

IN THE MATTER OF THE INQUIRY ARISING FROM THE DEATHS IN THE MANCHESTER
ARENA BOMBING

OPENING NOTE ON BEHALF OF SHOWSEC

1. A summary of Showsec's position

- 1.1 Before turning, as directed in the ILT note of 11 March 2020, to address the Inquiry's Terms of Reference ("TOR"), and in the hope that this is helpful, Showsec International Ltd ("Showsec") sets out, by way of this summary, its position in terms of the nature of the services it provided to SMG at the Manchester Arena ("the Arena"); its understanding of the extent to which it had counter terrorism responsibilities or obligations in the area of the City Rooms on the night of this appalling attack; and, its reaction to the criticism of the company to be found in the reports prepared by the Security Experts.
- 1.2 As the Chairman understands, this document has been prepared before the final version of the report from the Security Experts has been made available and without sight of some of the material to which Dr BaMaung and Col. Latham have had access.
- 1.3 Showsec is a company which provides crowd management and stewarding services across the UK. It employs approximately 140 full-time staff and has 4000 casual workers or so who work at various sites and venues including theatres, sporting venues and events, festivals, arenas etc., of which the Arena was one.
- 1.4 The crowd management and stewarding services that Showsec provided in May 2017 to SMG across all its venues including the Manchester Arena were governed by the terms of the contract between the two parties, the Stewarding Services Agreement [INQ012126]. The contract also, by way of example, makes it clear it is SMG who were to determine how many of Showsec's staff would be made available at each event and it was SMG who retained responsibility (as the occupier and operator of the venue) for the safety of all those attending and present at the Arena.
- 1.5 As the Inquiry's Security Experts have said, it was for SMG to set the standard for security at the Arena by way of a risk assessment. Showsec played no part in the production of their risk assessments [INQ001359] and [INQ001567], nor did Showsec see them.
- 1.6 An important part of the Inquiry's work will concern the City Rooms and the bomber's presence in this area during the hours before he carried out the attack. This public area fell outside the Arena and, whilst SMG had rights of access across the areas so its customers could enter the venue, in May 2017 SMG had no right to close the City Rooms during events. So, the City Rooms, at that time, remained a public thoroughfare linking Victoria Station to the NCP Car Park and Trinity Way.

- 1.7 It follows that Showsec's staff had no right or power to stop, search or detain those members of the public in this area unless they were queuing to enter the Arena. Neither would a young man carrying a rucksack and passing through that area necessarily and obviously stand out as representing a possible threat to concert goers.
- 1.8 Against this background, the Security Experts have made what the Inquiry may find to be a valid observation that the *"City Rooms and the approaches to it [represented] a very complicated operational environment with unique security challenges"*.
- 1.9 The public nature of the City Rooms meant that the policing of this area remained the responsibility of GMP and the BTP. The Policing Experts have concluded that *"BTP had adopted responsibility and primacy for Arena events"* and it was their officers who conducted patrols of the areas outside the venue at these times.
- 1.10 The focus of both Showsec's planning in seeking to meet its contractual obligations to SMG and the work of its staff on the ground in the public areas around the venue, including the City Rooms, was on ensuring that the large number of people attending the Arena did so safely and that the well-known dangers of over-crowding were avoided. Attention was also paid to ensuring that nothing inappropriate or which might endanger the crowds was brought into the venue; ensuring customers got safely to their seats; and, during the event, on the behaviour of those attending the events. The safe egress (and in emergency situations the evacuation) of many thousands of people who would come to the Arena was also a prime concern of Showsec.
- 1.11 Showsec did (and does) not offer specialist counter-terrorist advice to SMG (or, indeed, to the operator of any other venue) and that was not a service SMG had asked Showsec to provide in the contract for their work at the Arena. As would appear from its response to the bombing, SMG took this type of specialist advice from others with expertise in this area.
- 1.12 However, along with any other employer in this country, Showsec had (amongst other legal duties) statutory obligations under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act, in so far as was "reasonably practicable", to secure the safety of its employees and other relevant third parties (in this case, those attending the event at the Arena).
- 1.13 That obligation could not, of course, be discharged without regard to the threat of a terrorist attack during an event at the Arena. To address that risk and to ensure those working at the events were aware of such risks, Showsec took the following steps:
- (i) every member of Showsec's staff received counter-terrorism training [INQ012048] and a test either as part of their induction or subsequently;
 - (ii) that training was supplemented by emails and e newsletters sent to its staff and at the briefings which took place before each event and at which every member of staff was required to attend; and
 - (iii) a risk assessment [INQ001477] and a document entitled Showsec Counter Terrorism Awareness 2017 Manchester Arena [INQ012031] were produced.

