

WITNESS STATEMENT

(Criminal Procedure Rules, r27.2 Criminal Justice Act, S9 Magistrates Courts Act 1980 s5B)

Statement of: Stephen MASON

Occupation: Head of GDSP Contract East, Cadent Gas Limited

This statement (consisting of 9 pages) signed by me is true to the best of my knowledge and belief and I make it knowing that, if it is tendered in evidence, I shall be liable to prosecution if I have wilfully stated in it, anything which I know to be false, or do not believe to be true.

I understand that the material we have provided to the Police may be shared with the Public Inquiry investigating the Grenfell Tower Fire. We are willing for any material handed to the criminal investigation to be shared with the Public Inquiry.

Signed

Dated 3 October 2017

1. I, Stephen MASON, am employed by Cadent Gas Limited ("Cadent") and authorised to provide this voluntary statement on behalf of Cadent, whose registered office is Ashbrook Court, Prologis Park, Central Boulevard, Coventry, CV7 8PE. All information provided by me is on behalf of Cadent and is not provided by me as an individual in my own right. I make this statement in connection with work undertaken by or on Cadent's behalf at Grenfell Tower ("Tower") in the period preceding the tragic incident on 14 June 2017.
2. I will start by providing some background about Cadent; its funding; and the contractual arrangement it had in place in relation to the works performed at the Tower:
 - a. Prior to 1 October 2016, National Grid Gas pic owned and operated 4 of the 8 UK gas distribution networks. By an agreement dated 30 September 2016, all assets and liabilities relating to National Grid Gas pic's gas distribution business were transferred to a new company, National Grid Gas Distribution Limited. On 2 May 2017, National Grid Gas Distribution Limited changed its name to Cadent Gas Limited. Throughout this statement I will refer to all matters as if all actions and activities had been undertaken by Cadent.
 - b. Cadent is a gas transporter, which means that it owns and operates the pipes and associated apparatus which supply natural gas to commercial and domestic properties within the geographic footprint of its distribution networks. It does not own the gas; rather it is paid to transport gas on via gas suppliers such as Npower and British Gas, who in turn charge customer via a 'transportation charge' on customers' gas bills.
 - c. As the largest distributor of gas in the UK, Cadent owns 4 of the 8 regulated gas distribution networks. It owns and operates over 131,000 kilometres of lower-pressure gas distribution mains, serving 10.8 million homes and businesses (48 percent of the UK's homes, schools and businesses). The Company covers the East of England, North London, the North West and the West Midlands to ensure customers are connected to the gas they need for heating, cooking and to keep businesses running. Cadent manages its networks including connecting new customers and responding to reported gas escapes. It also manages the

National Gas Emergency Service number on behalf of all gas distribution networks.

