. Frank Klees: It's \$8.7 million.

Dr. Chris Mazza: I don't recall, sir. It was taken on by my finance department and it was taken on by counsel.

Mr. Frank Klees: Where in the agreement did it authorize Ornge to float a \$275-million bond offering?

Dr. Chris Mazza: The agreement is not prescriptive, as I've indicated, sir. The agreement was that Ornge—the agreement indicates, in the context of the agreement, in the overall aspects of the agreement, that Ornge was to improve on the operational and system effectiveness, efficiencies, safety and sustainability, and other aspects of providing this service to Ontarians in ways that it saw best.

Mr. Frank Klees: One last question—

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): And we'll move to the NDP, now, please.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Thank you.

Interjections.

M^{me} France Gélinas: All good?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Yes.

M^{me} France Gélinas: All right.

You have said, when you last talked to me and answered my questions, that you had briefed four ministers. You started with Clement, then you briefed Mr. Smitherman, then you briefed Minister Caplan; you never had an opportunity to brief Minister Matthews, our current Minister of Health. When did you first meet—have you ever met Minister Matthews?

Dr. Chris Mazza: No, ma'am.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Have you ever spoken with her?

Dr. Chris Mazza: No, ma'am.

M^{me} France Gélinas: All right.

Let's look at the final few days or weeks at Ornge. We had started the year 2011 with an extensive briefing. The briefing was received by numerous ministries of this government—well received, encouraged to continue; you were on the right track. The corporate structure allows opportunities for the people of Ontario—there's even maybe opportunities for the government to invest into some of the corporate structure you're putting together. Things are doing pretty good.

When did you have an inkling that things were not good?

Dr. Chris Mazza: I first had concerns that things were not good when Mr. Klees brought questions to question period in the spring of 2011, I think it was.

M^{me} France Gélinas: In 2011.

Dr. Chris Mazza: Mr. Klees had significant concerns that he was tabling. I was disappointed in the answers that were given on the floor of the Legislature to Mr. Klees's questions, and I was confused, because it was my impression and understanding that Mr. Klees's questions should have been able to be answered.

I remember going to my corporate communications VP and saying, "I don't understand. Why aren't they answering?" At that point I made another offer to have a personal briefing so that the questions might be better answered, and I was told, through my VP of communications, that the briefing was not necessary, that the minister understood.

M^{me} France Gélinas: And did you question, like, what did she base this on? She told you that the minister understood and she knew this—

Dr. Chris Mazza: And didn't need our briefing.

M^{me} France Gélinas: She didn't need your briefing.

Dr. Chris Mazza: And that was all I was told. I suppose, then, that I allowed my concern to settle and continued to go forward. My concern didn't rise again—again, because I was told, "We understand, and there's no need to come in and do a briefing."

My concern began to rise exponentially when the minister's comments appeared with Mr. Donovan's articles. I couldn't understand what appeared to me as the comments. I didn't understand how that could have occurred. That was when I became concerned.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Did the Minister of Health contact you at the time—

Dr. Chris Mazza: My illness had been deteriorating. From August of that year, I'd been struggling, and certainly by December I was having a very difficult time. My chairman, as well as two of my executives, undertook to meet and engage with the minister at that point in time, and I went on leave shortly thereafter. So that meeting would have occurred between my chairman and the minister.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Did anyone ever ask you to resign?

Dr. Chris Mazza: No.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Your work was terminated because Ornge Global was terminated?

Dr. Chris Mazza: I was pretty sick at the time. I found out—

Interjections.

Dr. Chris Mazza: I was pretty sick at the time. I discovered from my family that the newspapers had said that Ornge Global was bankrupt and I was terminated as a result of bankruptcy. I didn't actually even receive a phone call.

M^{me} France Gélinas: All right.

Dr. Chris Mazza: I found out from the newspaper that it was due to bankruptcy.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Do you believe that Ornge Global was bankrupt?

Dr. Chris Mazza: I don't know that my opinion or beliefs are relevant here. I do know that, to my understanding, in December, when I asked my vice-president of finance, who was managing all aspects around Global, what was left in terms of amounts and what our burn rates were, it was my understanding that there was still approximately \$4 million, and that we would be able to deal with the press issues, correct the misinformation and successfully complete the private placement and go on with what we hoped would be something good for Ontario and the patients. So I think I'm answering your question.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Yes, you are. You had this vision of having the for-profit leverage some of the knowledge and skills in air transport, and that the for-profit would benefit the people of Ontario. Until your very last day at Ornge, that's what you tried to do, and the ministry knew and supported it.

Dr. Chris Mazza: That is my understanding, ma'am. I was motivated by—in 2005, the death I spoke of, the young boy, affected me deeply. There had been many other deaths in my career as a transport medicine physician that affected me deeply. The triage that I engaged in almost every day as a front-line physician, trying to tell people who could have what resource, knowing that the person who wasn't going to get the resource was going to be damaged, was going to be hurt—and yet there weren't enough resources. Those motivations were strong in me.

In 2005, before we were going forward, the chairman asked me if there was enough money in the funding to actually engage in this service, or were we taking something that was destined to be a monkey on our backs, so to speak. So I engaged, actually, a small set of cohorts in

a study that demonstrated that there were potentially 8,000 persons per year that we weren't getting to in a timely or effective fashion. That was frightening. The number 8,000 was not an accurate number; it was approximate because we could only take cohorts and then statistically expound upon them.

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But we knew that there was a significant problem. We knew that resources were hard to come by. We knew that health care was already a massive problem for the government. So we came up, as a group, with an idea to generate revenue outside and find ways to bring that revenue back and use it to increase capability, to increase infrastructure and, in our hope, to address what we referred to often at Ornge as the gap. We believed that it was there. Our doctors believed that it was there because they faced it every day when they were triaging.

So yes, ma'am, up until December, I believed that everything we were doing was positive and was going to return dividends.

M^{me} France Gélinas: So what do you figure went wrong?

Dr. Chris Mazza: I don't know. To this day, I don't know.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: I have some questions. The member from Guelph, Ms. Sandals, raised a number of concerns about your compensation. I want to help and perhaps get your assistance in clarifying some of these points.

Did the Ministry of Health, the government, at any point in time before today express any concerns to you directly about your salary compensation?

Dr. Chris Mazza: No, sir.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Does it seem curious to you now that they seem so concerned about your salary compensation, when, throughout your tenure at Ornge, the Liberal government did not make any direct inquiries to you regarding your compensation?

Dr. Chris Mazza: A number of things seem odd to me now, that amongst them, particularly when it was evident from 2007-08 onwards that we were not on the sunshine list and that the audit that had been done was clear that Peel was not on the sunshine list. So yes, that's odd.

It has also been mystifying to me that the very mandate, the very concept of Ornge, the issues about the gap, the very issues that we were trying to get at, the very issues of generating revenue—it's as if it's a surprise now, yet it was something that we were informing everyone of on an ongoing basis.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Just touching on your last point: It was very clear that you had advised and the Ministry of Health knew that you would no longer be on the sunshine list. Did they express any concern when you had advised them of that or when Ornge had advised of that new step?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Not to my knowledge, no.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Were any of those concerns ever provided to anyone at Ornge in any written format, or any requests made whatsoever?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Not that I'm aware of.

M^{me} France Gélinas: You did say that you were not the one briefing the Ministry of Health; it was done through your chair, through Mr. Apps and sometimes through Mr. Lepine—

Dr. Chris Mazza: Actually, it was those three consistently. Do you mean in terms of the reorganization elements? Yes, ma'am.

M^{me} France Gélinas: When I look at it, it seems very complicated and very complex. Why so many entities? I get the concept that you wanted to set up a for-profit so that the profit comes back to address the gap and to do better and to help people. But why did it go from Ornge Global to everything else on that corporate structure? It is hard—

Dr. Chris Mazza: It's a question I asked, myself, ma'am. When it started, it became increasingly frustrating to me that all of these different elements had to exist.

I would provide two things. One, I think the Apps document that has been provided to the committee quite eloquently deliberates and defines the legal, financial, accounting and other reasons behind it. It also speaks to some of the more appropriate operational, structural reasons.

I think it's important to reflect on the fact that when Ornge started, it was a not-for-profit but not a charity. One of the first structural issues was, "Hang on a second; we can't actually raise money in a foundation unless we're also a charity," and so then you had the charitable issue come into play. Then you had a number of regulatory issues associated with the medical aspects of our function and you had regulatory aspects associated with the aviation aspects of our function.

I think that in trying to put the not-for-profit, the performance agreement, the charitable and the for-profit and all of the different other regulatory issues—you come up with the structure you come up with.

I do know that the structure was delineated after exhaustive debate by the board of directors with counsel—

M^{me} France Gélinas: That's Mr. Apps?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Mr. Apps, but the board of directors also had its own independent counsel. I don't remember the name of the firm, but they had their own independent counsel.

I do know that the structure had exhaustive review by KPMG, the auditors. I do know that PwC was involved. There were a tremendous number of people far brighter than I in matters of corporate structure, corporate finance and the legalities inherent, and I accepted that that was what was appropriate in order to get the job done.

Interjection.

Dr. Chris Mazza: Apps was corporate counsel. Cindy Heinz had become Ornge counsel. So Apps and Heinz led the deliberations, but really, Apps and others at Fasken's. Actually, it wasn't even just Apps; there were a number of folks at Fasken's who contributed, because there were different specialties required.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Did you ever meet with our Premier, Mr. McGuinty?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Yes, ma'am.

M^{me} France Gélinas: When was that?

Dr. Chris Mazza: I really apologize that I keep having to say this, but I don't recall—

M^{me} France Gélinas: Just tell me what you recall of it. Was it a fundraiser? Was it at night? Was it in Toronto? Was it—

Dr. Chris Mazza: I met Mr. McGuinty formally at a fundraiser in Toronto that I was brought to by Fasken's. I was introduced. I went through, in the five minutes or so that I had with the Premier, the concepts of Ornge at a high level, and focused on generating revenue outside the province of Ontario to improve sustainability, effectiveness etc., so generating money outside the tax base to improve a system that is antiquated and in trouble. I talked about all of the ideas that we had for improving it here; I talked about fleet renewal.

I met the Premier again, in an informal way, at a deployment of the emergency medical assistance team which I created following SARS. It was deployed for the Kashechewan evacuation; I don't remember the date, but the Kashechewan evacuation I remember. I spoke to him for some time there—more than five minutes.

I had met the Premier maybe once or twice after that, at events that I was not involved in where he may have said hello.

M^{me} France Gélinas: You never had dinner with him or anything?

Dr. Chris Mazza: No, ma'am.

M^{me} France Gélinas: But you know who he is and you've talked to him.

Dr. Chris Mazza: Yes, ma'am.

M^{me} France Gélinas: The most formal of all briefings was the five minutes you spent with him explaining the outside-of-Ontario for-profit coming back as well as the aviation—

Mr. Roger Yachetti: It wasn't five minutes. I think he meant to imply "more than five"—

Dr. Chris Mazza: It was more than five minutes.

M^{me} France Gélinas: How long would you say?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Which one was this? The Kashechewan?

M^{me} France Gélinas: No.

Dr. Chris Mazza: The fundraiser. Probably on the order of 10 to 15 minutes. It was for 15 minutes.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Fifteen minutes briefing him. And that was arranged as a one-on-one during a function, or were there a lot of people listening in, or—

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Dr. Chris Mazza: No, it was sort of an opportunity that had presented for me to go to a corner and talk.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Okay, and Mr. Apps had helped arrange that? You were a guest of Mr. Apps?

Dr. Chris Mazza: I was a guest of Mr. Apps but, no, it was my job to—the Premier had moved into an area where there was nobody. At that point, Mr. Apps introduced me, and then I spoke.

M^{me} France Gélinas: You went on and said what you had to say.

Dr. Chris Mazza: Yes, ma'am.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Do you recall meeting with Minister Smitherman?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Yes.

M^{me} France Gélinas: How were those meetings arranged?

Dr. Chris Mazza: The first meeting I had, I don't remember whether it was myself who made the call or one of my staff, but I met with his director of policy at the time, Ken Chan. That was my first meeting, and then I had another couple of meetings where I had to present the ideas. Then I was working with the bureaucracy on bringing forth the appropriate concepts and ideas, and then I met with the minister and his staff to brief him. That was when we started working more completely on the documentation and the issues and the analysis that would be required to move forward.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): You have about two minutes.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Okay.

You knew that Mr. Apps was connected to the Liberal Party, did you?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Actually, ma'am, I'm somewhat apolitical and I actually did not know that until much later. I suppose saying that he was connected to the Liberal Party—I knew he had Liberal leanings. I did not realize until much later that he had formal involvement with the Liberal Party, no. He was brought to my attention through Cindy Heinz for his corporate legal capability. That was how I got to know him.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Did he ever offer to help connect you with staff in Minister Smitherman's office or with Minister Smitherman? Because we have an email that I will read to you. It's from Mr. Apps:

"Last night worked perfectly. Chris was able to make a real connection with the Premier." I take it this is the meeting you just shared with us?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Yes.

M^{me} France Gélinas: "I will organize a private dinner for Chris with the Premier so he can outline the vision and game plan in greater detail." I take it that this dinner never actually happened?

Dr. Chris Mazza: No.

M^{me} France Gélinas: But do you believe that he had the capability to arrange such a dinner or such a meeting?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Do I believe that he had the capability to do it? I suppose he could have; he didn't.

I don't actually recall that email. Was that sent to me?

M^{me} France Gélinas: It's okay. We've received binders that thick of emails he sent you, so if you forgot one I'll forgive you.

Dr. Chris Mazza: Yes, I don't actually recall that. So I'm not sure of the question. Did I think he could arrange that? I don't really know. He didn't.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): And if you could wrap up, please?

M^{me} France Gélinas: Okay, my last question. If you went to Mr. Apps and said, "We really need to get to Minister Smitherman," would he be helpful in—

Dr. Chris Mazza: He was not involved in anything to do with Mr. Smitherman.

M^{me} France Gélinas: No?

Dr. Chris Mazza: No. We were able to do that on our own because Ken Chan and the policy people in the office loved the idea. So, no, we didn't need any help with that. We didn't ever really go to Mr. Apps to say, "Get us in touch with" anybody. He was corporate counsel. If anything, we would go to Mr. Apps and say, "How do we approach this? How do we pursue this? What do we need to do here? Who do we need to talk to to get the right approach, the right information, and make sure that this is being done appropriately?"

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Thank you very much. We'll move on to the Liberals. Mr. Zimmer.

Mr. David Zimmer: Thank you very much. I've listened to your evidence so far this morning, and it does come across, in the first instance, as someone who had a very objective commitment to improving air transport medicine, that you had an objective and, indeed, a detached view of corporate structure and corporate governance. In fact, in things like your own compensation, you said you did not personally intervene, that those decisions were made by the compensation committee. They fixed your salary. You said that that's how it should be, that you would have a conflict in participating in your own salary level, so you dealt with that all at arm's length, and that you were cognizant of matters of corporate governance and the role of the CEO not to involve him or herself in events that place the CEO in a conflict. I got the impression that you were very careful not to personally intervene as the CEO in any inappropriate way.

But there is another element here, in fact, where I think there was a personal intervention, and that involves the matter of one Kelly Long. On May 12, Kelly Long—who I understand was your girlfriend or partner—testified that the two of you met while she was an operations manager at a sports club in Ontario, and you were a guest of the club. Is that how you met her?

Dr. Chris Mazza: I was a member of the club. She was the manager of the ski club.

Mr. David Zimmer: When you met her, what position did you hold at Ornge?

Dr. Chris Mazza: I believe at that point I was the CEO of Ornge.

Mr. David Zimmer: At about that time, did you start—

Dr. Chris Mazza: Actually, Ornge didn't exist, so I would have been working at the Ontario air ambulance base hospital program at Sunnybrook.

Mr. David Zimmer: Subsequent to meeting her, you started to date and go out and developed a personal relationship?

Dr. Chris Mazza: I had a friendship with Ms. Long.

Mr. David Zimmer: Was it a romantic relationship?

Dr. Chris Mazza: I'm not sure that that's relevant. I had a friendship with Ms. Long. What is relevant as regards Ms. Long is that when I developed a relationship

with Ms. Long, I declared my relationship to the vice-president of human resources. I subsequently declared, under her tutelage and guidance, my relationship to my board chair and, eventually, to the executives that Ms. Long worked with and that I worked with.

Mr. David Zimmer: When did you engage Pathway, which is a government relations firm, to provide services to Ornge?

Dr. Chris Mazza: I don't recall the date. I remember that the Pathway Group was involved with us from an early time. I had been introduced to Mr. Mitchell, and we were involved in trying to improve our community presence. He had a particular ability in that regard.

Mr. David Zimmer: So Kelly Mitchell, a self-identified Conservative activist, was one of the principal lobbyists at Pathway Group. Is that correct?

Dr. Chris Mazza: No, that's not correct. I didn't meet Mr. Mitchell as a self-identified Conservative activist. I met Mr. Mitchell as someone who had a tremendous number of community connections in the north and had a tremendous amount of ability in working with aboriginal folks as well as any number of other issues that I was involved in at the time.

Mr. David Zimmer: But Kelly Mitchell provided services to Ornge through the offices of Pathway?

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Dr. Chris Mazza: In those regards, yes. But not as a lobbyist.

Mr. David Zimmer: All right. But his fees and Pathway's fees were paid by Ornge. Pathway was hired by Ornge.

Dr. Chris Mazza: From a very early point on in Ornge's work, yes. We were doing community work. They were small projects.

Mr. David Zimmer: We understand that around October 2005, the evidence of Ms. Long and Kelly Mitchell was that you asked Mr. Mitchell at Pathway to hire Ms. Long. Is that correct?

Dr. Chris Mazza: No, that's not correct. I'm not aware that Mr. Mitchell gave evidence in that regard. I did make an introduction. It's not unusual for me to meet people and offer to make introductions.

I was approached by Ms. Long at the end of 2005 regarding career interests and possibilities. She was a York University grad, she was an English teacher, she was managing a ski club. She struck me as an articulate and intelligent lady. She asked me at the time, I believe, if there were opportunities at Ornge. I indicated that I was not aware and did not really involve myself in that but that she could check the website. I did offer to make an introduction to a colleague who was in the areas that she was saying that she was interested in: communications, public relations and the like—

Mr. David Zimmer: Were you—

Dr. Chris Mazza: Excuse me—and I made that introduction.

Mr. David Zimmer: Were you in a relationship with her at that time?

Dr. Chris Mazza: She was a friend.

Mr. David Zimmer: Was she a girlfriend?

Dr. Chris Mazza: She was a friend. I was married.

Mr. David Zimmer: We've also learned that once she eventually got hired by Pathway, her salary, according to her evidence, was around \$58,000. Do you know that to be correct?

Dr. Chris Mazza: No, I don't know.

Mr. David Zimmer: The evidence from Mr. Mitchell was also that Pathway was reimbursed an amount equal to \$58,000 by Ornge to cover her salary.