- 1.14 The counter-terrorism awareness document set out Showsec's counter-terrorism procedures at the Arena (included its training, security planning, measures to address hostile reconnaissance and threat identification, including by way of suicide attacks). It was sent to SMG so that SMG could understand how Showsec was addressing this aspect of their efforts to secure the safety of event goers. The Security Experts are of the view that Showsec's document "*provided some sound counter-terrorism security advice*". Neither was any concern raised by SMG and nor was it suggested by the CTSA who provided SMG with specialist counter-terrorism advice that Showsec was falling short in this regard. Whilst Showsec has no direct contact with the GMP's CTSA who offered advice on counter terrorism matters to SMG, Showsec was entitled to expect SMG to share any relevant information with them.
- 1.15 There are obviously limits as to what it is reasonable to expect of the casual staff working for Showsec (whose primary job was to provide crowd management services) in respect of counter-terrorism. This moderately paid workforce who came from different backgrounds and ranged in terms of experience had received no specialist counter-terrorist training, and could not, sensibly, have been expected to carry out, by way of example, specific counter-terrorism sweeps or to confront suspected suicide bombers. That is the work that Showsec and its staff would expect to be done by BTP who were patrolling the areas outside the Arena or by the armed units of GMP working in conjunction with the security and intelligence services.
- 1.16 What was reasonable to expect of Showsec, in the context of the service it provided at the Arena to SMG, was that its staff had been sufficiently well-trained to enable them to identify any individual behaving suspiciously in the City Rooms, to remain vigilant whilst on duty and then, if they had concerns about an individual, to escalate that information quickly to the Event Control Room.
- 1.17 In that regard, and as the Security Experts have noted, it is clear Showsec has generally performed well. Procedures relating to the management and reporting of incidents, the recording of information by stewards and the handing over of such information to supervisors appears to have been "*quite robust*". Suspicious behaviour and/or acts of hostile reconnaissance had regularly been identified by members of Showsec's staff and reported in a manner consistent with the training the stewards had received.
- 1.18 On the night of 22 May 2017, the Station Bridge and the emergency exit in that area of the City Rooms known as "the Grey Doors" were manned by SIA licence holders Kyle Lawler and Mohammad Agha. What has become clear from the report of the Security Experts is that the reaction (or asserted lack of reaction) of Mohammad Agha and Kyle Lawler to concern being expressed about the presence of the bomber by members of the public is to be the subject of scrutiny. It would be quite inappropriate for Showsec to advance any position which is critical of either member of its staff, to whom the company (along with the rest of its workforce) has and continues to offer support following the horrifying events of 22 May 2017. It will be for the Chairman to consider their positions against the evidence he is to hear from both those individuals and any submissions which are to be made on their behalf.
- 1.19 What Showsec is entitled to point to is the view expressed by the Security Experts that both Mohammad Agha and Kyle Lawler had been appropriately trained both by Showsec and the SIA. Both had been provided with sufficient instruction to consider whether an individual having the appearance of the bomber fitted the audience profile and, if not, to engage with that individual or to report the concern on.