- d. Cadent is a private limited company, as opposed to a public sector entity. It has a licence to transport gas in Great Britain and this is regulated by the Office of Gas and Electricity Markets ("Ofgem"). Ofgem both sets the regulatory framework and the level of the 'transportation charges' on customers' bills. Therefore, there was no need for Cadent to bid for the work as the work already formed part of its business and regulatory obligations. Nor, was it necessary for Cadent to set any level of pricing for payment for the work as this is also included in the regulatory obligations set out by Ofgem.
3. Cadent was aware that the Tower essentially comprised a high rise block of residential flats. The Tower originally had two supplies of gas. The first, a 10" steel service, supplied a communal heating and hot water system in the basement of the tower block. The second, a 4" steel service, supplied gas for cooking in residential flats on the 4th to the 23rd floors via 6 gas riser pipelines (vertical gas pipes) that were installed when the Tower was built. Our records do not stretch back this far but typically the services would be built into service ducts forming the core of the building at the time of construction, similar to lift shafts. Just over 70% of the flats had a live gas supply. Between October 2016 and June 2017 a third gas supply service and a replacement for one of the existing risers were installed in the Tower, together with associated works. The circumstances of the replacement are described below.
4. The gas risers in the Tower were subject to periodic inspections in line with Cadent engineering procedures (principally T/PM/LC/21). The most recent survey had been completed on the 30 September 2016. A small gas leak was identified on one of risers, riser 2, due to corrosion and as a result this riser was isolated (the gas supply it provided was cut off) in accordance with Cadent's procedures. This was completed on 1 October 2016 isolating the gas supply to all flats at the Tower supplied by riser 2. The flats affected were those flats with a number ending in a 2 i.e. 12, 22, 32 etc.). In total there were 20 such flats, of which 13 used a gas supply for cooking.
5. Cadent has a duty to connect customers whose premises are situated (horizontally) within 23 metres from a relevant gas main. Cadent also has a duty to maintain a gas connection until such a time as it is no longer required by the owner or occupier of the premises.
6. Following the isolation of riser 2, there were two options in respect of that element of the gas supply at the Tower. One option was to no longer supply gas for cooking to the building as a whole and compensate ('buy-out') all gas customers within the building for this. This compensation would enable customers to swap to electrical appliances for cooking purposes. This option was only considered viable if all consumers using gas within the Tower agreed to the change (not just those served by riser 2) and the owner/Tenants' Management Organisation ("TMO") agreed to it. Cadent's experience has been that it is very challenging and time consuming to obtain universal agreement and was also mindful that whilst this issue was being discussed the customers supplied by the isolated riser 2 would remain 'off gas'.
7. Throughout October and November, the potential for a buy-out was the subject of ongoing discussions with the Kensington and Chelsea Tenants' Management Organisation ("KCTMO") which manages the Tower. It was concluded in late November that a 'buy-out' was

unworkable as it was unlikely that the required agreement of all gas users in the Tower would be achieved as the majority of them still had a live gas supply.

8. Whilst the buy-out' option was being considered, the second option of a new riser replacement scheme (starting with riser 2) was being developed in parallel, to mitigate the potential failure of the 'buy-out' option and address the fact that one riser had already failed and the others would naturally deteriorate over time. The decision not to proceed with the 'buy out' was made on 17 November 2016.
9. The new replacement scheme involved designing and installing a new vertical gas pipe (riser) and new horizontal gas pipes (laterals). This would allow gas to be supplied from the street up to each of the residential floors of the Tower and into each of the residential properties that required it. Once inside the flat, that pipe would go to the location of the gas meter and terminate at an emergency handle used for cutting off the gas in that individual flat. This handle or Emergency Control Valve (ECV) is the end of the pipework which Cadent owns and operates. Beyond this handle is a meter installation, after which is the customer's own internal gas pipework and gas cooker.
10. As the new replacement scheme was 'construction work', it was to be undertaken in accordance with the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 (CDM). Under CDM, Cadent as the initiator of the works and the company paying for them was the 'Client'. CDM requires that Cadent as 'Client' appoint a Principal Designer to manage the design phase of the project and a Principal Contractor manage the construction phase of the works. Cadent appointed tRiIO to undertake both of these roles.
11. tRiIO is an unincorporated joint venture between Morrison Utility Services Limited and Skanska Construction UK Limited whom together undertake work for Cadent as tRiIO. It is a substantial undertaking and was awarded an 8 year contract on the 18th December 2012 for London and East of England networks which commenced on the 1st April 2013. As part of this agreement, tRiIO is required to work in accordance with a number of Cadent's policies, procedures and industry standards which included IGEN/G/5. This standard details best practice for the design, installation and maintenance of gas installations for multi-occupancy buildings, of which the Tower was one. tRiIO has exclusivity to undertake gas distribution construction work of this type for Cadent in London and East of England.
12. tRiIO, who was appointed to undertake works at the Tower on 1st October 2016, had responsibility for planning and managing the design and construction works of the replacement riser at the Tower. tRiIO had separate design and construction leads for the project and undertook all of the design works itself. The construction phase of the works was managed by a project manager, with the support of a site manager. Whilst the project manager was in overall control, the site manager was tRiIO's representative who was overseeing the works on site.
13. tRiIO sub-contracted parts of the construction work to the following contractors from its approved contractor register.
14. K&S Pipe Contractors LLP (K&S) was contracted to install and weld the new replacement riser (vertical pipe) and laterals (horizontal pipes) running into the individual flats. They were initially engaged in October 2016 and were part of the discussions that took place in respect of the proposed route for the new riser. By the time of the fire, K&S and their sub-contractors had completed the work they were contracted to undertake at Grenfell.