Dr. Chris Mazza: That's not my recollection. As I recall, we were involved in working with the Pathway Group. I had made the introduction. It is my understanding that Mr. Mitchell hired Ms. Long of his own accord and with his own oversight, as would be appropriate for—

Mr. David Zimmer: Look, I don't want to put too fine a point on it, but the evidence—

Dr. Chris Mazza: If I can just finish.

Mr. David Zimmer: All right.

Dr. Chris Mazza: That is my understanding and my recollection. If I can go further and say that we were also looking at increasing our activity in the community specifically related to working with aggregate companies to increase our landing pads—we had a shortage of landing pads for our scene response activities. This was something that Mr. Mitchell's firm would be well suited to, particularly with his background in natural resources. He had already made a decision to move Ms. Long. She became a very cost-effective means of addressing that project, more cost-effective than one of Mr. Mitchell's senior partners. As I understood it and as I recall, it also came along with the ability to have Mr. Mitchell's oversight involved.

Mr. David Zimmer: The evidence that we heard previously—and I'll summarize it—was that the \$58,000 salary that she was getting at Pathway was offset by a payment to cover her salary, and that was the nature of the arrangement with Pathway and Ornge regarding Ms. Long.

Dr. Chris Mazza: That is not my recollection. My recollection is Pathway's work increased regarding the aggregate work that we were doing. Pathway was particularly suited to that aggregate work. I don't have anything further to add to my answer.

Mr. David Zimmer: Ms. Long joined Pathway from the fitness club very shortly after, as you've said. She seemed to have some very senior responsibilities. What, in your view, were her qualifications?

Dr. Chris Mazza: As I said, Ms. Long was a very articulate and intelligent lady. Ms. Long was a York University graduate with a degree. She also taught English. She was managing—it wasn't a fitness club; she was managing the water ski club. I was struck that she had substantive abilities. As I said, as a young university graduate, she certainly already had some credentials to that effect.

Mr. David Zimmer: So she joined Pathway in October 2005; in December 2006, she moved over and joined Ornge. Is that correct?

Dr. Chris Mazza: I don't recall the dates. During her time working on the aggregate project, which was a very important project for Ornge, there was a tremendous volume of work that was done on that, but it was a short-term project—

Mr. David Zimmer: When did she join Ornge?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Again, can I—

Interjection.

Dr. Chris Mazza: I don't recall. The aggregate project was a very important project and it required a significant volume of activity. We were very pleased with the direction it was going. During her time on that—it was a short-term project, though, and I believe that during her time at Ornge she became intrigued and interested in Ornge and the culture at Ornge, and a position came up. She applied for that position, competed for that position and won that position.

I was not involved in the selection. I was not in the interview process. It was not uncommon at Ornge—we believed very much in word of mouth, bringing talented people into the organization, and that sometimes meant that there were friendships. Human resources oversaw those issues very strictly, and so if there were even friendships, you were not involved in selection and/or interviewing or the decision process.

Mr. David Zimmer: If I told you that she joined Ornge in December 2006, would you disagree with that?

Dr. Chris Mazza: If that's what you've got, then, no, I would not.

Mr. David Zimmer: Did you provide a recommendation to the personnel department at Ornge to hire her?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Not that I recall.

Mr. David Zimmer: Do you recall if you were asked your opinion of her skill set?

Dr. Chris Mazza: I think she'd already had an opportunity at that point to demonstrate her skill set, sir, in working on the project that she was working on.

Mr. David Zimmer: So she left Pathway at a salary of \$58,000, joined Ornge at a salary of \$60,000—that was the evidence—and quickly advanced to the position of associate vice-president a few years later at a salary of \$120,000, and I think there were also some bonuses and so on there. Are you aware of that?

Dr. Chris Mazza: I'm aware that Ms. Long worked very hard at the organization, and I believe that the VP of human resources would corroborate that. I believe that she achieved all of her projects with a great degree of attention to detail. She was articulate, timely; she was a very, very hard worker. She impressed her direct reports, and any advancement she made, I can assure you, was on her own.

Mr. Chairman, I realize that the optics of that particular circumstance are not good, but I can assure the committee that Ms. Long worked her way through Ornge, and anything that she achieved at Ornge, she achieved on her own. I did not influence her promotions

and I did not influence nor was I involved in her hiring. I did not force her through the organization. Again, she worked her own way through, and I believe that, again, the former VP of human resources would corroborate that.

Mr. David Zimmer: But you were in a relationship with her during this period?

Dr. Chris Mazza: No, sir. I did start a relationship with Ms. Long. I don't recall the date. I did start a relationship. What I do know is that when I started the relationship with Ms. Long, I declared said relationship to my VP of human resources. My VP of human resources then guided me through declaring that relationship to my board chair, and subsequently to my executive. My board chair and my VP of human resources had no concerns and no issues, and I urge you to—my VP of human resources would corroborate that I was assiduous in that, that I did not involve myself in decisions surrounding her, and that was why I declared conflict to the VP of HR. In addition, my chairman of comp was aware.

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Mr. David Zimmer: Here's a quote from a previous witness, Mr. Tom Lepine, and I'm quoting from the Hansard record.

Dr. Chris Mazza: Yes, sir.

Mr. David Zimmer: The introduction to the—I'll read the quote in a second, but the gist of his evidence was that Ms. Long's employment at Ornge created issues with respect to other managers.

Here's what he said in Hansard: "I think Kelly had more of a direct route into his"—Dr. Mazza's—"office than any of the other executives. In other words, if anybody said something contrary to what Kelly believed, chances are, you wouldn't be with Ornge for very long."

What is your reaction to that thought of Mr. Tom Lepine?

Dr. Chris Mazza: I find that very disappointing and somewhat offensive, to be honest, Mr. Zimmer. Nothing could be further from the truth. That may have been Mr. Lepine's perception, and I'm very sad that that is his perception.

Performance at Ornge was managed under human resources with very, very assiduous attention to the values that Ornge held. If an individual was not performing or their performance was in question, then the direct report of that individual would work with human resources to often come up with a mediation process, assistance etc. People were not just dismissed, nor did I ever take on that authority or approach; direct reports did. So that's the first point that I'm offended by, and saddened.

It is sometimes not unusual, in my opinion, for executives to feel that junior staff sometimes have direct lines to the CEO, which they resent. Mr. Lepine also resented the fact that the president of the union had a direct line to me, and other paramedics had direct lines to me. Perhaps that led to some statement like that. The reality is, I always tried to have some attention to people in the front line who were not my executives so that I could keep a hand on the pulse.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): You have two minutes.

Mr. David Zimmer: All right. In the corporate structure, her title at Ornge was associate vice-president. Associate vice-president in a corporate structure means that the associate vice-president reports to the vice-president, and the vice-president reports up to the CEO. So how was it that the associate vice-president seemed to have direct access to you without going through the office of the vice-president?

Dr. Chris Mazza: As I've said, sir, she did not have direct access to me on matters of business. What I said when I answered your question was that it may have been the perception of the executive who made the comment—

Mr. David Zimmer: What would give rise to that perception?

Dr. Chris Mazza: I was trying to answer that, sir, by saying that that perception is because I was often trying to feel the pulse in the front lines, not with Kelly or anybody specifically.

I think it's important to note that when I started a relationship with Kelly, it was very important to us to keep that relationship non-business. That was important for my sanity, if nothing else.

There were many, many things, Mr. Zimmer, that I was not aware of that I am now, having been away from Ornge for nine months, finding out, and also finding out that Kelly was aware of. Our conversations did not include business.

As I've already indicated, I'm saddened and offended by Mr. Lepine's thought. I wish I understood why he thought that, but there's certainly nothing in my experience or understanding that should have led him to think that. I have nothing—

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): If you've finished your answer we'll move to the opposition.

Dr. Chris Mazza: Yes, sir.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Mr. Klees?

Mr. Roger Yachetti: Excuse me, Mr. Chair. May I inquire whether you have in mind a short break at all this morning?

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): We have just 35 minutes left till noon, and you have an hour break then, as long as Dr. Mazza is doing okay. Dr. Mazza?

Mr. Roger Yachetti: We can proceed.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Mr. Klees?

Mr. Frank Klees: Thank you. I'd like to deal with the issue of government oversight of Ornge. We referred earlier to the performance agreement under which Ornge was mandated to deliver the air ambulance service, and we discussed the extensive references and very prescriptive requirements that Ornge had to maintain quality assurance, to report to the ministry, to ensure that proper training was in place and to ensure that the proper communication system was in place. You would agree with me that that was really the cornerstone of that agreement, because at the end of the day, that quality delivery of emergency services was paramount. Do you agree with that?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Yes, sir.

Mr. Frank Klees: When the Auditor General tabled his report on March 21 of this year, he said this: “Ornge is a textbook example of what happens when the government doesn’t get the information it needs to properly do its job.” Again, I’m quoting from the Auditor General’s statement when he said that seeking cabinet approval for the transfer of Ontario’s air ambulance service to a corporate service provider—the ministry said that an essential part of its oversight responsibilities would be to obtain and evaluate performance information from Ornge. You would agree with that. That was understood, I think, by all parties to the agreement. Do you agree with that?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Yes, sir.

Mr. Frank Klees: The Auditor General went on to say, “We concluded that the ministry did not meet these oversight commitments.” Would you agree with the Auditor General?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Sir, I think I’ve answered that I feel that the ministry worked to the best of their ability to provide oversight according to the performance agreement.

I think that what is often missing in this analysis is that in 2006, when Ornge took on management of the system, there was no management information system. There were no metrics. The data was antiquated. Much of the work that Ornge was, and continues to be, engaging in is trying to find the appropriate means of capturing the right metrics and evaluating said metrics, such that the organization can more strategically manage its future.

I think that, given the state of data and the state of data capture and the ongoing work in that, the ministry and the performance agreement were managing to the best of what existed.

Mr. Frank Klees: But establishing that information database was part of the requirement of the performance agreement. You received millions of dollars, transferred to Ornge, for the very purpose of establishing—

Dr. Chris Mazza: Yes, sir, and we were in the process of establishing it. We were working extremely hard on establishing it.

We had already replaced the communications systems from analog to digital in the communications centre, which went a long way. We had introduced software in the company, SAP software, that was trying to tie in to the communications centre and finance data that would be accumulated there as flights were dispatched. We were attempting to introduce optimization in linear programming to better allow us to strategically manage flights as opposed to just hand-manage the flights or paper-manage the flights.

We were in the process of introducing electronic, in-the-field, direct capture, which is an exceedingly difficult task, but one that pays huge dividends in terms of capturing the right information and allowing strategic decisions to be made. All of these projects were under way and were requiring inordinate time and effort on our part.

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Mr. Frank Klees: Since 2005—it’s now 2012.

Dr. Chris Mazza: Sir, actually Ornge did not take over services until January 2006, and in January 2006 we were dealing with green screens and DOS-based programming in the communications centre. We were also dealing with server systems that had 2% memory remaining and crashed. We were dealing with server systems that actually didn’t have any schematics associated with what they were connected to. We were dealing with an antiquated physical plant and the entire IT infrastructure.

Mr. Frank Klees: What was the investment that Ornge made in that communications system?

Dr. Chris Mazza: I don’t have that data in front of me, nor do I have access to that anymore. I cannot recall.

Mr. Frank Klees: Can you give us an estimate?

Dr. Chris Mazza: No, sir, I cannot.

Mr. Roger Yachetti: Are you asking for dollars, Mr. Klees?

Mr. Frank Klees: Yes.

Dr. Chris Mazza: I can’t recall. It was a substantive project. It was a significant, multi-year project and it was a huge part of Ornge’s strategic planning to increase and improve that backbone.

Mr. Frank Klees: Well, sir, I would have thought, given the central importance of the communication and dispatch system, that as the CEO, you would have known what the status of that project was on a week-by-week basis and certainly would have known how much was allocated to it. However, we’ll move on.

Dr. Chris Mazza: I think, sir, I would have known eight or nine months ago when I was receiving regular reports from my staff and when I was still involved at Ornge and still very much a CEO of Ornge. It’s been nine—

Mr. Frank Klees: What was the number eight or nine months ago?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Again, having been in hospital, having had a substantive impact to my health, I’m not able to recall those facts, sir.

Mr. Frank Klees: Okay. Since day one of these hearings, we’ve heard from the minister, we’ve heard from deputies, assistant deputy ministers and directors who have told us, all from the same hymn book, that the leadership team at Ornge that was solely responsible for the things that went wrong is to be blamed for the things that went wrong.

Here’s what health minister Deb Matthews had to say when she was confronted about the lack of oversight: “We found...very serious problems at Ornge. When those problems came to light, we took decisive action. What have we done? We have replaced the leadership at Ornge. We have a new CEO in place.”

And again, before this committee on March 28, she assured us that “Ornge is now on the right path...but there were serious problems under the former leadership.”

Here's what the Premier had to say: "We've replaced the CEO; we replaced the board."

Sir, how did it come about that you and your leadership team could get away with all of these mismanagements of our system and that now, in retrospect, the health minister and the Premier condemn your leadership? How did that happen?

Dr. Chris Mazza: I don't know the answer to that, sir. I do know that the Premier—I would assume—but certainly the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care and the minister were aware and informed at all times of the various things that we were doing, always.

I am not clear at all as to how, suddenly, the leadership at Ornge is at fault when during my requests for meetings with the minister to introduce myself and to introduce my concepts, the board's concepts, Ornge's issues, I was told there was no need because there was confidence and comfort in what we were doing based on how they were continually informed. So I don't know the answer to your question, how, suddenly, a leadership team that as recently as spring of 2011 and even as recently as my chairman's meeting in early November—we were informed that they were still supportive of everything we were doing and our leadership team's activities. I do not have an answer.

Mr. Frank Klees: You're aware of the fact that when questions were raised based on information that we received—in fact, I recall well when I raised the first questions in the Legislature. The minister's response was that all is well. When I asked her to look into it, she assured us that all was well.

As those questions continued to be raised in the Legislature, we then started to hear from the minister that she was lied to by the leadership at Ornge. When we challenged the minister to step in and intervene, she told us that she could not intervene, that because of registrations, because of incorporations, because of a failure of the performance agreement that we've just discussed, she didn't have the authority, she didn't have the ability, to intervene.

I'd like to ask you this question—and I refer back to a comment that you made earlier. I believe you said that had you received a call from the minister or anyone in the ministry to say, "What you're doing is wrong, and we don't like the direction that you're going," you would have complied with that, because, at the end of the day, as you say, they are your primary customer.

Dr. Chris Mazza: Not only were they our primary customer, Mr. Klees, but they were our entire motivation for doing everything that we were doing. There was no other motivation. That was my adult life's work. I wanted to fix what I saw that was broken. I wanted to fix it for a long time. It had nothing to do with other things; it had to do with wanting to make it right and make it work for patients.

So if they had said to me at any time, "No"—"Yes, ma'am," or, "Yes, sir," and it would have changed. That is my absolute truth at my core.

In addition, I am not aware that at any time anybody lied to the minister. I never had any conversations with the minister. I certainly cannot imagine for the life of me that my chairman would have lied or that Mr. Lepine would have lied. That is not in their core.

I would also challenge the issue of not being able to intervene, even in a simple phone call. There's this issue of legal and the performance agreement, and you've heard from Ms. Golding and others that this actually was a robust document. There is an ethical-moral issue at stake, which says that of course they could say, "Stop," and you would stop. But I would also say that when people decided to stop, it certainly stopped fast. So I don't understand, really.

Mr. Frank Klees: We have a difficult time understanding that in this committee as well. Having been a former cabinet minister, there have been a number of occasions, I can tell you, when I as minister picked up the phone, spoke to a stakeholder and said, "Look, we don't like the direction this is going." There was never a circumstance where that stakeholder did not agree to sit down, have a discussion and work out a reasonable resolution.

So our frustration here as well has been that, having allowed Ornge to go down a certain path with full knowledge and full information, now that there are issues revealed that are questionable, it's very apparent that this government has circled the wagons and is throwing everyone else under the bus, including you, sir.

Dr. Chris Mazza: I have been naive in my understanding of how big the bus is that rolled over me, sir. I assure this committee that at all times in my efforts, I have only ever tried to do my very best for the patients and people of Ontario, and up until recently, it was my understanding that the ministers and the Premier—the government—supported me 100% and supported us 100% and were proud of what we were doing.

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Mr. Frank Klees: When you called the minister and asked for an opportunity to speak with her, you were not accommodated with a meeting. I'd like you take the opportunity now and tell us what you would like to say to the minister today.

Mr. Roger Yachetti: Which minister?

Mr. Frank Klees: Deb Matthews.

Mr. Roger Yachetti: Thank you.

Dr. Chris Mazza: I don't think I'd like to say what I'd like to say today, sir, but if I were to say what I would have said back when I was offered an opportunity, I would have done what I did with Minister Smitherman and with Minister Caplan. I would have gone through the history. I would have talked about the context. I would have said, "Here is where air transport medicine was. Here is what was wrong with it. Here are the challenges facing it now as we move into an even more disseminated population that is aging. Here is the massive challenge facing you now that we have a pure centre of excellence health care model, which means that we deliver patients to focuses. The patients don't get their

angioplasty in Parry Sound nor do they get it in many other communities around the province. We have a centre of excellence model.”

I would have said, “Minister, we have a massive challenge ahead of us. It is my belief, based on my study, that there are at least 8,000 persons—that study is further corroborated by a study that we had the Hay Group do. Yes, there are multiple challenges in the Hay Group study. The data was difficult to get, and data in health care now, particularly with PHIPA—privacy in health information—is extremely difficult to put together, but the empirical experience of this transport medicine physician and this front-line physician is that we’ve got triage going on every day, that we’re going to have more of it, and that, if I understand correctly what is happening, you don’t have a lot of money left.

“In fact, I understand that you have a deficit and that you’re struggling to deal with that deficit without cutting services. I respect everything you’re doing and I’m not going to come and put my hand out, Minister, and say, ‘Give me more.’ I’m actually going to say, ‘Here, I think I’ve got an idea.’ We can do this out there, and we can do this because we’re first movers in this, and people don’t understand that.

“We’re the only group on a global basis that understands that transport medicine is an economic efficiency for health care. It’s not a richness. It actually improves the economic analysis. It definitely improves morbidity and mortality of patients, and it improves the quality of care while at the same time decreasing the cost. We’re the only ones who have had the ability to get our heads around that because in this province, despite all that we want to complain about, in this country, we are blessed with the ability to have a single-payer system where we can bring a focus like Ornge, rather than in many places that I have worked, where it is multiple hospitals and multiple carriers.”

Those are things I would say.

I would go on, sir, but I understand I’m in your time.

Mr. Frank Klees: Let me ask—

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): You have two minutes.

Mr. Frank Klees: One last question for you: Had the minister said to you in that conversation, “Dr. Mazza, we have serious concerns about some of the issues at Ornge. For example, we have a serious concern about the level of your compensation, and we think that that compensation should be brought in line. I think we need to do some things that are going to clean up those areas that we have serious concerns about,” what would your response have been?

Dr. Chris Mazza: “Yes, ma’am.”

Mr. Frank Klees: Thank you very much.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): We’ll move to the NDP then. Ms. Gélinas.