- 1.20 The Security Experts have raised the issue of the scope, frequency and sufficiency of the pre-egress checks in the City Rooms and whether these should have encompassed the mezzanine area. Pre-egress check sheets appear in Showsec's Counter-Terrorism Awareness Document [INQ012031]. Showsec's position is that the pre-egress checks were designed to secure the safe evacuation of the Arena, with a particular focus on eliminating the risks of slips and trips and removing obstructions, and did not include searching the mezzanine or any form of counter-terrorism sweep. Showsec staff did clear the stairs so that employees of J W Williams and Serco who used them in order to enter and leave their place of work could do so safely.
- 1.21 In terms of the evacuation following the explosion, whilst again the emergency planning was the responsibility of SMG, there appears to have been a collegiate approach between SMG and Showsec to the practice exercises and neither Showsec's Operational Plan [INQ012033] nor its training of its staff have been the subject of criticism. As the Security Experts observe, under enormous pressure and with the assistance of the police, Showsec and SMG managed to evacuate 14,000 people, many of them children and young persons, without a crushing incident in just 15 minutes or so.
- 1.22 But that is only part of the story. Members of Showsec's staff, displaying no regard for their own safety, did all they could to tend to the dying and the injured. They witnessed the appalling scenes in the City Rooms and they too have been grievously affected by this atrocity.
- 1.23 Finally, Showsec, no doubt in common with other non-family CPs has done its best to look carefully at its performance at the Arena and to reflect critically on what it did well, what it did not and what it could have been done better. Inevitably after an event of this magnitude, which had terrible consequences for so many and which is also, for good reason, to be the subject of a very detailed examination, failings will be identified.
- 1.24 Some of the criticism made of Showsec is, so the company accepts, well-founded:
- (i) It may well be that searching of bags was carried out by non-licensed SIA operatives. Since the incident there has been a substantial increase in both the numbers of stewards and SIA trained staff requested from Showsec by SMG. There is also a wholly new searching regime based around an expanded perimeter. However, there remains the obvious question whether a detailed examination of this aspect will assist in determining the core, causative issues. The bomber did not at any stage seek to enter the Arena. He, or those working with him, knew that he would not have been admitted with his heavy rucksack by the Showsec staff carrying out access duties;
 - (ii) Showsec accepts that its Risk Assessment [INQ001447] was inadequate because it did not accurately reflect the national threat level from terrorism; did not identify (and therefore address) the risk from VBIEDs or PBIEDs; and, underestimated the casualties likely to occur as a result of a terrorist attack. This risk assessment was not, however, designed to set out how Showsec delivered on its limited counter-terrorism obligations. That was reflected in [INQ012031] the Showsec Counter Terrorism Awareness Document.

1.25 In other respects, although of course Showsec must await the evidence and keep an open mind, aspects of the criticism to be found in the first version of the report prepared by the Security Experts would seem inappropriate and, in some instances, verging on the unfair because they appear far removed from what is realistic and reasonable to achieve by a company in Showsec's position offering crowd management services to the operator of a venue.

Showsec's response to the Terms of Reference

2. TOR 2 The build up to the attack including:

iv. What if anything was known by the Security Service, the police and others about the matters above (planning, preparation etc.), what steps were taken (if any), and their adequacy.

2.1 Showsec had been provided with no information about the planning or preparation for the attack and had not been made aware of any specific threat to the venue.

2.2 Reconnaissance (TOR 2 i) on the day and the movements of the bomber in the lead up to the attack (TOR 2 iv) will be dealt with from Showsec's perspective later in this Opening Note as part of its response to TOR 4.

3. TOR 3 The attack itself including:

i. Events immediately prior to and following the detonation of the explosive device

3.1 There is again an overlap between this TOR and TOR 4.

3.2 The CCTV footage shows that at 22:14, Christopher Wild approached the Showsec SIA licence holder, Mohammad Agha, and reported his concerns about a man with a rucksack. As it has transpired this was in fact the bomber. Mr Wild then left the City Rooms at approximately 22:16 (where his partner, Julie Whitley, remained) and he went down to the station concourse, before returning to the City Room at 22:22. On his return Mr Wild told Ms Whitley that he had had a word with the man they had seen and spoken to security about him [INQ006854 p 6].

