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**Question Taken on Notice**

**Asked on 19 August 2020**

**Health, Communities, Disability Services and**

**Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee's public hearing**

**for its inquiry into the Queensland Government's health response to COVID-19**

**MR BERKMAN ASKED COMMISSIONER CARROLL, DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GOLLSCHEWSKI AND ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER CHELEPY**

**QUESTION:**

Have you heard of any of the practices (referred that footage was available) where Police officers have forcibly, whether by direction or force, pushed protestors into a space where they are confined and can't practicably maintain that physical distance. Obviously, what we know will increase the risk of transmissions. The question is are you aware of that happening. Have any steps been taken to prevent it happening again.

**ANSWER:**

The footage referred to in the question shows Brisbane City Councillor Jonathon Sri claiming that police used a practice known as 'kettling' when dealing with protestors at Kangaroo Point on 21 June 2020. The footage does not show the so called 'kettling' occurring, or protestors being forcibly dealt with by officers in any way. It merely shows Councillor Sri making the accusation of officers using this tactic.

The Queensland Police Service (QPS) does not practice 'kettling' as a means of crowd control. On the day in question, officers were dealing with an unauthorised public assembly in Main Street Kangaroo Point, when they directed several hundred protestors to leave the roadway they had blocked. The advised protestors were directed to the footpath and off the roadways, where they were able to move freely, north and south along both sides of Main Street and into Walmsley Street.

Any concerns around social distancing, however brief, were appropriately mitigated by using face masks and hand sanitiser supplied to the protestors by the organisers. The footage clearly shows protestors, including Councillor Sri moving about freely, and protestors wearing face masks.

The QPS is committed to keeping our community safe, and in supporting an individual's democratic right to protest, works collaboratively with protest organisers, wherever possible, to ensure these activities are conducted peacefully, lawfully, and safely. The QPS also asks protest organisers to consider the impact to community safety when conducting protest activity during the current health pandemic.

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