M^{me} France Gélinas: I just want to ask you—I know that you’ve been sitting there for close to three hours. I have another 20 minutes coming—

Dr. Chris Mazza: Feels like six.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Yes; six days, I suppose. If you promise me that you will be back after lunch, we could break for lunch early or I can go on with my 20 minutes, whatever you want.

Dr. Chris Mazza: Please, go ahead.

M^{me} France Gélinas: You’re good to go?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Yes, ma’am.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Okay. I think I will pick up where my colleague just left off. You felt that the ministry knew exactly what you were doing—more than “felt”; you knew that the ministry was fully briefed on what you were doing. They were supportive and frankly were proud of what was going on at Ornge. Had they asked you to change anything—your answer was quite telling: “Yes, ma’am.” That’s what you would have done. How can you explain that there was never a reach-out to you to try to save something that we should all be proud of?

Dr. Chris Mazza: I can’t explain that. I’ve never understood that. I didn’t understand when it started. I don’t understand. I cannot explain.

M^{me} France Gélinas: If you put yourself back in December, when the Toronto Star and Mr. Donovan started talking about your organization, the things that came out were on compensation. My colleague asked you about compensation. Had the ministry or anybody within the ministry’s office asked you to review compensation, you said yourself that you would have been open to this. Would your board have been open to that as well?

Dr. Chris Mazza: I believe so, ma’am. I say this because there is, aside from the ethical and moral issues that my board felt strongly about with relation to its work for the ministry—I think the board and the executives were also very aware of the unbelievable power of persuasion. It’s not like you would have—I don’t know how to explain it. They’re your principal customer, your principal focus. So if they don’t like this or want that done or any number of other things that they feel quite strongly about and after discussing it it’s very clear that they feel quite strongly about it, then you say, “Okay.” May I share an example?

M^{me} France Gélinas: Sure.

Dr. Chris Mazza: I don’t remember when this is, so I apologize again, but on or around the time that we were going to the corporate bond markets, the issue of consolidation within the Ministry of Finance came up. The Ornge board, Ornge finance staff and experts that Ornge brought to the table to assist Ornge felt strongly—and I underline “strongly”—that this was not an appropriate decision. They voiced that issue with the Ministry of Finance and the controller’s office and had meetings with them and tried very hard to debate this issue. In the end, the Ministry of Finance decided that that was what they were doing. Ornge accepted that and then complied. I just use it as an example for something that was felt very strongly about and yet, after attempting to discuss, to debate and to find a solution that Ornge felt was more appropriate, complied with what the government decided they wanted.

M^{me} France Gélinas: I would say that this is kind of a good example, actually, that you've given, because we have lots of written material between Ornge and the Ministry of Finance that shows how vigorously you opposed the consolidation and how it happened anyway.

Dr. Chris Mazza: Yes. I don't think there's anything wrong with vigorously opposing or bringing your opinion to the table, but at the end of the day, as I indicated to Mr. Klees, "Yes, sir" or, "Yes, ma'am" would have been the response.

M^{me} France Gélinas: You would have complied. So, compensation could have been resolved?

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Dr. Chris Mazza: Yes.

M^{me} France Gélinas: The other issues that are still lingering out there are the price that was paid by Ornge for the helicopters and the issue of, did you have to pay extra for some of the weight etc.? Everybody has pointed to you as the person who paid more for the helicopters than should have been paid.

Dr. Chris Mazza: The helicopter itself?

M^{me} France Gélinas: The helicopters.

Dr. Chris Mazza: Or the upgrades?

M^{me} France Gélinas: For the upgrades of the helicopters.

Dr. Chris Mazza: Because I had nothing to do with the—well, very little to do with the actual negotiation of the pricing in the helicopter. It was far too complex a process.

The upgrades issue—I need to put some context around this, if may.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Sure.

Dr. Chris Mazza: I was not aware that there was any need for upgrades, and that's not unusual. I'm not an aviator. I depended on the aviation department to find such things.

The aviation department came to me quite some time after the negotiation of the helicopter contract; actually, things were in production and we were getting close to delivery. It's important to understand that, because this entire issue of bringing a new fleet in and changing a new fleet out had an entire room covered in a Gantt chart in terms of timelines that needed to be met. So it was a particularly stressful time.

What was brought to my attention initially was, okay, we need these upgrades. Fine. But they're included in the contract. We already negotiated them as part of the contract. I didn't pay any more attention to it.

I then became aware, through phone calls to me, and also I was made aware of it by some of the executives, that there was tremendous acrimony now developing between AgustaWestland and the aviation team. This acrimony surrounded a fairly harsh position that the team had taken with AgustaWestland, which was that this was in fact part of the original contract and we're not paying for it, and that's it. That was certainly not consistent with the style of negotiation that AgustaWestland sought out and dealt with on a global basis. I was then made aware that the position that we had, that these were part of the

contract, was in fact incorrect and that legally they were not part of the contract. We didn't have the upgrades in the contract. I was told that we were wrong.

I was now put in an extremely awkward position where a relationship was being damaged on an almost daily basis. There was significant acrimony developing. These were people we were going to need to work with for 15 to 20 years and they were very, very important to how we were going to do what we were going to do here in Ontario.

One of the aviation executives then indicated to me, yes, that they're not part of the contracts—he doesn't agree, but he understands they're not part of the contract—but he can get it for significantly less than \$12 million. That was offered as an opinion. He said \$12 million because that was what was on the table. That was the price that was being required.

That was offered as an opinion. There was certainly absolutely no negotiated, mutually agreed upon settlement that I was aware of, nor was I made aware of nor was offered to me. That opinion was offered to me, and it was the same opinion of the fairly harsh negotiating tactician who had led me into believing that it was part of the contract in the first place.

At that point, I indicated that I would speak to Agusta. I was interested in trying to get through this. Our delivery dates were approaching and I was extremely anxious, as I've indicated, about the relationship.

In that discussion with Agusta, I acquiesced to the position that, "We now understand that they are not part of the contract. That is the advice and position that we've now been given. So, we agree with you, but your position of \$12 million: We can't afford that. That is too much. What can you offer?" I believe a 50% discount figure was put on the table. I indicated in that conversation that I could neither accept nor deny—it seemed reasonable to me—but that I needed to pass that over to my financial staff, my legal staff, my accounting staff, to ensure that this was appropriate from all of those perspectives. Not of least importance was a fair market value for what was being received. I didn't have the ability or expertise to do that. I passed it over to finance and they worked on that process from that point forward and I was not involved. It was my understanding that eventually the fair market value was defined using the appropriate means, that all legal and accounting efforts were accomplished. That agreement was then brought forward, with all of those caveats, to the board of directors for approval.

M^{me} France Gélinas: We had Tom Rothfels and Rick Potter testify in front of this committee, who both said that the weight upgrades were part of the contract. Who were the people who told you they were not?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Well, legal at Ornge specifically indicated to us that our position was wrong, was inaccurate. Aviation had been pursuing that position. That had been the position that they'd been pursuing. But certainly, I'm sure that your testimony from finance and from legal would have indicated that they were not part of the contracts. There's a difference here. We need to be care-

ful. It's not just weight upgrades. There are weight upgrades and then there's a whole lot of other things that the aviators needed on board the helicopters that they hadn't negotiated in the first place. I don't recall what those things were. I don't want to be crass, but they were things like extra lights. There were a number of things.

M^{me} France Gélinas: We have Mr. Potter's testimony that basically he went to you and said that he was successful in convincing Agusta that the weight upgrades and the others were part of the contract. He expected a "Congratulations, well done, well negotiated," and none of that happened.

Dr. Chris Mazza: That is not my recollection of events. My recollection of events was that I was offered an opinion—and I was never told that it was part of the contract—that he would be able to get it significantly down from \$12 million. I don't remember the actual number he used. Actually, as I recall the conversation, it was more about how he still didn't agree that it wasn't in the contract, but he understood that, from a legal perspective, it wasn't. As far as I understand, legal testimony here has supported that, and that was certainly the advice that was given to me. It was not part of the contract. That was always Agusta's position, from a legal perspective. I'm not a lawyer. I accepted that position. That was the advice I was given.

M^{me} France Gélinas: This amount of money happens to be very close to the amount of money that was paid for a marketing service agreement from Ornge to Agusta-Westland. Agusta is a global company that has knowledge and skills and resources far beyond—you're not on the same number of zeros when we talk about the budget of Ornge and when we talk about Agusta. Why would Agusta ever come to Ornge for a marketing service agreement?

Dr. Chris Mazza: After the completion of the helicopter purchase agreement etc., I began spending a fair bit of time selling Ornge's ability, what Ornge was capable of. I think it's very sad to me, often, that people don't realize that, yes, this global monster of a player, part of Finmeccanica—why would they think little Ornge was so—because we were doing something nobody else in the world was doing. Nobody else was looking at transport medicine the way we were, and that was critical to them to try to understand how they could position that.

I had spent a fair bit of time trying to make them aware of how we could be advantageous to them in penetrating a marketplace that they were having difficulty penetrating, particularly in the United States.

I've lost track of your question.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Why would Agusta ever come to Ornge?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Why would they, yes. I think I'm answering it in that we had tremendous ability. They had tremendous respect for our vision, for our strategy and for the way we made things happen. But they also had tremendous respect for a transport medicine organization that was doing upwards of 18,000 patient movements per year. I mean, that's massive. Just like anything else,

when you have a volume of experience like that, you actually get very good at it, and they had never encountered that before. So they were receptive to the marketing services agreement in trying to better understand places in the world and ways that they might engage those places in the world to move towards systems like what we were doing.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): It now being noon, we are finished for the morning, but I just wanted to point out that the government has circulated an email with "Ruth Hawkins, Ministry of Health," on the top that they plan on asking you questions about this afternoon. We'll make sure that you do have a copy of that particular email.

This afternoon, we'll start with three minutes left with the NDP.

We are now recessed until 1 o'clock.

The committee recessed from 1202 to 1300.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): I call this meeting to order. Just before I start, it was a long morning. Dr. Mazza, if at some point you need a five-minute break to use the washroom or—please just let me know and we'll recess at that time.

Dr. Chris Mazza: Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): The NDP has three minutes left in their questioning. Ms. Gélinas.

M^{me} France Gélinas: I will use my three minutes wisely.

Just before lunch, I was asking you about the marketing agreement. I'm curious for you to explain to me: How did this come to be? Who reached out to who? Who negotiated it? How would they come to see you about this: you as in Ornge or you as in Dr. Mazza, whoever they reached out to?

Dr. Chris Mazza: As I think I started to talk about, after the helicopters were purchased, we certainly—let me just back up. Going back to from our inception, and with a mandate—we always had a mandate and a belief that we were to go forward and generate revenue to supplement the tax base and improve the system in Ontario.

So now, just to come forward, we've completed the acquisition of the helicopters and we have for sure a partner for the next 15 to 20 years just in operating those helicopters that necessitates an ongoing interaction. There's no way around that. It's a very complex operation. This is a major multinational organization with connectivity all over the world into all sorts of areas that Ornge would love to be exploring.

One of my jobs was to begin to impress upon them how unique we were on a global basis and, certainly from our feeling, how important a relationship that could be for them and how we had value to bring to them. So I spent a lot of time impressing that upon them. They were—

M^{me} France Gélinas: Who would you talk to?

Dr. Chris Mazza: A variety of different executives. The CEO of AgustaWestland, who eventually became the CEO of Finmeccanica, the vice-president of North American sales, the executive vice-president of Global,

one of the business strategic folks—a number of different people. At any rate, they became receptive to the idea and I was very excited. I was pleased that they could see the value that we could bring.

We began to talk about two things. The first one was about marketing services and how we might begin to show them different parts of the world that we thought were valuable and different ways that we thought we could get into those parts of the world, along those lines. This was, in our mind, leading to what we hoped would become a joint venture marketing opportunity, an opportunity for us to utilize the considerable person power that was at their disposal in a joint venture. In fact, that was proving true.

In the fall of 2011, I was already starting to be in conversations with folks from India who were meeting us through introductions. We were carrying our own weight but we would never have met those folks. We were meeting folks from the UAE. We had met and were starting to work with folks from Brazil.

I think I got a little off track on your question.

In terms of the negotiation of the agreement, I negotiated the principle; in other words, the concept that we could have a marketing services agreement. But then I passed that off to my finance staff because, quite frankly, ma'am, I wasn't sure what structure—I didn't know how that would look. I knew I had an agreement in principle. I didn't know how it could be fitted into our structure and into our process, so I asked my finance staff to evaluate how that agreement would look.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Did you have an idea of the size, money-wise? When you talk about the principle of the thing, did you also have an idea if we were talking \$1,000 or \$1 million?

Dr. Chris Mazza: No, I was certainly thinking in terms of longer term and in millions. That was just my thought process. But let me be clear: Passing it over was not—it was to define what that would be. I mean, I was going to my finance and legal and saying, “How can we structure this? How can this work for us? Does this work within the charitable component, or does it work within—how do we do this?” My finance people went off to evaluate the deal and to evaluate how it would work for us. They were very clear: They had to do the same.

Interjection.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Sorry. Continue.

Dr. Chris Mazza: They had to do the same and evaluate how they wanted it to look.

Subsequently, those two minds, if you will, came back together in the form of negotiating an agreement that took—I don't know—somewhere between four and six months to negotiate the details, the deliverables, the payment schedules, expectations, review process, all of that.

At the end of the day, not only did this have to pass muster in our finance department and in our legal department, who had to agree that it was important to do what was appropriate and what was within our regulatory framework, and it had to be accepted by the Ornge board

of directors, but it also had to be accepted by the oversight processes of not only AgustaWestland but Finmeccanica.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Okay. We'll move on to the government now.

Dr. Chris Mazza: I hope I answered your question.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Ms. Sandals?

Mrs. Liz Sandals: Dr. Mazza, you've maintained throughout your testimony this morning that the Ministry of Health was briefed regularly and kept up to date. You have denied that the Ministry of Health or the Auditor General were stonewalled; in fact, quite the opposite. In response to questions from my colleagues opposite, you stated, “We were proud of what was going on” and had no reason to stonewall, and that the Ministry of Health was your prime motivation and you would never have lied to or misled the Ministry of Health.

You've also maintained that the province was behind you all the way, and had the provincial government felt otherwise, you would have changed course absolutely. You even went so far as to say that if the government had ever called you up and said there was something wrong or something you should change, you would say, “Yes, ma'am,” in reference to Minister Matthews.

I'd like to turn everyone's attention to an actual example of the relationship between yourself and the Ministry of Health. To put this in context, I believe this is probably one of the emails that were produced in response to Mr. Klees's request for information from the Ministry of Health. It's an email from yourself, Dr. Mazza. It's to Malcolm Bates, who was the director of emergency health services. It's copied to Ruth Hawkins, who was the ADM at the time; and then Alf Apps, Rainer Beltzner, and Maria Renzella, from Ornge, are copied. It is dated November 1, 2007. This actually goes quite a way back in the relationship; this isn't just the early relationship.

It's an email in which you vigorously oppose the province's attempt to consolidate Ornge onto the books of the province. Again, by way of context, this would be coming out of conversations between—a request of the provincial controller and in discussion with the Auditor General of the province of Ontario. So this request did not come from some minor bureaucrat. This request to consolidate came from the most senior levels of both the government of Ontario and the Auditor General as the representative of the Legislature of Ontario.

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Dr. Mazza, I wonder—and you are clearly in opposition here to this consolidation, if I can summarize, because in your opinion the government had no control over Ornge—if you could read the first paragraph to us, which begins, “Further to our telephone conversation.” This is your email to Malcolm Bates and Ruth Hawkins.

Dr. Chris Mazza: Let me clarify for the members of the committee: My knowledge does not allow me to have written an email to this degree, or to this degree of understanding of fiscal and accounting process and legal process—

Mrs. Liz Sandals: Your name is on it; it says “from Chris Mazza.”

Dr. Chris Mazza: Ma’am, if I may finish—if I may just finish—it comes from my office and from my email; yes, ma’am. I am familiar with the contents. I can absolutely clarify, though, that this was a matter that was written with the chairman of the board, PricewaterhouseCoopers, as well as corporate counsel. There is far more understanding in this letter than I had then or have today.

I am fine reading this—

Mrs. Liz Sandals: If I may comment, however, from the point of the view of the recipient, it came from Chris Mazza, CEO of Ornge. So if you could proceed with reading the first paragraph, that would be helpful.

Interjections.

Mrs. Liz Sandals: This is part of the public record now because it was disclosed by the Ministry of Health.

Dr. Chris Mazza: Yes. That’s fine, ma’am. I’m merely pointing out to the committee that this is not my style of writing, nor is it my tone, nor is it the way that I normally communicate. I would urge you to look at the way I communicate as a means of backing that up.

Mrs. Liz Sandals: Very well. It is from you—

Dr. Chris Mazza: “Further to our telephone conversation yesterday, I am deeply concerned by, and opposed to, the sudden and overreaching proposal of the Office of the Provincial Controller to include Ornge in the government’s consolidated financial reporting exercise which I became aware of only yesterday. This notion makes absolutely no sense having regard to (a) the actual structure and business of Ornge, including its relationship to the government (b) the original and continuing intent and objectives of the government in separating air ambulance services from government in 2005 as communicated by the minister and the Premier and (c) the strategic and business plans of Ornge as it seeks to change the model for funding and delivering medical air transport in Ontario in accordance with those broader policy objectives. More importantly, given the public service accounting policies that are supposed to govern the question of consolidation, I believe a serious error has been made based on a fundamental misapprehension of the basic facts governing the question.”

Mrs. Liz Sandals: If I could carry on down in what are represented to be your comments in paragraph (a), “the government has no authority whatsoever to appoint or remove these directors”—refers to the board of directors.

What purport to be your comments under paragraph (b): “The government has no ongoing access to the assets of the organization whatsoever and has never asserted such a right. The only right the government has is, in the event of default and termination of the performance agreement, which is only triggered by a material breach or a bankruptcy, insolvency or liquidation ..., is to recover only what remains ... of those assets that have been acquired with funds provided pursuant to the performance agreement...”

Dr. Chris Mazza: If I may add some context—

Mrs. Liz Sandals: If I could please carry on? Again, purportedly your comments at paragraph (c): “The government has no responsibility whatsoever for Ornge’s losses.” Further in that same paragraph: “Furthermore, the government has no jurisdiction whatsoever to direct the ongoing use of our assets. That is entirely the province of the board of directors and the management accountable to it. We have complete autonomy to decide how to deploy our assets. We have a contractual obligation to the government to deliver certain services within Ontario and we are funded to deliver those services. How we choose to deliver those services most effectively and efficiently is in our discretion. How we choose to deploy our assets—both for our contracted responsibilities under the performance agreement and otherwise—is in our discretion. Whether we use leased or owned assets, whether we in-source or outsource certain delivery functions (e.g., aircraft maintenance, aircraft operations) is in our discretion.”

If you go on down to paragraph (e), purportedly your comments: “The government has no power to dissolve Ornge whatsoever. Ornge’s continuing existence is completely independent of government. The only thing that the government can do—and this is only in the circumstances of default—is terminate the performance agreement, in which case it can only recover those assets which were given to Ornge by the government or acquired by Ornge with funding under the performance agreement.”