3.3 Thomas McCallum says he overheard a conversation between a man and a member of Showsec's staff in which the man said, "Have you seen that guy up there, he's totally out of it", or words to that effect [INQ007048 p 2]. The member of staff replied, "Yeah, we've seen him, he's fine." GMP are of the view that this was the conversation between Mr Wild and Mohammad Agha.

3.4 In drawing the Inquiry's attention to Mr Wild's movements after he had seen the bomber and spoken to Mohammad Agha, Showsec is not intending to be in any sense critical of him. Instead, this may be indicative of the level of concern Mr Wild had actually expressed and to illustrate the care with which expert opinion (expressed with the benefit of hindsight) must be approached.

3.5 Mohammed Agha's concern was brought to Kyle Lawler's attention. He was another of the SIA trained members of Showsec's security staff and he was also a radio holder. On the face

of his statements [INQ011961] and [INQ006258] he was suspicious of the bomber and knew that he should escalate the matter to Event Control. However, his statements are in part contradictory and his account of his movements and actions are not borne out by an examination of the CCTV material.

3.6 Showsec's position, accepted now by the Security Experts, is that both Mohammed Agha and Kyle Lawler had been properly trained to recognise suspicious behaviour and to escalate any concern in this regard to the Event Control Room.

ii. The immediate response to the detonation of the explosive device

3.7 The bomb was detonated at 22:31. By 22:45 the Arena had been completely evacuated without further serious injury or loss of life.

3.8 Full details of Showsec's response can be found in its reply to TOR 5.

4. **TOR 4 The security arrangements within and outside the Arena, including:**

i. The security provided/arranged by the owner and operator of the Arena venue, and by those contracted by them to provide security, in particular the City Rooms' security arrangements.

4.1 Showsec currently provides crowd management and stewarding services to SMG Europe Holdings Ltd ("SMG") for eight of its venues across the UK. It has provided these services to SMG for the Manchester Arena since 1995.

4.2 At the relevant time Showsec's relationship with SMG across all its UK sites was governed by the Stewarding Services Agreement [INQ012126], which determined the nature of the services Showsec were to provide at the Arena and other venues and staffing levels.

4.3 By clause 4.1 at [p 11] SMG appointed Showsec as its preferred and primary provider of stewarding and event services. "Services" is defined at [p 8] as "stewarding and event services as described in clause 4 and detailed at Schedule 2."

4.4 Schedule 2 at [pp 50 – 54] defines the services to be provided as Event Stewarding, Event Security, Evacuation and Emergency Planning, Customer Services, Crowd Management Advice and Staff Training, Contract Management, Personnel Training and Development and External Work.

4.5 Counter terrorism is not a specific service under the Schedule. However, at clause 7 of the Schedule, Showsec agrees that it will make available, at no cost to SMG and as and when required, senior managers, supervisors and key staff to take part in venue specific desktop exercises such as emergency situations including but not limited to fire, crowd disorder, terrorist attack and show cancellations.

4.6 Clause 7 does not suggest that Showsec should have primacy in this process. In fact, the clause refers to Showsec providing this particular service as and when required by SMG.

4.7 Showsec accepts that as part of its duties in providing "Stewarding and Event Services" it was required to identify the risks associated with terrorism, plan to mitigate those risks and

implement that plan. However, Showsec is not and has never held itself out to be a company that specialises in combatting the risks of terrorism.

