

IN A MATTER CONCERNING THE GRENFELL TOWER INQUIRY

WITNESS STATEMENT OF MICHAEL FALLIS-TAYLOR

1. I make this statement to the Grenfell Tower Inquiry in response to a written request for evidence dated 9 September 2019.
2. The request was originally made to Ms Sarah Dixon, the former Managing Director of the Express Lift Co and Subsidiaries division of Otis Ltd. I have been the Managing Director of that division since 15 July 2019 and, in light of this, it was considered more appropriate for me to provide a witness statement in response to the Inquiry's request.
3. As the Inquiry has acknowledged, Ms Dixon provided a written witness statement to the Metropolitan Police Service dated 23 October 2018 [Exhibit MFT/1:]. This covered a number of the issues raised by the Inquiry in its recent request. The Inquiry has requested that further and additional information be provided and I respond to those requests within this statement. The information contained in this statement and given in response to the Inquiry's questions has been obtained for me by a number of different individuals that have worked for the business at either this time or previously. I do not have first-hand, direct knowledge of all of the answers given in this statement and I have relied on facts and matters both told to me and recorded previously to compile this statement. I confirm, however, that the facts contained in this statement are accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief.
4. Subject to the caveats mentioned above, I rely on and re-affirm those facts and matters contained in the statement dated 23 October 2018. However, for the sake of clarity, I will not refer specifically to the facts and matters set out within that statement and I make a Rule 9 Statement to the Inquiry on this basis.

5. In an effort to ensure that this statement is as helpful as possible to the Inquiry, I repeat below the questions contained in the request for information dated 9 September 2019, before responding to them. Where the question refers to Otis and relates to operational matters I refer within my responses instead to PDERS. This is because PDERS, which sits within the Express Lift Co and Subsidiaries division, is the trading entity of Otis Ltd involved with the Grenfell Tower lifts.

Question 1: Please set out the relationship between Otis and PDERS, your role within the organisation and the field of its activities.

6. Otis Ltd specialises in the design, manufacture, repair and maintenance of lifts, elevators and other associated equipment. It is the UK division of the Otis Group, a worldwide leader in the design, manufacture and installation of lifts and elevators. PDERS is an unincorporated trading division of Otis Ltd and specialises specifically in the repair, maintenance and servicing of lifts and other associated equipment. Previously, PDERS was a limited company in its own right but its trade, assets and liabilities were transferred to Otis Ltd in January 2000.
7. PDERS is independently run on a day to day basis by its own management team that enjoys a large amount of autonomy from the management team of Otis Ltd. This arrangement is set out and codified in the Otis UK Group approval policies and procedures.
8. As mentioned above, I have been the Managing Director of PDERS and the wider Express Lift Co and Subsidiaries division of Otis Ltd since 15 July 2019.

Question 2: Describe the nature and time frame of Otis' involvement with the lifts at Grenfell Tower.

9. PDERS has been the Planned Preventative Maintenance provider for lifts for the Kensington and Chelsea Tenant Management Organisation ("KCTMO") since 3 February 2014, covering routine servicing, call-outs and repairs in respect of all lifts and associated equipment managed by KCTMO.

Question 3: How did OTIS come to be engaged as the lift maintenance contractor at Grenfell Tower (including in respect of any tendering exercise)?

10. PDERS came to be engaged as the lift maintenance contractor at Grenfell Tower due to its successful tender bid. Initially, PDERS completed a Pre Qualification Questionnaire in 2011 and a tender return in January 2012. For reasons of which I am not aware, the original tender process stopped after the submission of the tender return and new tender documents were issued in January 2013. On 11 January 2013, two PDERS employees (David Petchey and Adrian Rowland) attended a tender information meeting with Ricki Sams, John Parsons and Jenny Jackson of the KCTMO as well as Margaret Pinder of Harlow Associates Limited and Richard Carre of Pellings LLP. PDERS submitted new quality question responses and prices in March 2013 and it was awarded the Preventative Planned Maintenance and Repair Contract (the “Contract”) on 13 November 2013. A copy of the tender documentation and correspondence that we have managed to trace is attached at Exhibit MFT/2: . As mentioned above, the Contract commenced on 3 February 2014.