That’s what you purportedly say. I wonder if you could go to the bottom of page 3, the last two paragraphs, and read what is purportedly your conclusion, the paragraphs beginning, “Given that...”

Dr. Chris Mazza: Mr. Chairman, I’ve lost track of all of the issues that the honourable committee member has brought up.

Mrs. Liz Sandals: That’s why we gave you the memo in advance.

Dr. Chris Mazza: I’ve lost track. If I can start dealing with some of the issues that the honourable member has brought forward—

Mr. Roger Yachetti: The honourable member hasn’t asked a question yet.

Mrs. Liz Sandals: I will do that, if you would just finish reading the memo, please: “Given that ... ” at the bottom of page 3, the last few paragraphs, please.

Dr. Chris Mazza: “We trust that you will immediately withdraw this proposal”—

Mrs. Liz Sandals: That’s fine. Just carry on.

Dr. Chris Mazza: —“which completely” flies—it says “files”—“in the face of the public policy of Ontario in relation to its formation by this government in 2005. The fact that there is not one single indicia of control or even possible control that applies to Ornge should be sufficient to persuade you that there has been a profound misapprehension of the facts in this case by your office. We would like this matter resolved promptly and will be

pleased to meet to discuss this matter further at the first mutually convenient opportunity.”

Mrs. Liz Sandals: If I may, I’m actually not quibbling over whether you wrote this or whether a lawyer wrote it. It’s quite clear that a lawyer wrote it. However, it was the official correspondence that was received by the ministry on a very serious issue.

Does it sound, from what the Ministry of Health received, like this is an organization that’s working co-operatively and would never stonewall a government initiative?

Dr. Chris Mazza: I think I brought this issue up myself with Madame G  linas. Clearly, I am of the position that this is an example of healthy interaction and debate, or I wouldn’t have brought it up. I didn’t know that you were going to bring this up, ma’am. I brought it up myself as an example of how I felt that Ornge could have a difference of opinion and could enter into a healthy academic or otherwise debate and discussion. But in the end, the conclusion in this matter was that the consolidation occurred.

If I could give some background to this issue to the committee, when this first—and I maintain absolutely, and I am aware that I am under oath, that I did not write this, because I don’t have the knowledge to write this. This was a combined writing of the senior accounting financial authorities, both at Ornge and the consultants at PwC, as well as corporate counsel, as well as the chairman of the board and the chairman of the finance committee.

Having said that, the context and background of this issue was that when it first came to Ornge’s attention, there was great surprise and a lack of understanding. When we pursued this issue with the emergency health services branch on a verbal, interactive basis—which was our tendency, to pick up the phone and to engage in conversation—they too were mystified as to why we were being consolidated this year when previously we weren’t. They could not understand—and this is their accounting staff—why this was being applied. I’m not an accountant; I don’t purport to be one. I am merely relating that our finance and accounting staff couldn’t understand; the ministry’s finance and accounting staff within the branch couldn’t understand.

When my senior finance staff as well as counsel went to meet—I do not remember the name—one of the senior accountants with the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, they indicated that in general, the controller’s office would pass around a list of companies or a list of agencies or organizations, whatever, I don’t know, and that they would have to decide within health whether they would have to be consolidated or not. Previously, it had been their opinion that Ornge should not be consolidated. The controller’s office had taken a new position and one that these accountants did not understand either.

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In the spirit of those conflicting sets of information, the organization wrote this communication as a means of opening the door to discussion. I think the points in this

email were set out the way they are because, as I understand it—and this was what I was advised—these points are the points by which one tests control and therefore tests whether consolidation ought to occur. So they were written in that way to identify that in fact it didn’t meet the accounting tests of control.

The only other thing I would add, ma’am, is that if there was significant concern over the issues that were brought forward and the position that Ornge had with regard to these various issues, I can tell you that nobody ever said, “That’s not acceptable. We’re not going to engage in this. We’re not going to have this type of relationship. We need to go backwards now and redraw the performance agreement.” This was consistent with the performance agreement, and certainly it was a clear identification of how Ornge understood.

This document, by the way, preceded the audit by the Ministry of Finance. So again, there was plenty of opportunity at that point to say, “If this is your interpretation of policy, we’re not sure we agree with it. We’d like it to be another way.” Those conversations never occurred, ma’am—not to my knowledge.

Mrs. Liz Sandals: The question I asked you wasn’t, “Why did you write the memo?” It wasn’t, “Who advised you to make these points?” It was, “You have asserted that if the ministry or finance or anybody else came to you, that you were instantly co-operative and did whatever was being requested.” Is this a “Yes, ma’am” sort of response, in your view? I’d hate to see a “No, ma’am” response.

Dr. Chris Mazza: I think that what I have said is that in the end, the organization said yes to consolidation and they ceased and desisted in all further disagreement on this issue. So in fact, yes, it was a “Yes, ma’am.” It is an informed “Yes, ma’am.” I think, again, to my point, if the government was concerned that there was not co-operation or there was stonewalling, they never made that clear to us. As a matter of fact, conversations with the emergency health services branch were always cordial and positive, and with the Ministry of Health in general. We never had any relationship with the controller’s office and had no idea who these folks were. So I—

Mrs. Liz Sandals: At any rate, I’m sorry; I don’t read, “We trust that you will immediately withdraw this proposal” as “Yes, ma’am.” But let’s now go to the substance. Why, leaving the—

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Please let him respond.

Dr. Chris Mazza: Actually, it says, “We will be pleased to meet to discuss this matter at the first mutually convenient opportunity,” which we did. We went on to meet formally with them, and in that meeting they indicated that they were going to have Deloitte evaluate the issue and give a more informed third party opinion. My chairman will testify to that, as will corporate counsel, as will my finance executives who were in the room at the time. I was not there.

Interjection.

Dr. Chris Mazza: I'm sorry, ma'am, if I could just finish. The issue was left. We were waiting for a statement that Deloitte would be looking at this issue, and we instead received a letter that, "We have changed our mind. We will not involve Deloitte. You are consolidated." That was the end of it. We never spoke of it again. We said, "Yes, sir."

Mrs. Liz Sandals: I wonder if we could have a bit of a look at—not the legal, because I agree with you; this is obviously accountants and lawyers who are writing. Why were you corporately so vigorously opposed to consolidation? As a government member who sits on treasury board—and the auditor will probably agree with me—consolidation is actually, in some ways, to the disadvantage of the government, because what it ends up doing is putting more debt on the government's books. It makes no difference to the normal operations, to the entity being consolidated, that they had been consolidated. It's normally really not of any interest to the entity being consolidated; it's just an internal conversation with the government. Is that correct, Auditor?

Mr. Jim McCarter: I think essentially what the consolidation would deal with would probably be right on the accounts of Ornge, and especially—they may have got wind that they were going to be borrowing \$300 million. That could have been part of it. But generally, it wouldn't be health that would kind of drive the bus on this one; it would have been the provincial controller's office that would basically drive that decision. They would come up with their assessment. Typically, then, they would come to us and say, "This is what we think on this new entity, Auditor. Are you onside with this?"

Dr. Chris Mazza: In fact, I, at a personal level, never had an issue with this. It was an accounting exercise for me. I had a chairman who was an accountant. I had a chairman of the finance committee who was an accountant. They had an academic issue with this because they didn't understand it.

At the end of the day, as I've indicated, they agreed to consolidation. But you asked why there was an issue. I believe it was an academic issue.

Mrs. Liz Sandals: And it had absolutely nothing to do with the future plan of spinning off various corporations and having a closer tracking of that?

Dr. Chris Mazza: The various corporations—that did not exist at that time, ma'am. Those were not even—they had not been contemplated. We were still busy trying to figure out how we were going to replace the antiquated infrastructure, assets, how we were going to—we were still in the process of trying to take on a former government union—take on the CAW, how we were going to—by "take on," I mean bring them into the organization. We had a myriad of issues that we were struggling with. We certainly were not looking ahead at the more detailed elements that we eventually got to in terms of revenue generation.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): And you're on your last minute.

Mrs. Liz Sandals: You've said that you weren't trying to stonewall the Auditor General. If I could quote from the auditor's press conference of March 21, when he released his report, he said Ornge was not all that co-operative in providing information to the ministry. The auditor said, "Ornge deliberately did not give us what I would call a straight and fulsome answer all the time, and they really made it difficult for us to get all the information."

That's what the auditor has told us. Do you disagree with the auditor?

Dr. Chris Mazza: From my knowledge and my perspective, yes, I disagree with the auditor. I never met the audit team. I was never interviewed by the audit team. I met the—pardon me, Auditor—associate deputy, I believe—

Mr. Jim McCarter: I think we had a draft report discussion. I think you met with Gary, the deputy auditor, and Susan, the director—

Dr. Chris Mazza: Yes.

Mr. Jim McCarter:—and I think you popped in one day and had a bit of a chat, maybe, just to one of the staff, just to say hello—

Dr. Chris Mazza: No. It was a, "Hello, I'm Dr. Mazza. How are you?"

Mr. Jim McCarter: Then we had a bit of an email discussion—

Dr. Chris Mazza: On the phone.

Mr. Jim McCarter: We had a phone call discussion at the start of the audit, kind of talking about the timing.

Dr. Chris Mazza: That's correct. But I was—

Mrs. Liz Sandals: But you never—any information the auditor asked for, it was all given to the auditor?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Ma'am, I actually convened a committee, a team. That team was led by my chairman of the board. On that team was the chairman of the board as well as the chairman of the finance committee as well as a number of other folks. Always, the chairman of the board was—you see, Ornge always knew that the auditor would be coming someday. That is a reality. The chairman was particularly focused on making sure that any and all necessary information was supplied in a timely and efficient fashion.

I read what the auditor's report said. I was in the hospital at the release. I did not see teleconferences or anything. Certainly, my direction would have been to be co-operative in supply. My understanding was that they were provided with scads of paper and material.

I am not able to answer your question as to why there is that perception. I do not understand it myself. Again, we had a team. The chairman of the board and the board in general were very focused on being co-operative. Somehow, I guess that got lost.

1330

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): We are out of time, so we'll move to—

Mrs. Liz Sandals: It's your position that the—you can take a few seconds off my next round. It's your position, then, that the chairman of the board—that is, Mr.

Beltzner—who would be the same person who apparently wrote this memo that says that “the government has no jurisdiction whatsoever to direct the ongoing use of our assets,” was totally co-operative in turning over everything that the auditor asked for, even though the auditor says that that isn’t the case.

Dr. Chris Mazza: Just to make a correction, Mr. Chairman, I did not say that the chairman of the board wrote that; I said that a team wrote that particular email, and that team was comprised of lawyers, accountants and the chairman.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): And the auditor would like to clarify a point.

Mr. Jim McCarter: I just thought I might clarify the co-operation. On one hand, I’d have to say that we eventually got almost all the information that we asked for. The difficulty was, it just took a long time. It was a very arduous process. What would normally take a couple of days often took weeks; often they had to go back with a lawyer. It just took a long time.

On the other hand, at the end of the day, we did get virtually all the information we asked for, except we did have a scope limitation where we couldn’t see anything on the right-hand side—all the for-profit companies.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Thank you for that clarification.

We’ll move to the opposition. Mr. Klees.

Mr. Frank Klees: I would like to just continue briefly on the consolidation file while we’re there. Can you tell me why the consolidation issue was such a contentious one if in fact, as you’ve ultimately concluded, it was academic; it was not a big deal for you? Why was it such a contentious issue?

Dr. Chris Mazza: I don’t have anything further to add to the answer I already made, Mr. Klees. I think there was consternation over the—it didn’t make sense; it was not a logical issue. I think, to be honest, Mr. Klees, after the initial meeting with—I don’t know if it was finance or the controller’s office—we did have a meeting at Ornge, and it was clear that the controller’s position was quite assertive. They were very focused on their position. There was a meeting at Ornge and the decision was made that, “It’s not in our best interests to pursue this. Let’s just leave this alone. This is an academic issue. It doesn’t make any sense. Let it go,” at which point we just waited, because the conclusion of that meeting was that there would be a Deloitte and Touche review. That didn’t happen and, we were informed, wouldn’t happen. Nothing was ever done about that again.

Mr. Frank Klees: But it is a fact that Ornge—or someone at Ornge, if it wasn’t you—felt very strongly about it, to the point where they hired Don Guy to lobby the government over this very issue. Isn’t that true?

Dr. Chris Mazza: I am not aware that Mr. Guy was hired as a lobbyist. I know that Mr. Guy did work for us on community issues. I am not aware of his engagement at that level; no, sir. The issues regarding this in particular were actually well within the bailiwick and capabilities of the chairman and the chairman of finance. They

were also well within the bailiwick of corporate counsel and PwC. I remember Mr. Guy doing some work for us for a brief time but I do not recall the details of that work.

Mr. Frank Klees: We have it on pretty good authority that he did get involved in this file and he did make calls to the government to attempt to resolve this in Ornge’s interest, and obviously the rest is history.

Speaking of letters, can you tell me who was really in charge at Ornge? There is correspondence that is signed by someone who didn’t write it; there are people like Mr. Navas, who signed letters as the chief operating officer. Ms. Long thought that she was working for him, and while she was here she testified that he was the COO. He came here and told us he never was the COO; all he did was—in fact, I don’t think he remembered the letter that I showed him that he did sign.

Who was really in charge? Who wrote whose letters? What can we rely on? I mean, it sounds like Keystone Kops when you look at it from a distance. Who knew what was going on? Who was in charge of what? You tell us you don’t remember, and I don’t mean to be insensitive—I understand you’ve gone through a difficult time—but we’re discussing serious issues in a very major agency that, yes, was independent, but had the responsibility to deliver essential emergency health services in our province, and we have nothing but contradictory stories about what went on. And you, sir, don’t remember. How do we get a handle on what is going on here?

Dr. Chris Mazza: As I’ve said over and over again, I am, to the best of my ability, trying to recall and provide you with as much information, Mr. Klees, as I can. We are going back many years in some of these things. Regardless of my recent health history, I think it’s difficult for many of us to remember back that far. In addition, I have no access to any material that I would normally have had access to.

In answer to your question, Mr. Klees, I was in charge. I was the CEO. I’m accountable for that. But I was also accountable to the board of directors. I worked for the board of directors. And so, inevitably—the board held the overall authority at Ornge. I am accountable for the actions and endeavours that we went forward on. As I’ve said to the committee, I believed that we were doing excellent work. I believed that we were doing good work in the interests of the province. I believed that we had the support of the province. But I guess my answer to your question is that I was in charge.

Mr. Frank Klees: Okay.

I had a letter handed to you that all the committee members already have in their files. It’s the now-famous January 19, 2011, stakeholder briefing letter that was sent to Minister Deb Matthews and that was subsequently followed up with an in-person briefing. It was copied to you, Tom Lepine, your board of directors and 11 key government players, including the Premier’s principal secretary and a who’s who of finance, health and economic development. You have that in front of you?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Yes.

Mr. Frank Klees: No one remembers reading this letter. We've examined people here over the last number of months. We show them the letter and they recognize their name as being copied, but no one has read it. The letter was signed by Rainer Beltzner. My question to you is, who wrote it?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Again, this would have been a team effort, sir. It's quite a lengthy letter. It would have been written by Mr. Beltzner as well as—counsel would have been involved. It would have been a team production, sir. It was signed by the chairman as the overall authority of the organization.

Mr. Frank Klees: Okay. The letter makes some very bold statements. One of those statements is, "Ornge is seeking nothing from the government except to make it aware of what it has done and is intending to do"—

Mr. Roger Yachetti: Excuse me. Could you give us a page number, Mr. Klees?

Mr. Frank Klees: You know, actually, that's not a very relevant part of my question, but I will give you page 19, which is where I'm going with this. On page 19, the letter informs the government of the new business ventures and how those are going to be financed.

Interestingly enough, it has a paragraph here, under paragraph 8, that refers to development funding, because clearly everyone would be interested to know where the funding was going to come from for these new business ventures, these not-for-profit ventures.

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I'm going to help you, sir. I'll read this into the record myself. It starts with the development of the new business ventures. I'm quoting now: "over the period from April 1, 2010, to December 31, 2010, at an estimated cost of \$2.7 million, was accomplished entirely through the use of proceeds of a marketing/business development agreement with Agusta Aerospace Corporation ('AAC') pursuant to which total funding of almost \$5 million has been provided for business development purposes, including the creation of a business plan. This agreement was entered into in 2010 in recognition of (i) Ornge's expertise in aeromedical transport generally, including the intellectual property associated with its design of the medical interiors for the new rotary-wing aircraft acquired from AAC, and (ii) in consideration of Ornge's agreement to allow that expertise to be used in assisting AAC in penetrating a larger share of the global aeromedical rotary-wing transportation market."

I wanted that on the record because this is a briefing of government. It is directly referring to the Agusta marketing agreement, and it's saying that the \$5 million that had already been paid by that time was as a result of Ornge's expertise and intellectual property associated with the design of the medical interiors of those new helicopters.

What we know is that those medical interiors were a disaster. They didn't work. In fact, it was only a matter of time, very shortly after they were installed and those helicopters were delivered, that paramedics started to complain about the fact that they couldn't even perform CPR.

Now we're told by Ornge that there's a temporary fix on those medical interiors and they have to spend millions to retrofit those helicopters.

My question is this: Apparently, Agusta felt that they could pay the \$5 million, or whatever—it says \$5 million here—to that point, and they're relying on Ornge's expertise for designing medical interiors, which, quite frankly, you couldn't sell to a cabinetmaker today. I'd be interested in your observation.

Dr. Chris Mazza: I would just point out that "Ornge's expertise in aeromedical transport generally, including"—aeromedical interiors was one aspect. The letter is taking a whole raft of aspects under "generally" that it's not mentioning in here. There is a tremendous number of issues. I'll speak to the interiors in a moment.

I think that if it's acceptable to the committee, I'd just like to provide some context on medical interiors in general. It seems to have been a bit of a hot topic here.

Mr. Frank Klees: Actually, if I might, with your permission, we can work together on this. I will come back to the medical interiors in my next round. I would like to pursue the marketing agreement at this point, if you don't mind.

Dr. Chris Mazza: Okay.

Mr. Frank Klees: I just found it somewhat passing strange that the expertise of Ornge would be focused on the medical interiors, which I think we all admit today is really not the fact. But on the marketing agreement—

Dr. Chris Mazza: Sorry, I don't actually acknowledge that the interiors are terrible.

Mr. Frank Klees: Okay.

Dr. Chris Mazza: If we're going to discuss that, I'll just leave that on the record.

Mr. Frank Klees: With all due respect, Transport Canada has made this statement. It's not my statement. Transport Canada forced Ornge to retrofit. Transport Canada is saying that they will not approve those helicopters for air ambulance service unless they get it fixed. So whether you think there's something wrong with it or not is really quite irrelevant.

Dr. Chris Mazza: No, sir, I didn't say that there's nothing wrong. What I said was that they are not completely terrible and not fit for a cabinetmaker.

Mr. Frank Klees: Okay; well—

Dr. Chris Mazza: I think that they have a number of positive aspects associated with them. I think that there are some challenges. If you want me to wait until your next round, I'm pleased to do so.

