

WITNESS STATEMENT

Criminal Procedure Rules, r 27. 2; Criminal Justice Act 1967, s. 9; Magistrates' Courts Act 1980, s.5B

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Statement of: Philip Edwards

Age if under 18: o/18 (if over 18 insert 'over 18') Occupation: Operations Manger

This statement (consisting of 4 page(s) each 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.

Witness Signature:  Date: 4/4/18.

I am the Operations Manager for PDERS and I have been asked to respond to various questions raised by the police in connection with their investigation into the fire at Grenfell Tower on 16th June 2017

PDERS had a contract for 3½ years prior to the fire to maintain two lift units within Grenfell Tower.

PDERS had no involvement with Grenfell Tower prior to this and during the period of our contract our engineers attended routinely only to carry out maintenance and repairs to the lift units.

PDERS had no involvement in any management, refurbishment or building construction work at Grenfell Tower. As part of the refurbishment, we were invited to quote for some work of removing equipment in the basement of the Tower but in the event we were not contracted to do this work.

I provide below answers to questions raised by the police as follows

Please describe the lift system at Grenfell Tower (make/model/age)?

There were 2 passenger lifts installed by Apex lifts in 2006. They are Variable Frequency AC controlled lifts with TVLC controller that run at a speed 2.M/s with 26 stops. The lift capacities were 12 person 900Kg.

Was the type of lift at Grenfell Tower suitable for purpose? Was it/should it have been upgraded?

The lifts complied with the latest standards at that time of installation and were suitable for purpose. No refurbishments had been recommended Ongoing maintenance works to keep lifts running in good working order was carried out on a monthly basis. Only works completed outside of the contract during the period we had on contract was replacement of the lift car floor coverings which was replaced following the refurbishment of the building.

Who were you employed/contracted by and who was your point of contact?

Witness Signature: 

Signature Witnessed by Signature:

We were engaged by Kensington & Chelsea Tenants Management Organisation (KCTMO) and our was Patrick Barrett.

Did you encounter any issues with the contract at Grenfell Tower (non-payment/lack of communication)?

No

How often did PDERS attend Grenfell Tower and for what reasons?

The contract required us to attend on a monthly basis completing 12 visits per year as part of the maintenance contract. Other visits would be on an "as required" basis for attending to issues with call-backs to attend to issues with the lifts or carry out planned or unplanned repairs outside the normal maintenance regime

What was PDERS responsibility regarding Grenfell Tower?

Our responsibility was to carry out maintenance and attend to breakdowns on the two lifts in line with our fully comprehensive contract No ACG0128 which commenced on 03/02/2014

Did PDERS consider fire strategies (evacuation times, etc) when carrying out work at sites and was this up to date at Grenfell Tower?

No. We are not involved with Fire strategies and we were never approached by the customer to provide advice on anything concerning the lifts in connection with this We believe the lifts were not connected to any Building management system with the building to either to isolate the lifts in event of fire alarm activation or return to ground floor and remove from service.

Were PDERS involved in discussions surrounding fire safety?

No.

Did PDERS make any recommendations regarding Grenfell Tower and, if so, what was the

No.

Did the lift at Grenfell Tower have an automatic shut-off and, if so, how does this work?

No As far as we know the lifts were not connected to any fire system to shut down the lifts or return to ground floor in the event of fire alarm activation. If this was required we believe this would have been requested during the building refurbishment. There was no fireman's recall switch connected to these lifts which is operated by a switch installed at the street level entrance.

Witness Signature: 

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Such a switch when operated would bring the lifts to the ground floor and stop them from being used or they could be used by the fire brigade if the equipment was fitted with fire-fighting equipment. It is unusual for the equipment in this type of environment not to have some sort of system

Did you enter into any communication with the LFB, KCTMO or residents regarding Grenfell Tower?

There is no record of the company having done so

Did anyone broach the subject of fire safety with employees of PDERS?

No

Did you supply/affix/recommend and signage at Grenfell Tower regarding using the lifts during a fire?

No

Did PDERS consider residents mobility issues at Grenfell Tower?

No.

Does PDERS consider compliance with Building Regulations when carrying out this kind of work?

No. The lift was installed prior to our contract.

Please describe the lift shaft at Grenfell Tower (fire resisting/piston effect/pressurisation)?

The lift shafts are a concrete structure. All fire resistance, piston effect or pressurisation would have been considered at the time of construction,. We are not aware of any changes having been made.

Did PDERS encounter any vandalism of the lifts/lift equipment/mechanics and, if so, how?

No. The site was not one where vandalism was an issue.

Were the lifts at Grenfell Tower connected to the Building Management System. If so, how does this process work and where would any relevant data be stored?

No.

Witness Signature: 


Signature Witnessed by Signature:.....

I have been informed that both lift cars were found on the 10th floor. The doors to the right hand lift were fully open, whereas the left hand lift car doors were only slightly ajar. Please also explain this in your statement if you are able?

We are unable to explain this. There is no immediate explanation for this to occur in normal operation of the lifts.

I produce on behalf of the company the following documents requested by the police

- PDE/1 – H090 callout records 2014.
- PDE/2 – H090 callout records 2015.
- PDE/3 – H090 callout records 2016.
- PDE/4 – H090 callout records 2017.
- PDE/5 – H091 callout records 2014.
- PDE/6 – H091 callout records 2015.
- PDE/7 – H091 callout records 2016.
- PDE/8 – H091 callout records 2017.
- PDE/9 – H090 2017 service records
- PDE/10 – H091 2017 service records
- PDE/11 Maintenance contract

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