Question 4: Identify the party/parties with whom Otis entered into relationships in order to carry out its role, describing the purpose of those relationships. Please also set out which organisations and individuals Otis staff regularly had contact with in respect of the maintenance activities.

11. PDERS contracted with Unique Environmental Services Limited to carry out a full clean down of both lift shafts, both pits, the top of both lift cars and the motor room in February 2017. PDERS also contracted with TOP Services for the replacement of the lift car floor coverings.
12. PDERS’ primary and regular point of contact with KCTMO was the Contract Manager who was most recently Patrick Barrett.

Question 5: Please exhibit the final version of the contract pursuant to which Otis was engaged.

13. A copy of the Contract is at Exhibit MFT/3: . Unfortunately, the only copy of the Contract Articles of Agreement and Conditions that we have managed to locate is not a full version and only runs to 18 of 44 pages. While this document refers to Otis Ltd’s correct company number (147366), it incorrectly names it as “PDERS Lifts

Limited” A copy of the Service Information and Preambles for the Contract is attached as Exhibit MFT/4: .

Question 6: Outline the specifications of the lifts at Grenfell Tower.

14. There were two lifts at Grenfell Tower and these were Apex lifts of type Traction 2.0 M/S VVVF with TVLC controller that run at a speed of 2.M/s with 26 stops. Their load capacity was 12 persons/900KG and their manufacture date was 14/05/06.

Question 7: Please set out or exhibit a schedule of Otis engineers or sub-contractors who carried out inspection/maintenance/service visits to Grenfell Tower, including any supervisors who checked that work and the periods during which they were involved with the lifts at Grenfell Tower (with specific dates where available).

15. Attached to this statement as Exhibit MFT/5: . is a schedule of employees, workers and sub-contractors that carried out inspection/maintenance/service visits at Grenfell Tower. PDERS’ Field Management Team (Phillip Edwards, Len Stirling, Steve Thomas and David Watkins) carried out periodic checks of the work carried out by the field engineers, and this would occur approximately every 4 months. The dates on which the different engineers carried out their service and repair visits are recorded on the Service Visit Reports and Repair Visit Reports for 2014-2017, which are attached as Exhibits MFT/6: ., MFT/7: ., MFT/8: . and MFT/9: .

Question 8: What documentation and/or verbal handover concerning the lifts at Grenfell Tower (including their construction/specifications/fire safety features/fire maintenance needs) was Otis provided with by KCTMO or other organisations? Please confirm whether an Operation & Maintenance Manual was provided to Otis (if so, please exhibit it).

16. I believe that PDERS would have been provided a copy of the Service Information and Preambles by KCTMO as part of the tender process, which includes at Section 3 a 20-page Schedule of Lift Installations. This Schedule provides basic details of the lifts at Grenfell Tower along the lines mentioned above, and identifies them as Lift Numbers “H090” and “H091”. Copies of the Reports of Thorough Examination that had been

completed by engineers contracted presumably by KCTMO's insurers, Bureau Veritas UK Ltd, were also provided to PDERS by KCTMO's Deputy Contract Manager/Contract Administrator, Maria Ares. A copy of these Reports is attached as Exhibit MFT/10: : . Wiring Diagrams, originally prepared by the lift installers/manufacturers, were also kept in the motor room and were available to PDERS' engineers for reference purposes. I am not aware of any other documentation, or a verbal handover, having been provided to PDERS by KCTMO. I am not aware of any Operation and Maintenance Manual having been provided to PDERS.

Questions 9: Was Otis aware of any requirement for "firefighting lifts" to be installed in Grenfell Tower pursuant to the Building Regulations and associated guidance/lifts guidance? Did Otis consider that the lifts at Grenfell Tower met those requirements? If not, why not?