Mr. Frank Klees: How much did we pay for those, while we're on the topic anyway—\$6.2 million?

Dr. Chris Mazza: You're going to tell me that—I don't recall again, but—sir, I don't recall. It has been a long time.

Mr. Frank Klees: I think it was around \$6.2 million.

Dr. Chris Mazza: I think it was—

Mr. Frank Klees: I think when you're paying \$6.2 million for a medical interior of a helicopter that should be able to allow a paramedic to do CPR, we would expect it not to be partially okay; we'd expect it to be perfect.

Dr. Chris Mazza: Mr. Chair, if I could just respond?

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): You can take the time to respond to that question.

Dr. Chris Mazza: Yes. I mean, I can't leave that.

I need to provide context first, and the context is of the previous interiors on the Sikorsky 76, where, Mr. Klees, you couldn't intubate a patient. So in my medical opinion and as an expert in transport medicine, I would suggest that the control of an airway and the intervention on an airway is actually far, far more critical than the issue you speak of. It's not to say that CPR on board a helicopter isn't critical; obviously it is. But the other interiors with which we had survived for many, many years had an inordinate number of problems associated with them.

One of my greatest concerns as a transport medicine physician was that I couldn't put the patient on board the helicopter if I even suspected that they might get into airway trouble because I knew that there were no effective means to intubate them. What's more important is that, in order to care for the patient on board the old helicopters, paramedics pretty much had to take off their seat belts, get out of their chairs and completely avoid all safety precautions in order to care for the patient.

What I also know is that as we went forward into new interiors, we were focused intensely on making what we felt to be a world-class interior that would allow for the transport of the critically ill safely and effectively. We engaged a committee, a multidisciplinary group. We asked the union to nominate two members from the union in rotor and in fixed. We asked the medical advisory committee to bring a doctor to the table who would go. We had the aviation department put an aviation expert on the team. We had an administrator as well as an operations person. This team went to the manufacturers and worked with the manufacturers on trying to design a safe, effective and appropriate interior using mock-ups. They didn't just draw it and come up with it. They actually came up with initial thoughts, concepts. The engineers put them together in mock-ups. Then they went through scenarios—scenario after scenario after scenario. When they came back, the engineers then put all the changes into place, and the team then went back again. This process took the better part of a year just to get the design. They then made the changes that the team felt were necessary, and eventually the team signed off on the interior, saying that they were happy with it.

I became aware of a problem with the interior only after the introduction of the London helicopter. At that point, a scenario had come up that indicated that there was a problem. The scenario was—I don't recall what exactly, but the paramedics were concerned. I made the issue known to the chief operating officer at the time, Mr. Lepine, and I was assured that this was an educational issue, that the paramedics were just learning how to use the interior appropriately.

I then had a board member who was doing educational work in London hear the same thing from medics. At this point, I indicated to the chief operating officer that I needed him to convene a focused committee to address

this problem urgently. I believe that the chief operating officer did so. He did so in concert with aviation, and they began to work very diligently on trying to fix the issue.

Acknowledged, there is an issue with the interior, but I'd like to be very clear with the committee that it was certainly not through lack of effort in trying to get the right design.

Mr. Frank Klees: Chair, I'd like you to ascribe that amount of time to yourself, please.

Dr. Chris Mazza: I'm sorry; I didn't hear what you said.

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Mr. Frank Klees: Oh, no; that's nothing to do with you.

I'd like to follow up on the marketing agreement and an issue that was raised earlier with regard to a conversation between Rick Potter and this committee in which Mr. Potter made it very clear that he, in fact, had negotiated down some \$10 million in costs that Agusta wanted to assess, and he made it very clear to this committee that he came back thrilled with his success. To quote him, he said—this was following his meeting with you, where he told you that he had been so successful in negotiating down this additional cost: "What I said to Chris, and I'll paraphrase for this committee, was, 'Are you freaking crazy?'" That was his opinion of you, as the CEO, saying, "Thanks for negotiating down \$10 million. There are things you're not aware of. Leave it to me."

The next thing you know, Maria Renzella was given instructions to paper what was subsequently referred to as a marketing agreement, of which we all have copies. It's ironic that the amount of that marketing agreement was very similar to the amount that Mr. Potter had negotiated down. You seem surprised. That is a fact. For many of us who have some experience in business, it seems passing strange that one of our employees would come into our office and say, "Guess what, boss? I've been able to save the company \$10 million," and the boss turns around and says, "Thanks but no thanks. I'd prefer to pay this." A matter of weeks later, a number of the executive at Ornge are in conversation about how odd this is, and Maria Renzella is challenged with the responsibility to paper that deal.

I've heard your explanation, but I frankly don't accept it because there are far too many facts that align here, not the least of which is that Finmeccanica, which is the parent company of Agusta, has been caught in negotiations of bribery, of kickbacks, on the purchase of aircraft. One example of that that is widely reported in the media was the sale of 12 helicopters to India. You should know about that. Can you tell me where the former chairman of Finmeccanica is today?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Mr. Klees, I don't know where the former chairman of Finmeccanica is, no. I do not know. I don't know who he is. I've never met him. I don't know where he is.

Mr. Frank Klees: The media reports are far and wide in terms of the bribery charges, in terms of the kickback

charges of this company, and they are quoted as saying that they do business this way all the time. Was it ever a concern for you that if it came to light that one of your employees was able to save Ornge \$10 million and you refused that, that would be an embarrassment to you?

Dr. Chris Mazza: First of all, if I may start, the word “kickbacks” has been thrown around a lot, and I want to immediately refute that issue. In my person, I have never—nor would I ever receive such a thing. I am not, nor was I, aware of Agusta’s history which you refer to. I did not, do not, know about that. From my perspective, Agusta was and always has been an honourable company that I worked with. That is my opinion. That is what I observed. That is what I saw.

Comments that you made about Mr. Potter—you quoted, “Are you freaking kidding me?” That actually sounds very much like Mr. Potter: a very good executive but a very challenging, somewhat harsh, negotiator. It was my understanding, as I indicated, that the initial position by the aviation department was actually wrong. As an executive, I was now placed in a very difficult position, where I had tremendous acrimony going between these two sides, to solve it. Mr. Potter never once told me that he had a formalized, negotiated settlement. He told me that he had an opinion; he told me that he could do substantively better than \$12 million, but at that point, in all honesty, he had exhausted his credibility with me because the situation was deteriorating in terms of moving forward.

I thought I did a pretty good job of getting a discount of 50%. Having said that, I passed that over to finance to ensure that they had fair market value, fair market assessments, and that legal and finance did the appropriate evaluations, as are necessary, to go through that deal.

You say that I called to “paper.” No. My senior executive in finance was away. Many, many things happened in a week at Ornge. She was coming back; I was going somewhere. I needed to download a variety of things that had come up, and one of them was, “I need to figure out how to put this marketing services agreement together,” not “paper it.” The agreement was an agreement. I did not know how it would look.

Mr. Frank Klees: Whose idea was the agreement?

Dr. Chris Mazza: I answered that question already in saying that this was something that we had been pursuing for some time. It’s an idea that came up after the helicopter purchases were completed when we looked at our relationship with a major multinational and hoped to be able to utilize that relationship to further our business initiatives, as well as providing value to them to further theirs. We felt that we could do that for them. It was a mutual interest and integration.

There is one other item, though, and that is the following: In all of these agreements, in all of these issues, finance, counsel, accountants, consultants and the board of directors were all involved. If you think for one second that if anybody had said that there was something wrong with these agreements I would have gone ahead, then that is absolutely incorrect.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): If you’re just about done that answer, we’ll move on to the NDP. Ms. Gélinas.

M^{me} France Gélinas: All right. Thank you. Just to close up on the marketing service agreement, you described Agusta and their mother company as—you trusted them. You found that they were a good partner to have and saw opportunity to leverage that partnership for the good of all. They never offered anything that could have been seen as illegal? They never offered or talked to you about the possibility of giving money someplace, somewhere, somehow?

Dr. Chris Mazza: The only conversations we had about money with Agusta were about paying for the original helicopters, creating a marketing services agreement, creating a joint venture in marketing, and a donation to the foundation. Those were the only conversations that I certainly ever had or was aware of. Yes, that is, to the best of my knowledge, entirely accurate.

Again, I emphasize that I am not aware of any negativity surrounding that company’s aura. I did not know.

Interjection.

Dr. Chris Mazza: Sorry. I missed the upgrades as well.

M^{me} France Gélinas: When was the last time you talked to anybody from Agusta?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Not since maybe the beginning of the new year, after I left Ornge, just in an email saying that I was on medical leave.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Okay.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Dr. Mazza, there have been some concerns raised—

Dr. Chris Mazza: January.

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Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Pardon?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Sorry, at the beginning of January, I had already left on medical leave and had sent an email out in general format that I was away. There was no reply.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Okay.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Doctor, there have been some concerns raised about a culture surrounding those who come forward with concerns or issues—whistle-blowers. There have been some issues that people noted some problems with Ornge and wanted to raise those concerns but were not treated properly. Do you have any comments about that or do you have any knowledge you can share about that?

Dr. Chris Mazza: I think, simply—no. I believed I had an open-door policy. I know that my chairman of the board had an open door. I know other directors—the chairman of the board had an open door; other directors had open doors. I know that, for example, in medicine, the chairman would ask the chairman of the MAC at every board meeting, “Do you have any issues that management is not wanting you to talk about?” I have heard that said, Mr. Singh; I’m not able to explain it.

I’ve also heard said that there was a culture of fear. I don’t have any explanation for that either, sir. I know that

we had a high-performance culture. I know that the culture was driven and obsessed about goals and focused on deliverables, and perhaps that's frightening for some folks.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Thank you for that. Jacob Blum testified. I'm not sure: Were you able to hear or read some of his testimony?

Dr. Chris Mazza: No, sir.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: He testified, in one part of his testimony, that there were some concerns that he started seeing in Ornge, and he raised those concerns with people from the ministry. Did he raise any concerns with you about the direction that Ornge was headed? Were you aware of any conversation he had with the ministry about concerns that he had about the direction that Ornge was going in?

Dr. Chris Mazza: No, sir.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Okay. When you indicated that you wanted to internalize the fleet, the aircraft in Ornge, as a new direction, the ministry was aware of that new direction that you wanted to go in. Is that correct?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Yes, sir.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: And when you told the ministry of your decision or your desire as an organization to move toward owning your own fixed-wing and rotary-wing aircraft, did the ministry approve that decision?

Dr. Chris Mazza: They had no concerns.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: No concerns were raised?

Dr. Chris Mazza: No. They were supportive. I don't know—I don't want to—

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: No, go on.

Dr. Chris Mazza: There is some context behind this in-sourcing of aviation that might be helpful.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: We'll go into that. I think some of the context that you've brought up in terms of the lack of quality aircraft and the third party and other issues—

Dr. Chris Mazza: There's a number of issues.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: There's a number of issues.

Specifically with the helicopters, when you advised the ministry that you were going to purchase helicopters, did the ministry say, "Listen, we can provide you with some expertise. The Ministry of Natural Resources has had some experience purchasing helicopters"? Was that ever provided to you?

Dr. Chris Mazza: No, sir. The ministry was very supportive of our decision to acquire helicopters. In fact, the director said, "That's fantastic. This is a good example of why we did this in the first place. We could never have done this within government. This would be too difficult. We would never have been able to get this." And, no, the Ministry of Natural Resources was never offered.

In the design, the requirements for the helicopters and the scoresheets etc., Canadian Helicopters' expert staff were involved, as well as some consulting folks that we brought in.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Just changing tracks somewhat, were you aware—

Interjection.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Yes, go ahead.

M^{me} France Gélinas: I'm interested by the comment you just made that, "This is fantastic. This is why we went the way we went with Ornge at arm's length and setting up the for-profit"—

Dr. Chris Mazza: The not-for-profit.

M^{me} France Gélinas: —at arm's length, and, "We would have never been able to do this within government." Who made those kinds of comments and when were they made?

Dr. Chris Mazza: It was Malcolm Bates, and it was on and around when we were going forward. They had also been very frustrated with their inability to replace an antiquated infrastructure, and he was referring not so much that it wouldn't be something that would eventually be done, but rather that the process involved would be so exceedingly difficult that this is why you had an arm's-length organization.

Probably more importantly, what he was referring to, Madame Gélinas, was that in his organization he was forced to short-term plan. You can't short-term-plan in transport medicine. It can't be done. That's how you end up with antiquated infrastructure and no capital asset replacement plan. I think that was what he was referring to in his comments.

M^{me} France Gélinas: My colleague asked you about Jacob Blum and if there was any concern that he had brought to you. When Mr. Blum was here, he related to us the story of going to visit the speedboat that had been purchased and how he thought that was inappropriate. He certainly shared with us that he had shared that with you that he thought that this purchase was not appropriate. Do you recall anything regarding a disagreement on that issue?

Dr. Chris Mazza: I recall that Jacob was not supportive of the boat that was purchased, but that was not—I thought you were referring to directions in general. But that was never a reason for his change in his career direction. That was not a major issue, is what I'm saying.

M^{me} France Gélinas: So you did have this conversation with him.

Dr. Chris Mazza: I think he mentioned it; yes, he did. I acknowledged it. The board was supportive of the decisions that we were engaged in, and the other executive team, and finance. I had one individual who was not supportive, but the board of directors was supportive and it was a board-directed movement.

M^{me} France Gélinas: When you came to decisions, it didn't matter if it was Ornge that received funding from the government or one of the subsidiaries or the foundation or any of the other entities; the decisions were always from the same board.

Dr. Chris Mazza: No. There were different boards. In this particular case, there was—at that time, yes, it would have been the same board because this was early in development and there was only, I believe, in existence at that time Ornge and Ornge Peel, and they were the same boards.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Okay, but the boat, I thought, was purchased by the foundation.

Dr. Chris Mazza: I actually don't recall how that happened anymore. The boat was purchased with an interest-bearing loan by J Smarts, but I don't recall the details anymore, Madame Gélinas.

M^{me} France Gélinas: But at the beginning, when you started, the board of the foundation, the board of Ornge, the board of Ornge Peel and the management executives that you had decisions with—because, like you said, finance was okay and counsel was okay and the board was okay, but Jacob was not—

Dr. Chris Mazza: They were the same in those companies, yes. There were a limited number of human resources at the time.

M^{me} France Gélinas: And they were all the same. When did we start having different teams, and the different teams were for what?

Dr. Chris Mazza: When we started to have aviation, this thing started to become more disparate at that point as we created different organizations for different structural functions—sorry, different operational functions.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Your testimony this morning and this afternoon: When you refer to your board, you always refer to the board of Ornge as in—

Dr. Chris Mazza: In all of these decisions, the board of—any of these other entities were subsidiary, and so the board of Ornge always had to approve. That's what I mean.

M^{me} France Gélinas: So you always reported to one board, and that was the board of Ornge, the way we know it, and—

Dr. Chris Mazza: Until much later in the evolution, when they moved me. Yes, at the time, and in answer to your question, I reported to the board of Ornge, and any subsidiaries were reporting up. The board of Ornge required approval. It was required.

M^{me} France Gélinas: All right. I am still a bit confused, because you seem to be talking about—let's bring it as far forward as we can. We're now in 2011. We have the corporate structure that Mr. Apps has drawn for us; we can all see what it looks like. Did any of those corporate structures have a board?

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Dr. Chris Mazza: Yes.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Which one did?

Dr. Chris Mazza: They all had boards.

M^{me} France Gélinas: They all had boards?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Yes.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Okay.

Dr. Chris Mazza: So on the Ornge board—well, there was the Ornge board. All of the other entities had boards. They were made up of different people. You have to understand that some of this was just in evolution, so they weren't entirely comprised at that point. Anything that was functioning or operating had a board.

M^{me} France Gélinas: And were you the CEO, the executive director, for each and every one of those boards? You were? Okay. Were you also on any of those boards?

Dr. Chris Mazza: No. I was CEO. But on the Ornge board, no, I never was on the Ornge board as a voting member because it was a charity, so I had no vote. On Ornge Global, I provided information but I was not on the board because it was a general partnership. And on any of the subsidiaries underneath, I had no votes on those either. The only thing that I was on a board of was when the corporate structure created the OGMI management holding company.

M^{me} France Gélinas: And you were on the board of that?

Dr. Chris Mazza: I was on the board of that. But it was a holding company; it had no operational and/or governance capability.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Okay.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Do you recall who Keith Walmsley is?

Dr. Chris Mazza: I'm sorry?

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Keith Walmsley.

Dr. Chris Mazza: I know the name. He worked at Ornge. I only know the name. I confess I don't remember meeting him. I don't really know anything about him other than the fact that I became aware that his work was concerning to Maria and that she had gone through significant mediation processes and continued to have challenges. That forced her to dismiss him.

Then I became aware of him later because a phone call was made to me by Ruth Hawkins that an individual had brought an issue, I thought to the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care—I don't know where it came in—and that she needed to speak to the chairman. I connected her to the chairman. I was never privy to the conversation. Other than the fact that it had been a concern raised by Mr. Walmsley, I was never privy to the content of the concern.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Okay. So at any point even after the fact, do you now know what the concern was that he raised?

Dr. Chris Mazza: I became aware much later that it was regarding salaries and that Mr. Beltzner had a conversation with Ruth Hawkins. Mr. Beltzner and the chair of the compensation committee met with Ruth Hawkins and—I don't remember his name, but he was the director of the internal audit group for health, which is part of the Ministry of Finance. They met privately.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: And when was this, roughly? Just roughly the year. I know it's tough to say—

Dr. Chris Mazza: Maybe 2008?

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: In 2008? And do you know what happened, what became of that meeting with Ruth Hawkins and Mr. Beltzner and—

Dr. Chris Mazza: Well, now I know that Mr. Beltzner and the chair of comp worked with the ministry.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: They worked together?

Dr. Chris Mazza: To address whatever the issue was and the concern, but I wasn't privy to that.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Was there any follow-up that the ministry expressed, any sort of concern that they didn't get the follow-up that they needed?

Dr. Chris Mazza: No, absolutely not.

M^{me} France G elinas: I'd like to ask you: Do you remember Mr. Don Guy?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Yes.

M^{me} France G elinas: How did you meet him and how did you come to hire him?

Dr. Chris Mazza: We didn't hire him. I came to meet him through Catherine Rosebrugh, who had come to me after Jacob had moved on. She was hired to work in a combination of legal and regulatory affairs. Again, I do not recall the details of why, but there were a number of challenges that we were trying to communicate and figure out how to communicate. For a very short period of time, Don provided some consulting expertise to Catherine's group. I've only met Don on maybe one or two occasions. It was a brief time.

M^{me} France G elinas: So Catherine already knew of Mr. Guy?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Yes, I believe so.

M^{me} France G elinas: Okay. Did you know the position that Mr. Guy had within the Liberal Party?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Afterwards I knew.

M^{me} France G elinas: Do you know what it is?

Dr. Chris Mazza: I don't know today. I knew it was that he was previous chief of staff to the Premier.

