

**Response to Questions from Economics and Industry Standing Committee –
Mr Nathan Summers, 15 May 2012 (Answers provided in black font).**

1. The Committee has received evidence that Mr John Storey, a local gyrocopter pilot, radioed a message about an approaching fire to you between 10:15am and 10:30am on the day of the race and asked you to relay that message to race organisers.
 - a. Do you recall the exact words of this message?
That there is a fire over the ridge and it would be at check point 2 in about 2 hours.
 - b. Did Mr Storey indicate where the fire was?
Yes. East side of the Ridge.
 - c. Was there urgency in Mr Storey's voice when he radioed the message?
Not that I could tell.
2. The Committee understands that after receiving Mr Storey's message, you landed at checkpoint two and passed it on.
 - a. How long was it between when Mr Storey radioed the message and when you landed between checkpoint two?
10 to 15 mins apx.
 - b. Who did you pass the message on to and how?
Verbally, to an event coordinator.
 - c. Was the helicopter still running when you passed on the message?
No.
 - d. Do you recall the exact words of the message you passed on?
That there is a fire over the ridge and it would be at check point 2 in about 2 hours.
3. Your police statement indicates that after passing on the message you filmed around checkpoint two for approximately 20 minutes, and then while flying to checkpoint three you saw smoke from the fire on the ridge.
 - a. Did you know if this was the fire that Mr Storey had referred to?
I assumed that it was.
4. Your police statement also indicates that when you landed at checkpoint three at around 11:00am, you spoke to RacingThePlanet staff and expressed your concerns about the fire.
 - a. Do you recall who you spoke to? Did you mention that the fire was on the ridge?
I cannot remember who I spoke to, but I did voice my concerns about the fire.

- b. How would you describe the level of urgency in this conversation, both from you and the RacingThePlanet staff?

I was concerned, but RTP staff did not seem too concerned.

5. You noted in your police statement that when you spoke to RacingThePlanet staff and expressed your concerns, you were informed that they had no communications but a satellite phone would arrive soon.

- a. Did it surprise you that they had no communications? Do you know when/if the satellite phone arrived?

I was surprised that they had no comms with other checkpoints yes. A sat phone turned up with an event coordinator when we were asked to get airborne.

- b. Did you have a satellite phone or other communications equipment with you?

Yes I had a sat phone.

- c. Did you offer to let RacingThePlanet staff use this phone or communications equipment? If yes, what was their response? If no, why not?

I did, but they had no contact numbers to ring.

- d. You also noted in your police statement that no one seemed too concerned at this stage. What gave you this impression?

The general high spirits and already some front runners coming through.

6. Why were you stationary at checkpoint three between 11:00am and 2:45pm?

- a. Was the helicopter supposed to be in use at any point during that time? If yes, why wasn't it?

No, we were waiting for the runners to come through from check point 2.

- b. Did you speak to any RacingThePlanet staff about the fires again during this time?

Cant remember.

- c. Did you speak to any of the media staff or competitors about the fires during this time?

Cant remember.

7. After you discovered the injured competitors on the ridge and attempted to land a number of times, you began relaying messages on UHF radio channel 10 to a checkpoint.

- a. Do you recall which checkpoint and who you spoke to?

I think it was a mobile checkpoint between 2 and 3. No I don't remember who it was.

- b. Was UHF channel 10 the channel RacingThePlanet had asked you to use? If not, why were you using a different channel? Is this the channel you would normally use in this area?

I think John Storey had told me to use Channel 10 UHF, when we had spoke earlier on VHF 126.7. Normally it would be on company channel 16 UHF.

Nathan Summers