17. PDERS was not contracted to provide advice or recommendations in respect of fire safety at Grenfell Tower or the fire safety suitability of the lifts. The Contract related to the service, maintenance and repair of the lifts that were installed prior to PDERS' involvement with Grenfell Tower. PDERS was never asked to, nor did it, provide advice or recommendations in relation to fire strategy and safety at Grenfell Tower or specifically in relation to whether the lifts installed were "firefighting lifts".
18. PDERS is not aware of *exactly* what the Inquiry means when it uses the term "fire fighting lifts".
19. That said, I am aware that the lifts installed at Grenfell Tower were not, in the opinion of PDERS and its engineers, what we would consider to be firefighting lifts as they did not possess many of the characteristics one would expect a firefighting lift to have, such as waterproofing of electrical cables and connections and three-way communications between the lobby the car and the motor room.
20. PDERS is aware of the regulations relating to the requirement for Firefighting Lifts included within BS8899 and EN81-72 and the application of this requirement. Responsibility for application of these standards and meeting Building Regulations rests with the Duty Holder.

ensure that they could be activated in the manner anticipated i.e. by moving to the chosen floor before the doors would open slowly when the correct buttons were pushed. The engineer completed this check for both lifts. This was not specifically itemised on the relevant checklist because not all lifts serviced by PDERS have a Fire Control Switch. Some are connected to a Building Management System and operate in a different manner. The engineers attending Grenfell Tower were trained and instructed to and did undertake this test.

Question 14: In respect of the fire control subsystem including Switches, please set out:

a) The location of any switches at Grenfell Tower (during the currency of Otis' contract);

26. The operational Fire Control Switch (the "Switch") was located between lifts HO90 and HO91 on the ground floor of Grenfell Tower, positioned above head height. I understand that there was also a decommissioned and non-operational fire control switch on the third floor, again located in between the two lifts and above head height. I understand from colleagues that this was thought to have been decommissioned in 2014 when the ground floor, first floor and second floor of Grenfell Tower were refurbished from offices to residential flats. PDERS did not decommission the switch on the third floor.

b) Whether and how these Switches were connected to the lifts;

27. The Switch was connected to the lifts through the electrical system to the CPU that controls electrical and operational elements of the lifts.

c) What, if any, instructions were provided for its use;

28. I understand that there was a plate/sign around the Switch that indicated it could be operated by a firefighter by inserting a drop key and activating the Switch. I believe that this was the extent of the written instructions available for the Switch, although the Switch was to be operated by trained firefighters who would presumably have knowledge of the proper operation of the Switch.

d) If any Switches came to be disconnected from the lifts, was there any signage in place to explain this;

29. I do not understand there to have been any signage to indicate that the decommissioned switch on the third floor had been disconnected from the lifts. I understand that PDERS has no record of the operational Switch on the ground floor ever having been disconnected.

e) The intended functionality of the Switch(es) where there are two lifts in operation;

30. The lifts at Grenfell tower were “Duplex” which means that the Switch operated both lifts in the same manner at the same time.
31. I am informed that when the Switch was operated (by the correct drop key being inserted into it and turned), both lifts descended to the ground floor without stopping and the doors automatically opened when at ground level. To use the lifts after this, the Fire Service had to select a floor by pushing the button and then press the door close button. The lift would then stop at the selected floor and the fire service then had to press the door open button. The door would start to open slowly so the fire service could assess if it was safe for the door to open fully. If it were not, the fire service could close the doors by pressing the door close button and move to a different floor.

f) The precise method of testing (including if and what drop key was used, provide a picture of key used if available), its frequency/dates and results;

32. The method of testing is outlined above, and was conducted on a monthly basis each time a scheduled maintenance visit occurred. A picture of the type of drop key (the Express Drop Key) used by PDERS engineers to test the Switch is at Exhibit MFT/12: and the record of the maintenance visits can be seen at Exhibits MFT/6: and MFT/7:

g) What if any maintenance (apart from inspection/testing) was undertaken on the Switches;

33. Having reviewed the relevant service visit reports, I am not aware of any maintenance being carried out on the Switch over and above the scheduled testing regime. I understand that the Switch was fully functional on all scheduled maintenance visits.

h) If Otis engineers tested the fire control subsystem by operating it with a drop key or similar, were there any reports of difficulties in inserting or turning the key? If so, please provide details of this event and what remedial action was taken;

34. No.

i) Describe the last maintenance visit and the last reactive visit to Grenfell Tower by an Otis engineer/member of staff prior to 14 June 2017, in particular any testing of the fire control subsystem and its results.