M^{me} France G elinas: And do you know what services he provided for Ornge and to Catherine's group?

Dr. Chris Mazza: I don't recall, no. As I said, I think it was—there were a number of projects and trying to find ways to communicate some of the challenges that we were facing at the time, but I don't recall, Madame G elinas.

M^{me} France G elinas: Mr. Guy was prepaid for his services. Would you know if that was standard practice at Ornge, that people would be prepaid?

Dr. Chris Mazza: No; actually, I would suggest that that's counter to what Ornge would normally do. You would provide the services, and you'd be paid afterwards.

M^{me} France G elinas: Would you know if Mr. Guy ever helped Ornge get the ear of the government in one way or another?

Dr. Chris Mazza: You know, it's certainly not my—I never reached out to Mr. Guy. So from my own personal perspective, I would have to answer the question in the negative. I am not aware that—I know that I did not. "Getting the ear": I guess I don't really know what that means. Sometimes in finding the right department or who to talk to in the bureaucracy, people like Mr. Guy, I'm sure, can help. But in terms of getting to an actual elected official, no, I'm not aware of that.

M^{me} France G elinas: Okay. When was the last time you communicated with Mr. Guy?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Years.

M^{me} France G elinas: Years ago?

Dr. Chris Mazza: On a personal basis?

M^{me} France G elinas: On any basis. When was the last time you talked to him?

Dr. Chris Mazza: No, that's what I'm saying: I haven't talked to Mr. Guy in I don't remember—quite some time.

M^{me} France G elinas: Okay, no problem.

You explained to us that it was Fasken's who recommended that you start doing business with Mr. Apps regarding your corporate structure.

Dr. Chris Mazza: Yes.

M^{me} France G elinas: Can you explain a little bit more to us as to how Mr. Apps started working for Ornge, with Ornge?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Well, we had a charitable entity, Ornge, and then we had the for-profit entity, Ornge Peel. You know, as we were moving forward, we were very, very aware that we were not to use grant funding in any business development, and yet we were to develop businesses that would generate revenue. So our structures were definitely challenging. We were moving forward to try to attract—we thought we would try to move forward and try to attract institutional investors. Our corporate counsel at the time, who was always our principal corporate counsel then, Cindy, said that Alfred might help us both with structural and trying to understand the institutional investor world. That's how that introduction came about: Cindy brought Alfred in to fulfill that role while she continued to be our primary corporate counsel.

M^{me} France G elinas: All right. About when did you find out that Mr. Apps had been president of the Liberal Party?

Dr. Chris Mazza: I actually don't recall when. I think it was, quite honestly, when I was trying to get hold of him about an issue, and he was always back and forth between Ottawa, and I asked why. That's when I became aware.

M^{me} France G elinas: When was the last time you communicated with Mr. Apps?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Not since I left Ornge.

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Interjection.

Dr. Chris Mazza: Yes, except I did read his report, which was sent to my counsel. But I have not communicated with Mr. Apps since the beginning of January 2011.

M^{me} France G elinas: You've told me that it was not the practice of Ornge to prepay for services. Any idea why it would have happened in the case of Mr. Guy?

Dr. Chris Mazza: No, I don't.

M^{me} France G elinas: No? We don't really know why?

Dr. Chris Mazza: I don't.

M^{me} France G elinas: Okay.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: I'm just going to turn your attention to the Meyers Norris Penny audit that was done. The report took some time to come out in its entirety. Did ministry officials come to meet with you or anyone at Ornge to discuss some of the findings of that report and say, "Listen, there are some issues that the auditors have found. Let's work on fixing those"?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Oh, yes. There was a committee that was formed to address the issues. The ministry emer-

gency health services branch and Ornge were working on those issues.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Can you give me perhaps one example that was raised and one way that it was fixed—any example you can think of?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Okay. One of the concerns that they had was that our communications were informal. Although we had regular, almost daily—and that’s absolutely accurate—conversations with multiple persons at the branch, we weren’t diligent about a formal communications process. That was instituted immediately, actually, in the form of a set of quarterly meetings, with minutes being taken. It initially wasn’t attended by senior staff, but eventually was attended by an assistant deputy minister.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: That’s very helpful. Do you know if all or a majority of the recommendations that were made were actually implemented or followed through on?

Dr. Chris Mazza: I’d have to answer that I don’t know. I haven’t seen the report in a long time and I don’t remember.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: It looks like the Auditor General, in his report, found some of the same problems that the MNP report found and commented on the ministry’s responsibility to obtain certain information. I’m just going to read from his report. The Auditor General said in his report that they should ensure compliance and “the end result will be improved care, improved access to service, increasing effectiveness and efficiency of the delivery of service, and the assurance of greater fiscal and medical accountability.” Did the ministry, on a regular basis, obtain even basic operational information about what Ornge was doing on a day-to-day basis, on an operational level, in terms of the aircraft, the rotary wing and fixed-wing, and what was going on?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Mr. Lepine dealt with all the reporting aspects of the performance agreement, and those reporting aspects were followed diligently. Everything that is outlined in the performance agreement we reported on. Items outside the performance agreement I’m not aware we would have reported on or were reporting on on a formal basis. We would have, if asked, reported on any number of issues—in terms of flight volumes, I believe the auditor made mention of—or a number of specific operational variables, but I am not aware of being asked for that, ever.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): You have a minute left.

Mr. Roger Yachetti: Mr. Chair, through you to Mr. Singh, please, may I know the page you are reading from, sir?

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Oh, it’s not a page of anything. It’s just some of my own notes.

Mr. Roger Yachetti: Oh, I’m sorry. I thought it was the actual report.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: No.

Given the fact that the MNP report indicated certain things that the ministry could have done, the Auditor

General also commented on the ministry’s failure to fulfill their obligations under the performance agreement. In your opinion, why do you think the government is arguing that the performance agreement itself is faulty, given the fact that the ministry itself is responsible for not fulfilling their oversight goal?

Dr. Chris Mazza: I don’t know.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: That’s fair. I don’t know either.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Thank you very much. We’ll move on to the government. Ms. Sandals.

Mr. Roger Yachetti: Mr. Chairman, would this be an appropriate time for a short break, please?

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Yes, it would be. We’ll take a five-minute recess.

Mr. Roger Yachetti: Thank you.

The committee recessed from 1425 to 1438.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): We’ll call the committee back to order. It’s time for the government’s questioning. Who would like to do that?

Mrs. Liz Sandals: Yes, thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Ms. Sandals.

Mrs. Liz Sandals: Thank you, Chair. I did just want to note, before we move on, a couple of things that the Auditor General said—one at his press conference, which was that the performance agreement was weak and it was not adequate and it needed to be significantly strengthened. In the actual report, the auditor says that the performance agreement “does not entitle the ministry to access the books and records of any of the entities that Ornge directly controls,” and that’s no doubt what has led to the difficulty which the ministry reported in terms of trying to get certain information from Ornge.

In particular, when Mr. Malcolm Bates appeared before us, he spoke about the ministry’s attempt to have Ornge disclose your salary, Dr. Mazza. Mr. Bates, as part of that testimony, explained that he had called Tom Lepine to discuss your salary. Not surprisingly, given that, when Mr. Lepine was here, we did ask him about accessing salary and that information. I’d like to read you bits and pieces of the exchange that Mr. Lepine and my colleague Mr. McNeely had around your salary.

“Mr. Phil McNeely: When you heard about Dr. Mazza’s salary ... what did you think of the \$1.4 million a year?”

“Mr. Tom Lepine: I thought it was ridiculous and what I really felt is the same as I think most Ontarians felt, which is betrayed.

“I’m sure we’ll get to the discussion later about some of the operational decisions that I had to make. To find out that I was being asked to make those types of decisions, up to and including the potential to have to close bases, in order to stay within budget, and to find out that he had a salary of that and, more particularly, the loans,”—which we referenced earlier—“I felt betrayed and angry.”

And then, further in the exchange between Mr. McNeely and Mr. Lepine, they discussed the actual process of Mr. Lepine and others putting together the report for Minister Matthews, finally, on your compensation.

Mr. Lepine said, “He”—referring to you, Dr. Mazza—“walked into my office shortly before he went off and asked what we were doing. I told him what we were doing, and he said, ‘Well, Lepine, you know what my salary is.’ I said, ‘I don’t, Chris. We’re pulling it all together.’ He said, ‘Well, it’s \$500,000,’ and I said, ‘Well, it’s not \$500,000, because we’ve already got documentation here that it’s up over a million now and we’re trying to include the rest,’ and he said,”—that is, you said, Dr. Mazza—“‘Well, the rest of it goes to my private corporation.’ I said, ‘But it’s paid through taxpayers’ dollars, Chris. That’s your medical stipends and we’re including that.’”

So the question is, Dr. Mazza, given this exchange, is it true that you were still telling Tom Lepine not to disclose all of your compensation even when Minister Matthews explicitly asked for it?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Ms. Sandals, in fact the conversation is inaccurate in some degrees. My salary was \$500,000. That is an accurate statement, and it is correct. What Mr. Lepine failed to disclose in that set of comments was that my chairman was in charge of that entire process, which was why I was unaware as to what anyone was doing in that office at that time. Nothing I said or did had any bearing on what Mr. Beltzner decided to disclose. I had nothing to do with it. What Mr. Lepine refers to, when he refers to “private corporation”—my confusion was what was being disclosed. Was it salary? Was it stipend? What was it? Again, it didn’t really matter what I thought, Ms. Sandals, because my opinion wasn’t going to have any bearing on what was done. Mr. Beltzner was in charge of that situation, as he had always been, and I left the room.

Mrs. Liz Sandals: So we’ve already had the discussion about what was bonus and what was performance and what was this and what was that—

Dr. Chris Mazza: The private corporation that I referred to had to do with my medical stipend, my medical corporation. That was my confusion with Mr. Lepine but—

Mrs. Liz Sandals: Thank you; because it sounds like you’re still trying to park money even though the minister has explicitly asked for your total compensation.

Dr. Chris Mazza: No. No, ma’am. I was trying to understand what he was doing. At the end of the day, whatever I understood didn’t matter anyway because Mr. Beltzner was in charge of that circumstance in that situation, and it was his dealing with the minister on this. I had nothing to involve myself in.

Mrs. Liz Sandals: Thank you, and I’m going to turn it over to my colleague Mr. Moridi.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Mr. Moridi.

Mr. Reza Moridi: Thank you, Dr. Mazza, for appearing before this committee.

Dr. Mazza, it has been said that the idea to create a province-wide air ambulance service was your idea. Is that accurate?

Dr. Chris Mazza: I think that I had a vision of a system of transport medicine that would benefit this

province and its people, particularly since what was happening in health care was the regionalization of highly technical, very demanding and very expert services. They were being regionalized, and yet there was no means for the people to be accessing those regional centres in an efficient and effective manner. I had a vision that, instead of a fragmented and disparate very dysfunctional system, we should move towards a consolidated single transport system that would be able to connect the various places in the province with the regional centres of excellence that were being designed.

Mr. Reza Moridi: When did you come up with this idea, Dr. Mazza?

Dr. Chris Mazza: I trained in emergency medicine from 1989 through 1994-95. In 1995-96, I began to be increasingly exposed to transport systems and transport medicine. I fell in love with the idea that you could bring the hospital to the patient, that you could improve care and allow systems of health care to evolve that would be able to get better for less through volume principles.

The idea evolved over the years, and I didn’t really come to a clear assessment of what it could be, provincially, until well into 2004.

Mr. Reza Moridi: Did you ever talk about your idea to the Minister of Health at that time? Did you talk to the Minister of Health about your idea of creating such an organization?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Yes, I spoke to the Minister of Health at the time, Minister Clement, and I presented the ideas to Minister Clement in 2003, I think—it might have been 2002—early. Those ideas were met favourably. He understood the centre-of-excellence models, he understood how health care was regionalizing, and he understood the rapidly increasing costs that were difficult to contain. He urged me to proceed to delineate a way that this could be done, and I began to move forward, working with the bureaucracy, I think as I indicated earlier.

SARS occurred in Toronto, and I was immediately pulled into an executive group that was trying to deal with SARS. Really, nothing happened after that. An election was called shortly after SARS, and I then met a new minister and began the process again.

Mr. Reza Moridi: At that time, you were working at Sunnybrook hospital, I guess. You were employed by Sunnybrook.

Dr. Chris Mazza: As a doctor, I was not employed. I was self-employed.

Mr. Reza Moridi: You worked at—

Dr. Chris Mazza: I worked there. I was self-employed.

Mr. Reza Moridi: At that time, Fasken Martineau was legal counsel for Sunnybrook hospital. Is that correct?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Yes. That is how I met them.

Mr. Reza Moridi: During this time, who were your main contacts at Fasken’s?

Dr. Chris Mazza: I already had met with—that was, I think, when I first met Cindy Heinz; I also first met

Lynne Golding and I first met Guy Giorno. Lynne was counsel to Sunnybrook.

Mr. Reza Moridi: Were you working closely with some well-connected Conservatives at Fasken Martineau, people including Guy Giorno, former chief of staff for Premier Harris and the future chief of staff for Prime Minister Harper? You worked with Kevin McCarthy, who is the current chief of staff to Minister Flaherty?

Dr. Chris Mazza: I don't know that person.

Mr. Reza Moridi: You don't know that person. You worked for Lynne Golding, the wife of then-Minister Tony Clement, the Minister of Health at that time?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Yes. The only correction I would make, sir, is that I didn't work closely with these people. Specifically, Lynne was Sunnybrook's counsel already, so I was introduced to her through—I don't remember his title, but he was the senior financial officer at Sunnybrook.

Mr. Reza Moridi: From the information, Dr. Mazza, that Fasken's has provided us, you were working with these well-connected Conservatives to lobby officials in the offices of Premier Eves, Minister Clement and the Red Tape Commission. What were you lobbying for?

Dr. Chris Mazza: The term "lobbying" confuses me. It's one that is often used. I'm not sure what that means.

At the time, as I said, I was working for Sunnybrook. I didn't know who to talk to or who we could talk to. Lynne made introductions. First of all, the Sunnybrook CEO and senior staff listened to the concepts, were supportive of the concepts and thought they were good ideas and good for the system and good for Ontario, so they introduced me to their counsel, whom I then proceeded to go through things with. She seemed to think it was a very positive and very good idea as well. The next introduction was to Mr. Giorno.

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Most of this was not, by my recollection, to lobby; it was more to tell us how we could have anybody listen to this. The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care is a \$40-odd-billion corporation; it's pretty hard to figure out who to call or who to talk to sometimes.

I don't know when the McGuinty government introduced the anti-lobbying legislation; I believe it was in the second term. But certainly at that time hospitals had, and specifically Sunnybrook had, people in their employ who were designed to try to find their way through government. In our case, that is not what we were trying to do with Mr. Giorno or Ms. Golding. We were trying to understand how we could structurally and from a regulatory perspective present an idea that we felt from a functional and operational perspective was excellent, but how that could fit into the system that is government.

Mr. Reza Moridi: In 2003, Dr. Mazza, did you ever discuss with Mr. Giorno, Mr. McCarthy and Ms. Golding—

Dr. Chris Mazza: Did I ever—

Mr. Reza Moridi: Did you ever discuss with these people—Mr. Giorno, Mr. McCarthy or Ms. Golding—

that you were looking to establish a corporation that could generate revenue from outside sources?

Dr. Chris Mazza: I don't know Mr. McCarthy. I don't recall that name. I may know him, but I do not recall the name.

We were discussing the concept of transport medicine as a system perspective. We were discussing how the system had deteriorated to such an extent. We were discussing the antiquated infrastructure. We were discussing the unbelievable operational difficulties that were in the system at the time. We were discussing how the entire health care system was moving towards this regionalization element. We were also discussing, quite frankly, some of the very difficult things that were occurring in health care because of the new—pardon me, it's not a word, but—the municipalization of land ambulance and how movement now was significantly restricted and compromised. So we were talking about a systems design issue. In addition, we were talking about the growth of health care, the growth of cost of health care, and how generating revenue outside of that taxpayer base could be extremely beneficial to eventually sustaining an operation.

Mr. Reza Moridi: Was the government made aware of those discussions you had with these people?

Dr. Chris Mazza: I'm not sure I understand the question. The government as in the minister? The government as in—

Mr. Reza Moridi: Yes, the Ministry of Health or other ministries within the government.

Dr. Chris Mazza: Certainly the emergency health services branch was made aware that we were having conversations with, eventually, Minister Clement and also that we'd been in conversation with Fasken's, and these were things that we were very intrigued with and interested in, yes.

Mr. Reza Moridi: Was there any policy decision made by government authorities to go ahead with this proposition?

Dr. Chris Mazza: No. As I related, we were in process when SARS happened, and everything came to a grinding halt across the Ministry of Health and government in general.

Mr. Reza Moridi: Are you aware that the cabinet was made aware of this conversation or this decision?

Dr. Chris Mazza: No. Not aware of that.

Mr. Reza Moridi: Could you tell to the committee, Dr. Mazza, how closely you worked with Mr. Guy Giorno?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Not very closely. In fact, Jacob Blum pretty much worked with Guy Giorno. I had a few meetings with Guy—on the order of less than four. Shortly after SARS, I really had no contact with Guy ever again.

Mr. Reza Moridi: Could you tell us what was the nature of the work Mr. Giorno did for—

Dr. Chris Mazza: As I said earlier, Mr. Giorno was trying to assist us in how we might structure and build

out the concepts that would fit into changing the system from what it was.

Mr. Reza Moridi: What was the nature of the work Mr. Giorno did after the creation of Ornge in terms of operational and other matters?

Dr. Chris Mazza: I'm not aware.

Mr. Reza Moridi: I have one last question with respect to Mr. Giorno. Did you and Mr. Giorno ever discuss AgustaWestland?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Not that I recall, at the time.

Mr. Reza Moridi: You didn't discuss—

Dr. Chris Mazza: Not that I recall. At the time I, to be honest, didn't know who AgustaWestland was.

Mr. Reza Moridi: Would it be a fair statement to make that Ornge was originally conceived during the Harris-Eves governments?

Dr. Chris Mazza: I think it's a fair statement to make that—well, Harris, I believe was gone. Mr. Eves was the Premier, I believe, at the time. I think it is a reasonable statement to say that the concept of a unified transport medicine system with revenue-generating activities was conceived at that time, yes.

Mr. Reza Moridi: Would you say that it was the Harris-Eves government that planted the seed of what is now known to have become Ornge?

Dr. Chris Mazza: I wouldn't disagree with that statement.

Mr. Reza Moridi: Thank you, Dr. Mazza.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Mr. Zimmer?

Mr. David Zimmer: How much time, Chair?

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): About 10 minutes—nine minutes.

Mr. David Zimmer: Thank you. Did you have any input into the decision to fund Ms. Long's MBA studies at Western to the tune of \$90,000?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Mr. Chair, if it's appropriate, I'd like to comment on the MBAs in general so it will provide you some context. It's important to understand the process that was involved. The board of directors was very anxious and concerned about succession at Ornge. They were concerned about their dependence on certain key personnel and they were concerned that there was significant difficulty in finding the right folks that would fit the culture and the high performance that was required. I tell you that background because they asked that I have our organizational development team work on a succession plan, and that succession plan had associated with it a number of activities to identify staff that could be groomed for future executive roles.