15. K&S subcontracted parts of its work to specialist contractors detailed below:
- a. London Ops Gas, a survey company run by Simon Boyle, was contracted to undertake survey work in connection with the replacement riser and laterals.
 - b. Holland Gas Engineers Ltd ("Holland Gas") was contracted to move the meters within the thirteen residential properties, where necessary. Holland Gas had completed its work at the Tower at the time of the incident.
16. tRiIO also engaged a number of other contractors directly, namely:
- a. Express Building Contractors Limited ("Express") assisted Holland and tRiIO fitters in running the internal pipework and were then engaged in April 2017 to box in the replacement riser and lateral pipework in the communal landings to the identified flats.

At the time of the fire, the ducting of the riser was complete up to the 22nd floor. Express had completed the ducting of the laterals on the 5th floor, and had fitted the batons for mounting the ducting for the laterals on floors 6 to 10. It was anticipated they would be working on site for a further 5-6 weeks at the time of the fire.
 - b. Globe Scaffolding Limited ("Globe") was contracted to install scaffolding on the 23rd floor and it did so on 12 and 13 June 2017. This was to allow safe access for the installation of ducting around the replacement riser up to the roof vent. At all other locations within the Tower ducting could be installed without scaffolding.
 - c. Cape Electrical & Mechanical Limited ("Cape") was contracted to move the lighting in the stairwells and communal areas where additional room was needed for the new lateral pipeworks and/or ducting. Cape was engaged to work in the Tower between January and March 2017.
 - d. Lab UK Limited ("Lab UK") was contracted by tRiIO to conduct an asbestos survey of the thirteen flats and adjoining communal areas at the Tower in October 2016 and a further survey in December 2016 following the completion of the design. Their work continued into May 2017.
17. The preferred method for the installation of a new riser, as per the Institution of Gas Engineers and Managers guidance document IGEM/G/5, was an external gas riser with laterals supplying gas to meters immediately on the inside of the external wall of each flat.
18. Any option for the installation of an external riser (generally Cadent's preferred option) was discounted following Simon Boyle's discussions held with KCTMO. This was because the Tower had recently undergone a major refurbishment which involved the installation of an entire new façade on the outer skin of the building. KCTMO was concerned about the effect of fixing an external riser on the aesthetics of the Tower's appearance and the warranty for the cladding.

19. The possibility of replacing the riser in its original location in the utility shaft was discounted due to insurmountable issues related to access. Simon Boygle also surveyed the option for a riser being located in the stairwell running up the centre of Grenfell Tower and this was the proposal that was subsequently surveyed, designed and installed.
20. As part of preparing a detailed design, surveys for the riser replacement works included:
 - a. A detailed survey carried out by Simon Boygle to enable the works to be designed and installed. This survey information together with numerous photographs taken from inside the Tower at a variety of floors (marked up with the proposed route) and drawings of the proposed new riser system route were passed to tRIIO's Design team.
 - b. Lab UK also undertook an initial asbestos survey in October and a further asbestos survey of the Tower on 6th and 7th December 2016. Access to nine of the sixteen flats whose supply had been isolated was obtained and Asbestos Insulation Board ("AIB") was identified over the door of the existing cupboard housing the gas meter installation. (For clarity, at this time we understood that 16 of the potentially affected 20 flats had an active gas supply; we subsequently discovered that it was 13. There may have been a recorded supply to the other 3 flats but they were not using gas for cooking.) The AIB contained Amosite and Chrysotile and the textured coating to the ceilings contained Chrysotile. They were reported to be in good condition and presented no significant risk if not disturbed. With the proposed pipework in the flats connecting the new meter position to the existing installation pipework, the AIB would need to be removed and if any fixing holes were to be drilled into the ceiling these would need to be drilled and sealed by a licensed contractor in accordance with the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012. Lab UK advised that either the route for the piping should be changed or the asbestos part of the meter cupboard should be removed and replaced.
21. The initial design was drawn up by tRIIO Design Team in November 2016 with the riser in the stairwell and laterals in the communal lift lobby to supply gas to the flats. This was subsequently updated in March 2017 to include ducting (boxing-in) of the riser in the stairwell. The materials and standards to be used are contained within the technical procedures (including IGEM/G/5) that were issued to tRIIO by Cadent as part of the contract agreement. The required materials are generally sourced via a combination of tRIIO's own sub-contractors and the Cadent stores. To be clear, whilst we will specify the standard of the required materials as we are the client, it is for our contractors or sub-contractors to source them correctly.
22. Work commenced in December 2016 to install the new riser system as per the design. tRIIO instructed K&S to commence work on site to install the riser and laterals system. This work commenced on 10 December.
23. The installation of the riser pipework was completed on 25 January 2017, with the pipe being pressure tested to provide assurance that the pipe installed was 'gas-tight', and following this the riser and laterals were subsequently commissioned. At this point gas was supplied to all floors on which there were current gas users (who had been off gas in the affected flats). There were no gas users on the 15th floor.