35. Mr Mark Wallis, who joined PDERS as an experienced lift maintenance engineer in April 2017, attended Grenfell Tower for a repair call-out on 7 June 2017. This did not relate to the Switch or fire control subsystem. Previously to this, Mr Wallis had undertaken a routine monthly maintenance visit on 9 May 2017. During this visit, he would have checked the Switch in the manner outlined above. At this time the fire control system and Switch was functioning properly and in working condition.

Question 15: How were faults with the lifts reported to Otis, logged, dealt with and the results recorded?

36. The fault would first be reported to the KCTMO by a resident of Grenfell Tower. The fault would be logged by the KCTMO before being sent to PDERS Helpdesk by email and telephone with a unique reference number. The relevant PDERS engineer was then sent a callout message, after which the engineer would attend Grenfell Tower. If the fault involved an entrapment in a lift then the engineer would also be contacted by telephone and instructed to attend. Upon arrival, the engineer would follow the method statement for safe access and egress and then check the lift was safe at all floors, go to the motor room to inspect the lift controller and begin the fault finding exercise. The engineer would then fix the fault (where possible) and any shutdown that was necessary would be notified to the Field Manager. The engineer would then complete an entry in the log card kept on site before leaving.

37. These repair call-outs (as opposed to regular service visits) were also recorded on the relevant engineer's PDA, and the information would feed into a Repair Visit Report via the DGA system.
38. If the engineer was unable to return a lift to normal service following a callout, they would advise PDERS' Field Manager and record on the Repair Visit Report that the lift remained shut down and further action was required. This would be notified to KCTMO by way of a daily report, and KCTMO also had access to all the individual Repair Visit Reports and Service Visit Reports.

Question 16: Please summarise the prevailing nature of the faults/malfunctions/complaints reported in respect of the Lifts and how they were dealt with. Were there any reports about the fire control subsystem not working?

39. Over the two years prior to June 2017, I am informed that there had been periodic problems with the lifts' landing doors. This was most likely as a result of the dust and debris building up around the lifts due to the building works going on at Grenfell Tower. On a number of occasions, landing door shoes and rollers were replaced during maintenance visits. In February 2017, the lifts were subject to a full clean down by specialist contractors.
40. So far as I am aware, during PDERS' tenure there were never any reports about the fire control subsystem or the Switch not working.

Question 17: Was Otis aware of any fire safety measures in respect of the lift well (e.g. pressurisation to avoid smoke ingress in the event of a fire) or the lift cabin (e.g. ventilation/smoke extraction) and, if so, what role did Otis have in inspecting/maintaining such systems?

41. Other than the Switch, I understand that the lifts may also have had "smoke fillets" fitted to the doors as part of their original design to help prevent the ingress of smoke to the lift cabin. Engineers servicing the lifts would check that these remained correctly fitted, to ensure that the lift doors closed properly.

Question 18: What, if any, information did Otis have about the fire rating of the lift doors and what, if any, maintenance/inspection activities were undertaken in this respect.

42. The Fire Rating Certificate would have been issued to the building owner when the equipment was installed and PDERS would not expect to be provided with a copy. The actual fire rating of the doors would not make any difference to the maintenance procedures.

Question 19: Was Otis aware of any link between the Building Management System/fire alarm system and the lifts, such as to prompt their return to the ground floor in the event of a fire alarm activation?

43. I do not believe the lifts at Grenfell Tower were connected to a Building Management System/fire alarm system such as to prompt their return to the ground floor in the event of a fire alarm activation.

Question 20: In the event of Otis noticing any non-compliance with the Building Regulations and associated guidance/lifts guidance applicable to lifts in high rise dwelling houses, did Otis consider it its responsibility pursuant to the maintenance contract with KCTMO (or otherwise) to alert KCTMO and/or recommend remedial works to secure compliance?

44. PDERS would consider it a responsibility to alert KCTMO should it identify any issues which were dangerous to the lifts themselves. However, PDERS would not have any sight of the fire strategy for the building.

Question 21: Did Otis have any concerns about the operations, suitability, safety and/or compliance with Building Regulations and associated guidance/lifts guidance of the lifts at Grenfell Tower and, if so, how and with whom were concerns raised?

45. PDERS did not have any such concerns.

The contents of this statement are true to the best of my knowledge and belief. I am content for this statement to form part of the evidence before the Inquiry and to be published on the Inquiry's website.

Signed: _____ 

Dated: _____ 11/18/2019