Amongst them, this plan that came forward from organizational development had, at its heart, what was called the leadership academy. The leadership academy was Ornge's attempt and the board of directors' strong endorsement to identify staff from around the organization—the front lines, all the different departments—that could go to leadership and be exposed to something that they quite possibly had not had. The leadership academy would take place over a year, and staff would actually be separated from their work to go to a location where they

would go through a course load. It was something that we were in fact very proud of. That entire program was run by human resources and organizational development.

In the board presentation to put this together, it was defined at that board that we would offer postgraduate education to the top graduates of that program. Those persons would be scored by a scoring system used in schooling, and the top graduates would be offered postgraduate education. The postgraduate education that was chosen would be based on what the organizational development team and the human resources team felt was most appropriate for that particular individual and their skill set.

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Ms. Long was nominated by her director, as were many others nominated by their directors. Each department had a certain number of slots, and she filled one of the slots from her department. She had an exemplary performance, as I was aware, at the course, scored very highly, in the top of the class. I don't remember whether it was one, two or three. Accordingly, then, organizational development brought her forward as a candidate for postgraduate training in accordance with the board of directors program. Money had been set aside for this entire succession initiative.

This was something that was not unusual. It was something Ornge was trying to do to build from within and it was something that we had seen being done in the hospital system. I myself was provided with MBA background—I was funded, supported, to get my MBA by Sunnybrook.

So I guess that's a long-winded answer to your question, Mr. Zimmer, but I had no direct input into whether Ms. Long was selected for leadership, nor, obviously, could I have had input into her scoring so highly and so well in her leadership program that led to them offering a—

Mr. David Zimmer: Thank you, and just a follow-up question: Earlier in your evidence, you mentioned that you received a medical stipend, I guess, to practise medicine. Were you seeing patients, or what was the medical stipend for?

Dr. Chris Mazza: So this is historical and went through—from when the program started, you had a role in a medical director capacity, so therefore you had obligations as a medical director or then further obligations: exams, evaluation, ride-outs, that sort of thing. Effectively, Mr. Zimmer, as a transport medicine physician, when you are delegating, you are seeing patients in accordance with the College of Physicians and Surgeons, but you're not billing through OHIP.

Mr. David Zimmer: And what sort of figure was that? What dollar value was it?

Dr. Chris Mazza: I actually don't recall, sir.

Mr. David Zimmer: A large amount, a small amount?

Dr. Chris Mazza: I can't recall, sir.

Mr. David Zimmer: All right.

I have some questions about Mr. Blum. Mr. Blum appeared before the committee, and, as a result of his

evidence, I understand that the two of you met in 2002 or thereabouts, when you were both at Sunnybrook. I understand that's correct?

Dr. Chris Mazza: No, I did not meet him at Sunnybrook. We had moved to—I don't remember the date, sir, but we had moved off-site from Sunnybrook. The air base hospital program had moved off-site because Sunnybrook had no more room and we were renting space somewhere just north of Toronto EMS's location. I can't remember the address. I apologize. And—

Mr. David Zimmer: But you met in a Sunnybrook context?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Pardon me?

Mr. David Zimmer: You met in a Sunnybrook context?

Dr. Chris Mazza: We were the Sunnybrook base hospital but he was brought to me by a headhunter who said, "You should meet this guy. You might be interested in him."

Mr. David Zimmer: And about what year was that, roughly?

Dr. Chris Mazza: It was 2001 or 2002—2001.

Mr. David Zimmer: All right, thank you.

In your earlier evidence you referred to Jacob Blum's departure from Ornge, and I'm quoting you maybe half an hour ago: "after Jacob had moved on." That's what you said. When Mr. Blum was here, and indeed some other witnesses—there are some conflicting stories or interpretation about why he left Ornge in 2007. So Mr. Blum unequivocally told this committee that he resigned. Tom Lepine, however, told the committee that Blum had been fired by the board. When I examined Mr. Blum myself, he equivocated as to whether he was fired or resigned, and then the answer was, "I departed," and it was unclear.

So, in your view, did Mr. Blum resign or—

Dr. Chris Mazza: Mr. Blum did not resign.

Mr. David Zimmer: All right. Was Mr. Blum fired?

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): If you can answer in about a minute, that would be great.

Dr. Chris Mazza: Mr. Blum was encouraged to move on in his career, and effectively, then, I suppose, he was fired. Yes, sir.

Mr. David Zimmer: I'll stop there, Chair, but I do want to pick this up in the next round.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Very well. In our last round of questioning, you have about 16 minutes each. Mr. Klees, you have the floor.

Mr. Frank Klees: I was not going to pursue this, but I will, given Mr. Zimmer's questioning. Mr. Blum tabled with the committee his severance agreement, which was very rich: one-year continuation of salary, bonuses, \$20,000 for education and so on. That's a pretty strong severance package for someone who was fired. What was he fired for?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Mr. Blum had some substantive personal challenges that he was dealing with at the time, and they had been going on for some time. Those personal challenges were affecting his productivity. I had

been urged repeatedly by my board chair to take some definitive action on this issue. I was concerned about Mr. Blum's health. I was concerned about his personal challenges. I probably delayed longer than I should have, as his productivity was falling.

Mr. Frank Klees: Mr. Blum disclosed some time ago—in fact, very publicly—that he suffered tremendous stress. That seems to be something that's common to people who work at Ornge. He also admitted very publicly that he developed a dependency on drugs. He himself admitted that there was a point in his life when he was dependent on cocaine. He testifies today that he has struggled with that but, through the support of friends, through the support of Bellwood, he is free and clean and is moving on with his life. Can you tell us if at any time you yourself supported Mr. Blum in his drug dependency?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Oh, my God.

Mr. Roger Yachetti: Excuse me, just a moment. Can we understand the question? Supported him in what sense?

Mr. Frank Klees: Why don't you let your client answer the question?

Mr. Roger Yachetti: I don't understand the question. I don't—

Mr. Frank Klees: You don't have to. I'm sure your client does, because he was there.

Mr. Roger Yachetti: Do you understand the question?

Dr. Chris Mazza: No, I don't. Supported him in his drug dependency?

Mr. Frank Klees: Did you issue personal cheques to the pharmacy that was frequented by Mr. Blum, where those cheques were cashed by the pharmacy and where the cash was given to Mr. Blum, which he could use to purchase on-street drugs?

Dr. Chris Mazza: I—

Mr. Frank Klees: Be careful in your response.

Dr. Chris Mazza: —provided support for what I believed were his pharmaceuticals to control his mental illness. If I had ever known that he was using that to use illicit drugs—I provided him with support because he had nobody that would help him, and I believed that he was ill. I believed he had a mental illness. I believed he needed help. I didn't want him to suicide. He would call me frequently, text me, telling me how he was on the verge of suicide. He was seeking mental assistance, he was seeking mental help, and he couldn't afford his medications. He was on Seroquel, he was on a number of medications, and I tried to help. If for any second, ever, I thought that he would use that money for drugs, not only would I have been devastated, but I would have been livid.

Mr. Frank Klees: Why did you refuse his wife's appeal to you and his rabbi's appeal to you to join in a community group to support him and to help him through his drug problem?

Dr. Chris Mazza: I tried everything in my power to help Mr. Blum with his drug problem—

Mr. Frank Klees: Including prescribing Percocet to him?

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Dr. Chris Mazza: No, sir—

Mr. Frank Klees: You never prescribed Percocet—

Dr. Chris Mazza: Sir, Mr. Blum's private health records: Are they the matter of this committee? Because I saw Mr. Blum once as a patient who had severe back pain.

Mr. Frank Klees: Sir—

Dr. Chris Mazza: Are you asking me as a physician to reveal the confidences of my patient?

Mr. Frank Klees: I have the permission of Mr. Blum—

Dr. Chris Mazza: I don't have the permission.

Mr. Frank Klees: He's here. He's willing to give it to you.

Dr. Chris Mazza: I can't accept it.

Interjection.

Mr. Frank Klees: Let's deal with this. I want to know this: Did you at any time while you were the CEO of Ornge prescribe Percocet to one of your employees named Jacob Blum? Yes or no?

Dr. Chris Mazza: To the best of my recollection, I saw Jacob Blum as a patient for severe back pain, which was incapacitating him, and I provided him with a very limited prescription—no repeats—for Oxycodone, otherwise known as Percocet, and urged him to follow up with his family doctor. I had no knowledge at any time of his dependence on said substance at that time. I had no awareness that this was anything other than an individual coming to me for assistance and help. I believed I was helping him.

Mr. Frank Klees: Did you make it a practice to provide prescriptions to employees?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Sir, I only prescribed to patients or individuals with whom I had completed an exam, had an appropriate medical diagnosis and felt appropriate about that.

Mr. Frank Klees: Was Jacob Blum registered as a patient of yours?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Sir, I saw him in that capacity, and that is why, in my testimony here, you heard me not wishing to speak about these issues. I saw him in that particular moment as a patient, and I tried to help him as a patient. Later, when I provided cheques to his pharmacy, I provided it that way because, quite frankly, sir, I believed that was the safest way to make sure that he was not going to use it any other way. I understood it was for drugs that he was prescribed by his physicians.

Mr. Frank Klees: Perhaps you could have been a little more cautious as a physician. As a physician—

Dr. Chris Mazza: Sir, to the best of my ability, this was a patient in need. He was a patient in severe pain. He didn't have anywhere else to go at that time. And, as it was typical, I would only prescribe a very limited prescription, perhaps 10 or 12 tablets, and that was standard, to restrict the individual from abusing the situation. I

urged the individual to then follow up with their family doctor.

Mr. Frank Klees: You didn't think that was a conflict—you were the employer—for you to prescribe Percocet to an employee who was struggling? There was a lot of—

Dr. Chris Mazza: Sir, I had no idea that the employee was struggling. At the time that I prescribed Percocet, this was a productive employee; this was an employee who was functioning. He had a back problem. As a matter of fact, he came to me with a back problem and asked me to try to find him a surgeon. He asked me to try to find him a doctor that could help him. I actually connected him to doctors at the hospital in order to help him as well, sir.

So I went out of my way to try to help an individual, and that's what I've always done as a doctor: to try to help someone. Did I see it as a conflict? No, I did not, because I was treating him, at that point, as a patient in need. In fact, he went on a leave shortly thereafter to deal with his back surgery and back problems.

Mr. Frank Klees: Thank you. I'd like to move on to the document that was provided to you earlier entitled Investigations Concerning Air Ambulance and Related Services. It starts with page 9—there were some cabinet covers on here. On page 10, at the top of the page, there's a note.

Mr. Roger Yachetti: Do we have that document?

Mr. Frank Klees: Yes, you do. I gave it to you earlier today.

The note reads as follows—keeping in mind that this is a confidential cabinet document and was prepared by the emergency health services branch—I believe that's it, that you have in your hands there.

Interjection.

Mr. Frank Klees: Yes. If you would look at the second page, which is actually numbered page 10. The top note: "Please note that Ornge's chief operating officer indicated that a 'method of counting patients was mandated by the CEO with the intention of demonstrating an increase in activity associated with the transition of air ambulance from the Ministry of Health to Ornge.' The result is that Ornge has transported an annual average of 8.9% fewer patients since 2006-07 than it previously reported (this equates to more than 2,100 fewer patients transported in 2010-11)."

According to this document, the direction that you gave your chief operating officer was to fudge the numbers. Why did you do that?

Dr. Chris Mazza: I have no recollection of any statements of that kind whatsoever, nor do I understand why I would ever do that. Any funding that we received had nothing to do with the numbers of patients transported. Moreover, my motivation, focus and interest was on why we couldn't get to all the people. I was desperately trying to ascertain what the number was that we couldn't get to. I needed to try to understand it. There were no numbers that were in existence. Most of what I was trying to do was figure out what that number was. Part of my original

study was to try to figure it out. That was not a very complete method. We tried to bring the Hay Group in to try to figure it out. The data was poor and difficult.

We actually were in the process of trying to use surveys and physicians' assessments in the field to try and assess demand that was out there that didn't even make it to our communications centre. Our focus was always to try to assume what the number was.

Mr. Frank Klees: I think the conclusion that everyone reached about that is that you wanted to make things look better than they were. I'd like to go on—

Dr. Chris Mazza: No, that's not the conclusion at all. I believed that at all times the data and the statistics I was receiving were an accurate reflection of what was going on.

Mr. Frank Klees: Chair, how much time do I have, if you wouldn't mind adding in all of that other time—

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): You have five minutes.

Mr. Frank Klees: Five minutes.

I'd like to go through a couple of these references in this investigation report, because at the end it really is all about patient care. That's why we're here. We're here because the Auditor General's report gave us serious concern that Ontario patients' needs were not being met.

This document in front of us itemizes some 27 investigations in which Ornge was the primary subject and 10 other investigations that were supplementary to that. There are an additional 45 events that happened subsequent to January 1 of this year. These are incidents that refer to operational issues at Ornge, where paramedics were not able to take a patient on board because of the interiors. You dispute that, but that is what is in these reports. These reports refer to patients not being airlifted because there were not enough pilots. There are other incidents where patients were not able to be airlifted because there were not enough paramedics. There is a policy that had been put in place by Ornge to downstaff to save money.

At the end of the day, this report, I believe, is a condemnation of how business was being done at Ornge. I hear your defence of your vision and I would be the first one to support a restructuring of an organization and modernizing an organization and ensuring that it is efficient. I can tell you that what has happened here and the question that I would ask you is, given the initial vision that you had to restructure this air ambulance service and to make it more efficient, how did we get to the point where that vision became so clouded that we ended up essentially wasting multi-millions of dollars and we ended up frustrating front-line paramedics, front-line pilots?

I'm going to share an email that just came in at 2 o'clock this afternoon on my BlackBerry—

Mr. Roger Yachetti: With the greatest of respect, I'm sorry to interrupt you, sir, but is there a question there that he can answer?

Mr. Frank Klees: I will get to it. I have five minutes left and you're eating into my time. If you'll allow me to do this, I'm glad—I'm absolutely glad—to do that.

Here is the email that just came in at 2 o'clock. As I said, there are people watching. This is from a medic with 20 years' experience: "We still cannot intubate a patient in the new interior. We also cannot do something as basic as sit a patient upright if they are short of breath. Our biggest ongoing issue is trying to load and unload our patients. It takes two to three times longer to do this simple act.

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"As well, when the first aircraft came online in Sudbury, he was advised of all the issues with the new interior. He"—referring to Dr. Mazza—"made direct threats to a medic to shut up or face the consequences.

"I'm a medic with 20 years of experience, and I would honestly rather be on the old aircraft.

"Please contact me if you have any questions."

I'm sharing this with the committee and with Dr. Mazza for this reason: because, at the end of the day, what we want to do is restore confidence in our air ambulance service. We want to ensure that we do have the best air ambulance service in this province. But something is wrong with the way this organization has been managed. Something is wrong with the structure, and we need to fix it.

Rather than have the current government continue to try to make something into what it is not, what we need to know from our witnesses—and I'll include you, Dr. Mazza, in this—is, what will it take to restore confidence in our air ambulance service? I'd like your opinion on that.

Mr. Roger Yachetti: Is that the question, Mr. Chair?

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): That is the question, so I'll let—

Mr. Roger Yachetti: We haven't seen that email. Who wrote it, may I ask?

Mr. Frank Klees: Let me tell you: I can't tell you, and the reason I can't is—

Mr. Roger Yachetti: Wait a minute, now. Wait a minute.

Mr. Frank Klees: No, no. I can't tell you because this is an employee of Ornge—

Mr. Roger Yachetti: You're trying to impugn this man—

Mr. Frank Klees: —who is concerned about his job—

Mr. Roger Yachetti: —on the basis of an email that you won't tell us who wrote?

Mr. Frank Klees: That's right. You know why? Because there's no whistle-blower protection at Ornge, which was recommended by the very report that was referred to by Dr. Mazza.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Mr. Klees, let's—

Mr. Frank Klees: That's why.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): There was a question there. Do you want to respond, Dr. Mazza? Otherwise, we shall move on to the NDP.

Dr. Chris Mazza: To be honest, Mr. Klees, there is so much that you have said, I'm not sure how to respond. Some of the things that have come out in your discussion

have been very wounding for me personally. I'm sure that's not your intent.

I believed, and I still believe, in what we were doing. I thought that the interiors were designed with tremendous input from paramedics. I asked the union to bring forward the two paramedics. I asked the doctors to bring forward a doctor. I had no input myself, sir, into the design. I was not involved at all, nor did I demand that I change anything. When the design came back, I brought it to the board of directors and got it approved.

I already indicated I was not aware of the design challenges, particularly regarding airway and CPR. I became aware, actually, through front-line staff informing me. This was late, and it was after the London introduction. I knew there were some vibration challenges. I was told by the aviation department that that was being dealt with. Any and all issues that came forward, I was told they were either educational issues and/or minor issues that could be dealt with and improved.

When I became aware that there were more significant concerns, I immediately asked my chief operating officer to focus his utmost attention on this issue, which I believe he did.

I would counter the individual who is writing you that email. The system is never perfect, and, Mr. Klees, I'm sure you'd tell me it's far from that now. But that is certainly what I was working towards, to try to improve it. I have done the best I can.

The only other thing I would say is that an organization that I worked with for some time in the west actually took four years before they could even get their helicopters in operation, due to interior challenges. It is not an easy solution.

I thought that we had done a very good job. I thought that my operational people had informed me that they had ways to deal with the shortcomings. I thought that the future looked brighter because the shortcomings had been identified and we were going forward. I believed that the issue of continually taking feedback and trying to improve on something was what I was dedicated to do. It's what I believed in, sir.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): We'll move on to the NDP.

Mr. Roger Yachetti: Mr. Chair, may I say something? First of all, I want to apologize to you and to Mr. Klees for my outburst. But in a court of law, that kind of cross-examination is not permissible. You cannot cross-examine a witness on a document you will not identify. With the greatest of respect, if that line of questioning is going to form any part of this committee's decision, I insist on receiving a copy of it on behalf of Dr. Mazza.

Mr. Frank Klees: Sure.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Thank you for your comment. We'll move on to the NDP. Go ahead, Ms. Gélinas.

M^{me} France Gélinas: I have a couple of loose ends, as I think this will be our last rotation. You're okay, Dr. Mazza?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Yes.

M^{me} France Gélinas: You're good? Okay.

You've mentioned that after the audit was done, you formalized quarterly meetings.

Do you want a minute?

Dr. Chris Mazza: It's okay, ma'am. Go ahead.

M^{me} France Gélinas: You formalized your meetings and you started meeting more formally on a quarterly basis.

Dr. Chris Mazza: Yes, ma'am.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Do you remember if minutes were kept of those meetings?

Dr. Chris Mazza: It's my recollection that minutes were kept of those meetings.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Okay. I will ask the clerk to make sure that we get a copy, please, of those minutes.

Dr. Chris Mazza: I was not present at those meetings.

M^{me} France Gélinas: You were not present?

Dr. Chris Mazza: No.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Okay. Who would attend?