24. On 3 January 2017, a final survey was undertaken to confirm which flats were using gas prior to the fitting of lateral pipework. This commenced on 12 January 2017 and continued until 20 February 2017.
25. During the installation of the lateral pipes, Cape was asked to drop the lighting in the communal areas by approximately 70-75mm in order to allow the laterals to run at a high level. This work was carried out by a means of a conduit system. A similar process was used in the stairwell but as the stairwell was the single escape route, temporary emergency lighting was installed during the works and then removed upon completion. No new lighting or cabling was installed in the Tower as there was sufficient cable within the existing fittings to drop the lights by 70/75mm.
26. During the design and construction phases of the work, contractors faced access issues with a number of properties and where this occurred their gas supplies were connected at a later date. The access issues arose if occupants were absent or away when access was required. The network of gas pipes to all residential floors was completed and commissioned before the fire on the 14 June 2017.
27. tRIIO and its contractors undertook a range of inspections at the Tower. This included visual inspections of the welded riser and lateral welds being undertaken by an independent welding inspector. Magnetic particle inspections were completed on 10% of the welds. The new riser and laterals were also pressure tested prior to being commissioned. Visual inspections were also undertaken of the gas appliances impacted by the works by the Internal Works Engineers and internal soldered pipework by Supervisors from tRIIO and Holland Gas as per gas safety regulation requirements. Further, any pipework inside individual properties after the ECV that was impacted by the works was also pressured tested.
28. Health and safety inspections were completed by tRIIO, whilst the tRIIO Project Manager and Design Manager also toured the site.
29. tRIIO appointed inspectors who worked at the Tower had the following competencies:
- a. Pressure Testing
 - i. Utility SHEA (Gas), NCO (G) Service Layer, Safe Control of Operations EUSR, T/SP/P1 Specification for welding of steel pipe designed to operate at pressures not greater than 7 bar
 - ii. City & Guilds 'Conduct Specified Testing of Engineering Products or Assets (Servicelaying)' & Utilise 'Riser Team Leading'
 - b. Welding Inspector –BGAS Approvals Scheme – Magnetic Particle Inspector, Radiographer, Welding Inspector
 - c. Internal Works Inspections – CCN1 and MET1 plus Gas Safe Registration
30. The tRIIO Project Manager held SMSTS ("Site Management Safety Training Scheme") along with numerous industry qualifications and experience, whilst the tRIIO Design Manager held NEBOSH Construction qualifications plus numerous industry qualifications and other experience.
31. These inspections found minor findings related to the internal works including one occurrence of a lack of sleeving and two occurrences where electrical cross bonding were

not up to standard. There were two instances where existing cookers were missing chains and customers were advised of this. tRIIO should have the specific detail of these faults.

