

IN THE GRENFELL TOWER INQUIRY

RULE 9 STATEMENT (GIVEN PURSUANT TO THE INQUIRY'S WRITTEN REQUEST FOR EVIDENCE DATED 13 DECEMBER 2019)

WITNESS STATEMENT OF MR RICHARD MARK BERTRAM

1. I, Mr Richard Mark Bertram, make this Rule 9 statement pursuant to the Grenfell Tower Inquiry's written request for evidence pursuant to Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 as set out in the Inquiry's letter to me dated 13 December 2019.
2. I confirm that in making this Rule 9 statement I rely on the written witness statement made by me to the Metropolitan Police Service dated 22 February 2018 and my supplemental statement dated 2 March 2018. In making this Rule 9 statement, I seek to supplement the evidence given in those statements. I also confirm that I consent to the previous witness statements I gave to the Metropolitan Police Service being disclosed to the Inquiry for use in evidence.
3. I respond in turn to each of the two specific questions put to me by the Inquiry's letter of 13 December 2019 under separate headings below.

DETAILS OF MY ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES AT MANSE MASTERDOR LIMITED ("MANSE MASTERDOR")

4. I have never been employed by or worked for Manse Masterdor Limited. As I understand it, Manse Masterdor Limited changed its name to Litchfield Investments Limited on or about 18 November 2014, shortly after which it entered into a form of Company Voluntary Arrangement, the terms of which I understand were agreed by the members and creditors of Manse Masterdor Limited on 18 December 2014. As I understand it, the CVA followed the sale of substantially the whole of the trading assets of Manse Masterdor Limited to Synseal Extrusions Limited.

5. My involvement with matters relevant to the Inquiry did not begin until I joined Masterdor Limited on 1 February 2016. As I understand it, Masterdor Limited was the company set up by Synseal Extrusions Limited to take the assets of Manse Masterdor Limited. I note that Masterdor Limited was incorporated on 23 October 2014 under the name Willoughby (878) Limited and subsequently changed its name to Masterdor Limited on or about 19 November 2014.
6. It therefore follows that by the time I joined Masterdor Limited, there was no company that went by the name Manse Masterdor Limited as Manse Masterdor Limited had already changed its name to Litchfield Investments Limited over 12 months previously and was no longer trading, being subject to a CVA. I understand that Litchfield Investments Limited has subsequently been dissolved following liquidation.
7. It therefore follows that in answer to the Inquiry's specific questions set out at item 1 of its letter dated 13 December 2019 that I have never had any roles or responsibilities at Manse Masterdor Limited.
8. Insofar as it may be that the Inquiry's request for further evidence from me as set out in the Inquiry's letter of 13 December 2019 is intended to also seek details of my role and responsibilities at Masterdor Limited, then I am happy to confirm these as set out below.

MY EMPLOYMENT WITH MASTERDOR LIMITED

9. As mentioned above, I joined Masterdor Limited on 1 February 2016 at which time Masterdor Limited was a subsidiary of Synseal Extrusions Limited. I was recruited as General Manager for Masterdor Limited with the general remit of getting the company into shape and with an overall brief to grow the business. My role essentially was to oversee a wide range of activities relevant to the running of the business and with a view to getting it to run more efficiently and to increase its profits. As I stated in my witness statement to the Metropolitan Police of 22 February 2018, this included initially reviewing the business and preparing a 100 day business plan and subsequently preparing a 3 year business plan. This included overseeing a growth in staff from 142 employees when I joined, to roughly 200 at the time I left in April 2018.