Dr. Chris Mazza: My chief operating officer, Mr. Lepine; I believe Ms. Renzella; I think that often Mr. Farquhar; I'm not sure of others. Sometimes it depended on what the various issues were.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Okay; no problem.

If we follow your budget from the time the air ambulance got divested and started, and through Ornge and all this, you were quite successful at being able to increase your budget a little bit year to year. In one particular instance, you were successful in getting a \$2.5-million increase to your annual budget based on the needs for salaries. Was the negotiation of your budget and your yearly agreement—was this something that you negotiated yourself, or—

Dr. Chris Mazza: No.

M^{me} France Gélinas: No?

Dr. Chris Mazza: No. The ministry has a fairly rigid process involved in that that involves a rolling five-year plan. Budgets would be built by finance beginning pretty much in the fall leading up to presentations to the ministry.

In the beginning, the budgets were always brought forward, but there was a consumer pricing index-based increase or an escalator that was in the original performance agreement. Thereafter, it became a year-by-year.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Did you have any dealings yourself with the ministry trying to get resources for Ornge?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Of course, when budgets were looking even worse and were difficult, then it would always—not with the emergency health services branch. In one particular occasion—and I only really remember the one—trying to convince the ministry that the HST was a substantive impact on us because of our aviation exposure and was there a way for us to deal with that since it was sort of a, "Here's the funding envelope but we're going to take it back with the other hand." That's the extent of it.

I suppose the only other time I was involved was with the critical care land transport system, but that wasn't about funding; that was just about a system.

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M^{me} France Gélinas: And did the ministry refuse to co-operate with Ornge, or what happened?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Regarding what, ma'am?

M^{me} France Gélinas: That particular example.

Dr. Chris Mazza: The HST?

M^{me} France Gélinas: Well, sure. With the HST, how did that settle?

Dr. Chris Mazza: It didn't.

M^{me} France Gélinas: You had to pay, just like everybody else?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Yes, there was no—yes.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Do you remember, in your relationship with the ministry, either asking for permission or asking for resources? How did that go in general?

Dr. Chris Mazza: I think the emergency health services branch always worked to its best ability, in my opinion, to try to get us what we needed, but the reality was, there really weren't any resources. Resources were extremely constrained, so usually that didn't meet with any success, or not much.

M^{me} France Gélinas: If we look at it the other way around, if the emergency health services branch came to Ornge to gain access to program services data, would they have had difficulty getting this?

Dr. Chris Mazza: No, not that I'm aware of. We would have provided whatever they asked for.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Did they ever come to you requesting information, or was it always to Mr. Lepine or Ms. Renzella?

Dr. Chris Mazza: No, I don't recall them coming to me. I think in the very beginning, Malcolm and others would work through me, but I would inevitably be directing them to the executives, so that just became how that went on. They didn't come to me.

M^{me} France Gélinas: When you started putting forward—we'll talk about Ornge Peel as the first for-profit that was set up. Did the government ever follow this process? Did they ever ask for a golden chair or anything like this as you developed the for-profit?

Dr. Chris Mazza: No.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Would they have had an opportunity to ask?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Sure; they had an opportunity to ask whatever they wanted.

M^{me} France Gélinas: But they never came forward?

Dr. Chris Mazza: No.

M^{me} France Gélinas: I realize you're guessing, but how do you figure it would have been received if the government wanted a seat on the board of your for-profit company?

Dr. Chris Mazza: I don't know that I have an answer to that. It's hypothetical. I'm not sure how my board would respond.

M^{me} France Gélinas: No? It was never discussed?

Dr. Chris Mazza: No, it was never brought up as an issue that anybody was interested in, so that's why I don't really have an opinion on it. For me to form an opinion here, right now, I think is not appropriate.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Fair enough.

It's hard for me to understand. You're the CEO of Ornge. Your main funder is the Ministry of Health. You decide to go with what I will call this "blast" briefing in January 2011, and yet yourself, as the CEO, don't attend. You send counsel; you send the board chair. I would absolutely see the board chair there. How come the CEO did not attend?

Dr. Chris Mazza: The only answer I have is it was determined by the chairman that he wanted to lead the interaction, and Mr. Lepine was there for operational support and counsel. I don't know.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Does it sound like your board was taking away some of your power? As a CEO, you should be the one representing your agency, especially to your main funder.

Dr. Chris Mazza: Well, I suppose, ma'am, this is something that I've been painted with, as if I wanted power. That's actually not who I am. I was never concerned about my board taking—the board, the chairman; I just refer to it as "my" as you were saying that. You were saying that the board was very close to me on everything. I would bounce ideas off the chairman consistently and constantly, and others.

Another good example of not being concerned about my—you used the word—"power" being eroded was that the chairman of the finance committee interacted directly and often with the CFO. I was not present at that either, frequently. It wasn't a concern for me, either.

I understand your point, but I did not feel eroded and I did not feel challenged. I felt that the chairman had the best interests of Ornge at heart, and so did I. I felt that Mr. Lepine also had the best interests of Ornge at heart.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Then why would you send a lawyer to talk to the government?

Dr. Chris Mazza: This was purely educational. It was to explain the structure, to explain the issues—I learned a long time ago that probably the brightest physicist on the planet can explain what a black hole is to my 13-year-old. I can't. Sending counsel in: Since they knew the situation so well—the structure, the issues, questions that might come up—they would be the best ones to explain it in a very in-depth manner. It was in an effort to provide as much and as much appropriate information as could possibly be provided.

M^{me} France Gélinas: It didn't worry you that here you were, the CEO of what was becoming a more and more complex organization—certainly, the corporate structure is very complex. I still don't fully understand some of it, and I've been dealing with this file for it seems like a very long time. Here you are, the CEO of this organization that has this complex corporate structure, and there are people who understand the structure better than the CEO.

Dr. Chris Mazza: There are people in the organization who understood a lot of things better than the CEO. It was the nexus of medicine and aviation, and I understood medicine very well and I had a reasonable background in understanding business, but I would never put myself as an expert in strategic finance. I didn't understand accounting as well as the accountants did. I certainly didn't understand law or legal issues as well as the lawyers did. Importantly, I didn't understand operational aviation specifics the way that the aviators did. So I relied on a team of experts, and I saw my job principally as trying to lead that team, inspire that team, encourage that team and move us towards the goal that we saw, which was improving the system and improving the benefit to Ontario.

M^{me} France G elinas: Had things turned out differently, do you figure you would have drawn the line at some point and said, "This is too complex for nothing. What we want to do is provide good medical transport, try to generate some profit, and what we've got going here is way too complex for nothing"? If a reasonable person spending quite a bit of time cannot understand what's going on, why is it so complex?

Dr. Chris Mazza: So the question is?

M^{me} France G elinas: Would you have drawn the line at some point or would you have continued?

Dr. Chris Mazza: I think my vision was and the ideas that the board believed in were that we would be successful in generating revenue globally, bringing that back and improving the systems and services in Ontario. That was what we believed. If that was not panning out, we wouldn't have continued down that path.

It's kind of a roundabout way of answering you.

M^{me} France G elinas: Good enough. Jagmeet.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Thank you. In retrospect now—hindsight's 20/20—looking back, in Ornge, what are some of the key things you recognize now that could have been fixed or could have been improved?

Dr. Chris Mazza: With Ornge or with—

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: With all of it, yes.

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Dr. Chris Mazza: I think, in hindsight, I would be much more focused on ensuring that I had a written set of statements, that there were no concerns, no questions and no issues. What I mean by that is that in briefings etc. I would probably demand in my future that I see somebody signing off on that and saying, "I agree that I understand," and not just depend on words. I think that's probably number one.

I think number two is that I'm aware that some of the executives felt that we moved too fast. I can only say that if any of them had told me that they couldn't cope or that they were unable to perform their duties to the best of their ability then I would have tried to find a way to slow down, but nobody told me that. I was driven by a focus on people who weren't getting the service that they needed because we didn't have a system that could meet all of their needs. I was driven by the numbers of what we had seen in the gap and what we believed was a gap

in service. I was very focused on that. If I had to say, I wish that I could have seen more clearly, perhaps, that even though they weren't telling me that they were overwhelmed, that they perhaps were—

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Who do you mean by "they"?

Dr. Chris Mazza: The executives.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Okay.

Dr. Chris Mazza: Even if they weren't telling me—because they never told me that they couldn't do more or that we were moving too fast—I wish I could have seen it. I wish I could have perceived that and slowed things down. I regret that.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): We'll now move to the government for your last 16 minutes. Go ahead, Mr. Zimmer.

Mr. David Zimmer: Thank you, Chair. Very briefly, I just want to finish up on a question about Mr. Blum. I listened to your testimony. You talked about—that you genuinely wanted to help and were trying to help Mr. Blum with his issues that he was dealing with. Then, eventually the relationship deteriorated, because you did earlier, in answer to my questions, say that eventually Mr. Blum was fired. What caused your attitude to change from one of "I want to help you, Mr. Blum," to "I'm sorry, we've got to fire you"?

Dr. Chris Mazza: No, the timing is wrong. None of us really understood the depth of the problem. We didn't understand that the issue was as grave. We understood that there were a lot of personal challenges—a lot—but we didn't understand the substance issue at all at the time. There was some productivity challenges. We thought that we could work, in a mediated process, to try to change workload, to alter workload and to move forward, and we did all those things but it wasn't helping. HR tried a number of ways of encouraging or helping. As I said, I was under a fair bit of pressure from the executives, who were increasingly frustrated, and the board. So, we then moved to Mr. Blum's moving on.

The issue around me wanting to continue to help is: I did. I tried to stay in touch. I tried to stay supportive to the best of my ability, and that included trying to help, as Mr. Klees described, pay for what I thought were legitimate pharmaceuticals at a pharmacy. I even had the cheque brought to the pharmacy and given to the pharmacist so that it was appropriately utilized.

Mr. David Zimmer: What motivated you to continue with your efforts to try and help?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Because I care about people, and I was sad that—I said that we didn't know the issues were as deep as they were, but it became clear in his departure that those issues were extremely deep. They concerned me greatly, and I saw another human being in trouble. My tendency is and has always been to try to reach out, to try to help.

Mr. David Zimmer: Mr. Blum gave some evidence here before the committee recently. In his opening remarks, he complimented you. He said, "Dr. Mazza had the necessary personality to drive the breakthrough of inertia that the air ambulance"—the old air ambulance

system—“program found itself in at that time.” That was his position a few weeks ago here.

Yet Mr. Blum’s position in a story that appeared February 7, 2012, in the Toronto Star—reporter Kevin Donovan quotes Mr. Blum as saying this about you, sort of the extreme opposite: that he saw you use “public money ... for private gain” and called you a “monster.”

Can you offer any insight into what was going on in Mr. Blum’s mind here?

Dr. Chris Mazza: No, sir. I was deeply hurt by what was written. I was deeply injured and surprised. I was not aware. I thought I had helped him. I thought I had done the best I could to help him when even my human resources vice-president told me to stop trying to help.

Mr. David Zimmer: Thank you. My last question is, looking back on this whole exercise, there are probably lots of things that you would do differently, but what do you think is the single most important or significant thing that you would do differently if you could wind the clock back?

Dr. Chris Mazza: I think that I would be more aware of the difficulties of institutional history within government and, as I said to Mr. Singh, I would ensure that individuals gave more than their verbal and tacit approval or their lack of concern.

Mr. David Zimmer: Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Mr. McNeely.

Mr. Phil McNeely: Thank you, Dr. Mazza, for being here today.

I was a senior officer in my own company for about 35 years, so I’ve had some business perspective. I’m trying to think of what has happened here with that background. I had a legal firm that I consulted with and my board consulted with very often. I had a chief financial officer who was a chartered accountant, as I believe Ornge’s was as well. We made major decisions with the input of partners. I started as a sole practitioner, but I did have approximately 20 shareholders at the height, over 100 people, and we were quite successful over many years.

But I followed the rules and decisions that were taken with the advice of the shareholders, with the advice of the CFO and with the advice of the lawyers. In my case it was 18 or 20 shareholders. In your case it was really 13 million Ontarians.

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So you, with the help of your lawyers and the CFO and the board, I believe made decisions which were not fair to the people of Ontario who gave you their trust. You used property that was rented by Ornge to realize a profit that really went into a private company. You accepted payment from Augusta around the purchase of the helicopters. Those dollars ended up being in a private company.

I see that before the private company made profits, you were bonusing out your board. However it happened, you were the CEO. You were bonusing out significant dollars and taking a major salary, a salary which has been

described here I think by many witnesses as completely out of a realistic approach to salaries.

I’m just wondering, and I also wondered during this process: What were the corporate lawyers of Ornge doing? What was the CFO for Ornge doing? Where were you when the people of this province were not being represented by Ornge corporate lawyers, accountants and board members? That leadership should have come from you. Instead we find that significant—an over \$1-million salary; over approximately \$1 million in loans. These are huge dollars. Where were you when these decisions were made and where did you think the 13 million Ontarians—who was protecting them?

Mr. Roger Yachetti: Mr. Chairman, I would instruct Dr. Mazza to not answer that question. It is unintelligible, with the greatest of respect.

Mr. Phil McNeely: Well, it seems to be the direction it’s gone. If you don’t wish to answer that, that’s fine. I’ll proceed with another question.

Mr. Roger Yachetti: No, don’t give up so easily.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): If Dr. Mazza needs clarification, counsel—if you please, ask for clarification, Dr. Mazza.

Mr. Roger Yachetti: There are about 10 questions in what Mr. McNeely said. I don’t know which one he wants him to answer.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Please let Dr. Mazza respond.

Dr. Chris Mazza: I don’t know which question you want me to answer, sir.

Mr. Phil McNeely: Where was the CEO, yourself, when the taxpayers of Ontario were being not considered in the process?

Mr. Roger Yachetti: Excuse me for a moment. Excuse me, Mr. Chairman. One of the things you said, one of the premises you said in your lengthy dissertation was that his salary was over \$1 million. He has already testified under oath that his salary was \$500,000. It’s an incorrect premise, and there are a number of incorrect premises in the question.

I’m not trying to obfuscate here. I want this member to have his questions answered, but could he put them serially?

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): We’re just about done the day, so we’ll give Mr. McNeely a chance to get the questions a little more specific, then, please.

Mr. Phil McNeely: I do not believe that the people of Ontario were well represented by professionals in the corporation, by the board, and by the CEO, Dr. Mazza. Can you respond to that?

Dr. Chris Mazza: I poured my heart and soul and everything I had into building Ornge to be responsive and something good for the people of Ontario. It was my primary motivation. It continues to be. I understand you disagree with me on that, sir, but I did everything I knew to try to improve the system and to deliver better care and to do a better job and to save lives. I had tremendous motivation to do so.

Mr. Phil McNeely: Normally in private corporations, at least certainly my experience over 35 years, was that when you make profits you then can take them out. It appears that the profits were being taken out before there was any money other than taxpayers' money in this process. Can you respond to that?

Dr. Chris Mazza: I don't understand the question. I understand that the board of directors gave me a mandate, gave me a set of obligations, goals, deliverables. They set a salary; they paid that salary. There were any number of business initiatives that were going on and we were on the verge of moving forward with, so I don't know how to answer your question, sir. I've spoken to salary before. My salary was defined with third party compensation advisers. It was defined looking at data in an exhaustive approach. It was determined by the board of directors. I had no input into that. I accepted it.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): You have three minutes left, Mr. McNeely.

Mr. Phil McNeely: I'll just take one, then. We know that you were the CEO of Ornge and that you were a board member and shareholder for some of the for-profit entities. Would you agree that you had an obligation to act in the best interests of each company for which you were either a member of the management or a board member?

Dr. Chris Mazza: I am confused by the number of questions that just came out there. Again, I apologize. I'm exhausted.

I was not on the boards as a voting member other than one, OGMI. I did not have shares in anything other than OGMI, and that was a holding company. That was a determination that was also made by the board of directors with counsel and third party compensation advisers.

I'm not sure if I answered your question or not, sir.

Mr. Phil McNeely: I think I will leave it at that. I just end up with that when you're on for-profit and not-for-profit and you're wearing those different hats, that's a problem. But I will go now to—Ms. Sandals would like to have the last two minutes.

Mrs. Liz Sandals: Yes. Let me take a crack at this the other way around. You've testified many times over the course of the day that your primary motivator, your primary focus, was on serving the people of Ontario. I'm wondering, with everything that's happened, with everything that's come to light through the Auditor General's report, through the media, through the committee's hearings, with the benefit of hindsight, do you think you owe an apology to the people of Ontario?

Dr. Chris Mazza: Well, ma'am, I did the best that I could for the people of Ontario. I worked my absolute best. I poured my heart and soul into what I was doing. I did the best I could, and that was all I think anybody could ask.

Mrs. Liz Sandals: Thank you. We're done.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Thank you very much, and we're done this afternoon's proceedings. If the committee is interested in having you back at a future time, the clerk will contact you about that.

Mr. Roger Yachetti: Mr. Chairman, may I make a statement, please?

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): You may make a brief statement if you wish, yes.

Mr. Roger Yachetti: Much has been made of the Auditor General's report, and he's here with us. I don't mean to embarrass him, but I urge you to read the report of Alfred Apps in which he deals with the shoddiness, I'll call it—I don't know that he used that word—of the Auditor General's report. If the Auditor General's report is going to be used to somehow impugn Dr. Mazza, I ask that Mr. Apps's report be studied. It's 88 pages long—

Interjection.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Okay, that's fine. I'm not going to allow you to attack the Auditor General. Mr. Apps's report has been delivered to us and all committee members will have an opportunity to read Mr. Apps's report. I appreciate you making the comment.

Mr. Roger Yachetti: Just one other thing I want to say—

Mr. Frank Klees: We're talking about perjury first.

Mr. Roger Yachetti: There was a reference made by Mr. Klees to a note on page 10 of this document here, Investigations Concerning Air Ambulance and so on. It reads as follows: "Please note that Ornge's chief operating officer," not Dr. Mazza, "indicated that a 'method of counting patients was mandated by the CEO with the intention of demonstrating an increase in activity associated with the transition of air ambulance from the Ministry of Health to Ornge.' The result is that Ornge has transported an annual average of 8.9% fewer patients since 2006-07 than it previously reported." I won't read the rest of it, but somehow this was interpreted by Mr. Klees as a suggestion that Dr. Mazza asked someone to fudge the numbers.

Mr. Frank Klees: He did.

Mr. Roger Yachetti: There's no such thing in here, sir.

Mr. Frank Klees: There sure is. Read the rest of—

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): We're not going to go through the testimony place by—

Interjections.

Dr. Chris Mazza: May I just speak?

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Yes. Go ahead, Dr. Mazza.

Dr. Chris Mazza: The data inherent in this industry is difficult and challenging and the points of capture are difficult and challenging. I never knowingly, wilfully or otherwise asked anyone to change data for some kind of benefit. I have spent a career trying to figure out what the correct data is and how to capture it.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Thank you. If the committee is interested in having you back, you will hear from the clerk. Thank you very much for coming before the committee. It was a long day.

The committee is adjourned.

The committee adjourned at 1601.

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