32. It was a tour of the site by the tRIIO Project Manager and tRIIO Design Manager in March 2017 that led to the revised design mentioned above in paragraph 21.
33. During the project, some works were undertaken beyond the ECV. These works involved repositioning of gas meters and extending the installation pipework back to the existing meter position to limit the extent of 'network' pipework within individual flats. During this work, there was an asbestos-related incident.
34. On 16 February, a gas engineer working on behalf of Holland Gas attended the Tower to reposition a gas meter in one of the flats and extend the installation pipework. He did not realise that there was asbestos within part of the existing meter cupboard and subsequently drilled through the board to install the new copper pipework. This incident was reported internally and to the Health and Safety Executive. A full investigation was undertaken, which included LAB UK attending site. They instructed remedial works to be undertaken to remove any residue asbestos fibres from within the property and this was done by T&S Environmental. This incident stopped work on site for approximately three weeks until matters were resolved and the KCTMO gave permission for the replacement works to continue. This also resulted in a complaint from the owner of the affected flat (number 12) which was on-going at the time of the fire.
35. Express Builders were asked by tRIIO to provide a quote for the ducting and were contracted to undertake the work. This commenced on 24 April 2017 and was carried out through May and June before the fire. There were no other sub-contractors on site at this stage except for Globe.
36. Globe erected scaffolding on the 23rd floor on 12 and 13 June 2017 to gain access to the top of the riser in the stairwell to extend the ducting to the ventilation grille at the top of the stairwell.
37. The installation of ducting around the new riser had not been fully completed at the time of the fire. The vertical riser in the stairwell had all been ducted from the bottom of the stairwell on floor 2 to the 22nd floor, leaving the 23rd floor to be completed. Only the 5th floor ducting on the laterals in the communal lift area had been completed and preparation work in terms of fitting batons to the walls and ceiling had commenced on floors 6 through to 10.
38. Given the nature of the works to be undertaken at the Tower, there were both onsite and offsite discussions and correspondence between the parties. Throughout the works, the main correspondence passing between Cadent, tRIIO and KCTMO involved the following:- Mary Ryan and Pat Kelly (Cadent), Charlie Saul and Anthony Cheney (KCTMO), and Harvey Smith and Martin Loveday (tRIIO).
39. On 4 October 2016 following a site visit, it was confirmed by e-mail that the work had been passed to tRIIO and that all correspondence with the residents of the Tower would be provided to the KCTMO in the first instance. Correspondence continued to pass between tRIIO and the KCTMO to provide updates in respect of the most appropriate route for the new riser alongside discussions in respect of the possibility of a 'buy out'.

40. This correspondence included the decision on 17 November 2016, not to proceed with the 'buy out' and agreement to run the riser in the stairwell and the laterals below rather than in the recently lowered ceilings in the communal lobbies.
41. Following the asbestos incident at Flat 12 of the Tower in February 2017 there was correspondence related to this incident, the 'boxing in' which was to be installed and the scaffolding access which was required to facilitate it. This included a complaint from KCTMO about the works and the speed of them. Latterly, discussions included Cadent to a greater degree mainly, about the pace of the work being undertake and the plan to proactively replace the other risers which would impact flats whose gas supplies had been unaffected by isolation of riser 2.
42. On 21 April 2017, the KCTMO forwarded a complaint received from the resident of Flat 156 in respect of the proposed route for the laterals as part of the proactive works. Following on from this KCTMO asked that all survey work in respect of the proactive works be stopped as a result of them receiving 'some serious complaints' regarding the proposal. Although when Cadent asked for details of these complaints, none was forthcoming. On 17 May 2017, a further complaint was received from Cllr Judith Blakeman on behalf of the residents related to the lack of consultation about the works and concerns arising from the earlier asbestos incident. To be clear, this was unrelated to the riser 2 replacement works but rather about a longer term future project to reorganise the gas supply within the Tower.
43. After the fire, KCTMO's solicitors, Devonshires, wrote to Cadent on the 26 June 2017 asserting that an independent fire assessor, Mr G Stokes, had prepared a report dated 30 January 2017, which identified 'defects' and asserting that the report had been sent to Cadent. However, the Devonshires' letter was the first we were aware of the report and we have no record of having received it as no copy of the report was provided with the letter or to date to my knowledge.
44. Cadent was deeply saddened by the terrible events of the 14 June 2017 and will continue to assist the police and the Public Inquiry with their investigations.