

THE GRENFELL TOWER PUBLIC INQUIRY

OPENING STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF WHIRLPOOL CORPORATION FOR PHASE 1 ORAL HEARINGS COMMENCING ON 4 JUNE 2018

Introduction

1. As the Public Inquiry moves into this next important phase of the proceedings, and we approach the first anniversary, Whirlpool and its legal team would like to join with others to reiterate their sincere condolences to all those affected by the unprecedented and tragic Grenfell Tower fire, in particular of course, the Bereaved, the Survivors, and the Residents of Grenfell Tower and the surrounding area.
2. Whirlpool makes this short opening statement further to its earlier written submissions dated 4 December 2017. Whirlpool considers that it would be premature to make any substantive submissions at this stage pending the giving of evidence to the Public Inquiry and the completion of the further investigations into the cause and origin of the fire that have been recommended by the Public Inquiry experts and to which we refer briefly below.
3. Whirlpool remains committed to assisting the Public Inquiry in any way it can.

Report of Professor Nic Daied

4. Whirlpool makes the following comments on the report of Professor Niamh Nic Daied although she has yet to be called as a witness, and so her evidence is not yet before the Public Inquiry.
5. Whirlpool has welcomed the input of the Public Inquiry's experts, in particular, the Provisional Report of Professor Nic Daied dated 4 April 2018 of the investigation into the origin and cause determination of the fire at Grenfell Tower, which has been most instructive.
6. Having conducted her review, Professor Nic Daied concludes at paragraph 4.6 of her Report that:

“There is insufficient information and analysis undertaken at this time to be able to determine the cause of the fire that occurred at Grenfell Tower on the 14th June 2017. As a consequence, the cause of the fire remains undetermined at this point”.

7. It is clear from the report of Professor Nic Daied that there is very considerable further investigation to be undertaken, as she notes at paragraphs 3.7, 7.6, 7.6.43 and 7.7 of her Report. In particular:
 - 7.1 She notes that the determination of the cause of a fire requires to be substantiated and underpinned by physical evidence that explains all the stages required for a fire to occur (paragraph 7.7);
 - 7.2 An in depth analysis of the electrical system or combustibility analysis would have to include for example, tests of the combustibility materials which are present within the area of origin such that the sequence required for viable heating, generation of pyrolysis products and ignition of these products scenarios can be demonstrated conclusively (paragraph 7.7.2);
 - 7.3 The recommendation that a qualified Electrical Engineer undertake an examination of the electrical appliances or wiring associated with the fire at Flat 16 of Grenfell Tower (paragraph 7.6.45);
 - 7.4 Further analysis of the tall fridge/freezer and other artefacts be undertaken (para 7.7.4).
8. Whirlpool notes the recent confirmation of the instruction of Dr Duncan Glover to assist the Inquiry in reviewing the forensic electrical work undertaken to date, as well as recommending further lines of inquiry, which again Whirlpool welcomes.

9. In her report, Professor Nic Daied invites Whirlpool's participation in these further investigations. Whirlpool would like to take this opportunity to underline its commitment to assisting the Public Inquiry and its willingness to participate in the ongoing investigations in the manner envisaged by Professor Nic Daied in her report, or in any way deemed appropriate.

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18 May 2018