10. As I say, my role was essentially to oversee all aspects of the business. This included liaising with the Synseal board directors, namely David Leng (CEO), Lee Daveron (Financial Director) and Steve Musgrave (Manufacturing Director) and thereafter at site level, across all areas of Masterdor Limited's business through the relevant managers in each department. My liaison with Masterdor Limited's managers was generally speaking on a very high level basis having daily or weekly interface with them depending on the department but did not require me to get involved in the minutiae of what they were doing.
11. I participated in production meetings on an almost daily basis (again in an overseeing capacity) to make sure that the company was adhering to production and customer service requirements and to ensure that we were properly on course to comply with customer delivery dates in line with the build plan. Insofar as there may have been any problems or potential problems with any such operational matters, then my role was to ensure that these were appropriately addressed and dealt with.
12. In terms of responsibilities, this included reporting to Steve Musgrave who was the Group Manufacturing Director and David Leng, the Company's CEO. I had limited involvement in the marketing side of things which was principally dealt with through the Company's parent, Synseal Extrusions Limited.
13. One of my main responsibilities in the first 6 to 12 months of me joining Masterdor Limited was to oversee and drive through the introduction of the Company's retail portal which was an online trade sales portal for the Company's trade customers.
14. In the second twelve months of my employment, I was heavily engaged in securing and managing the Anglian Home Improvements contract which was a very significant contract for the Company and required a lot of my management time and focus.

DESCRIPTION OF ANY CHANGES TO THE MANUFACTURING PROCESS FOR SUREDOR FIREDOORS THAT WERE MADE IN THE PERIOD BETWEEN 14 JUNE 2017 AND APRIL 2018 AND REASONS FOR THOSE CHANGES

15. I cannot recall (and have not subsequently become aware of) there having been any changes made to the manufacturing of Suredor Firedoors between 14 June 2017 and April 2018 at

Masterdor Limited. To my knowledge, Masterdor Limited were manufacturing the doors in the same way that they had been manufactured and produced when Masterdor Limited was first set up. As I understand it, this would have been effectively using the same methods and processes that it had inherited from Manse Masterdor Limited when it acquired that company's assets.

16. What I can say from recollection and from working with the Inquiry, is that it became apparent from about late February 2008 onward that the type SG34 door had failed at Grenfell Tower. As I recall, Masterdor Limited (with the Inquiry's knowledge) started reviewing all its fire doors through late February, March and April. This process was led by Steve Musgrave. As matters developed, Deborah Kemp (Synseal's CEO who had replaced David Leng) started working with the Home Office in conjunction with the Inquiry for the purposes of reviewing the findings of the various reports produced in relation to the failings of the SG34 doors, which involved them reviewing the certification and manufacturing of those doors. Steve Musgrave started a review of all fire doors being produced by Masterdor Limited with the full support of Jim Duncan (who was the Technical Manager at the time) to understand the full range of certification and doors being manufactured. As I recall, Jim left the business (or alternatively retired) sometime during this period albeit I cannot now be specific as to when that was. Robin Harrison (who had previously worked in the quality and technical department at Synseal's Head Office) replaced Jim Duncan and latterly started working on this project with Steve Musgrave. This was a complex task and as I recall took place in February and March and was still ongoing when I left Masterdor Limited in April 2018.
17. I left Masterdor Limited in April 2018 at the time when the review into the certification and manufacturing of the SG34 and other fire doors was still in progress. As I recall, Steve Musgrave and the team started to review the initial findings from that review some time in April 2018 but this came at a time when I was working off my notice period and was therefore not an effective part of the business from a managerial perspective and so did not have any meaningful involvement in what was going on. My understanding was that based on the review's findings, Steve Musgrave and his team started to work with suppliers to propose and make changes to the design and manufacturing techniques for producing fire doors in line with a new testing programme.

18. In summary, however, and by way of direct response to the second question addressed to me in the Inquiry's letter of 13 December 2019, I am not aware of there having been any changes to the manufacturing process for Suredor Firedoors in the period in the period 14 June 2017 and April 2018.
19. I must stress that as I am no longer an employee of Masterdor Limited, I do not have any access to any of its documents or records and so the position I have described above is based on my recollection of events. I should state that the position I have described in relation to Manse Masterdor Limited and the dates of incorporation etc of Masterdor Limited is based partly on my own knowledge and also from information publicly available as held at Companies House.
20. Finally, I also wish to confirm for the record that I have never been a Statutory Director at Masterdor Limited.

STATEMENT OF TRUTH

I believe that the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

I confirm that I am willing for this statement to form part of the evidence before the Inquiry and for it to be published on the Inquiry's website.

Dated this 31st day of January 2020

Signed: Richard M. Bertram

Full Name: Mr Richard Mark Bertram