- 4.8 Showsec was required to consult with SMG concerning the preparation and provision of a General Method Statement that included staffing levels and the training required for each position (Clause 4.3).
- 4.9 Pursuant to clause 4.3(b)(i) SMG determined the specific requirements for staffing levels at each event. This included both the numbers of staff to be provided by Showsec and the category of those staff members. Thereafter, pursuant to clause 4(b)(ii) Showsec was required to consult with SMG concerning the preparation and provision of an Event Method Statement that included staffing levels and the training required for each position. Showsec had the right under this clause to make alternative suggestions, in writing and with reasons, but any change to the numbers or category had to be approved by SMG.
- 4.10 Pursuant to clause 4.5 [INQ012126 p 14] SMG retained overall responsibility as occupier of the Arena (and its other venues) for the health and safety of its customers, invitees and others present at its venues. The term further stipulated that, "*Showsec shall act upon all instructions issued by SMG in that regard.*"
- 4.11 Therefore, Showsec agrees with the Security Experts' analysis that it was the responsibility of SMG, to make security policy and decisions [INQ032612 paragraph 7] and that it was for SMG to set the minimum standard of venue physical security, informed by a carefully completed and up to date Venue Risk Assessment completed by an individual with the correct experience, advice and competence to do so [paragraph 26].
- 4.12 Showsec also agrees that it was for SMG to assess the likely security services and measures that were required for an event and to contract a supplier to provide the security services that SMG assessed to be necessary [paragraph 72].
- 4.13 So far as its relationship with any hirer is concerned, while SMG had agreed to take into consideration any representations made by the hirer in relation to security requirements for an Event, SMG's assessment of the security required was agreed to be final and conclusive [INQ029104] SMG Standard Terms and Conditions of Arena Hire – Manchester Arena [p 20 paragraph 21.1].
- 4.14 Showsec's Operational Plan for the Manchester Arena [INQ012033] contains at [p7] a Statement of Intent in which Showsec undertakes to provide a crowd management service for the event arena and associated activities. Crowd management is defined as "*the systematic planning for, and supervision of, orderly movement and assembly of people...[It] includes evaluation of...adequacy of means of ingress and egress...and expected types of group behaviour.*"
- 4.15 The Plan also lists areas of responsibility, which include supplying sufficient numbers of suitably qualified security/stewarding staff for the ingress, front of house, press and guest and backstage positions for the event. It also disavows any responsibility for crowd management or the security of people outside the event site [p 8].

- 4.16 At [pp 30 – 36] the Plan deals with the City Rooms and the responsibilities of Showsec staff in relation to attendees of an event entering or exiting via the City Rooms. The focus is on how Showsec can ensure that attendees enter and leave safely.
- 4.17 The factual and legal background to SMG's occupation of the Arena is set out in the statement of Mike Cowley [INQ025586] at paragraphs 13 – 20. At paragraph 18 he notes that, *"Importantly, SMG's demise stops at the Arena doors."* SMG's landlord and SMG itself had rights of access and egress over the City Rooms but had no right to close it to the public. The City Rooms remained a public thoroughfare that linked Manchester Victoria to the NCP Car Park and Trinity Way.
- 4.18 Showsec had no greater rights or obligations than SMG or SMG's Landlord. Neither SMG nor Showsec had the right or power to stop and/or search and/or detain those members of the public who were not queuing to enter the Arena. During events the general public had unrestricted access to the City Rooms and those in the area included attendees of the event and those travelling from or through the station to the Car park or to the city and vice versa.
- 4.19 So-called "grey spaces" such as the City Rooms remain problematic from a security perspective. Showsec notes the contents of the statement of Neil Basu, Metropolitan Police Assistant Commissioner and National Police Chiefs Council Lead for Counter Terrorism Policing [INQ032845 at paragraphs 17 – 22] concerning the review of the 2014 Crowded Places Model. It is clear from [INQ032846], a document from Counter Terrorism Police Headquarters of 19 February 2019 produced by AC Basu, that almost two years after the events of 22 May and the other terrorist attacks of 2017, there was still debate at high levels of law enforcement and counter terrorism as to how to manage these "grey spaces".
- 4.20 Notwithstanding all this (and regardless of a lack of any contractual obligation in this regard), Showsec accepts that it has statutory duties pursuant to the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 sections 2 and 3 in respect of its employees and third parties who may be affected by the conduct of its undertaking to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, their health and safety. Attendees at Arena events would be covered by section 3. Showsec also owes a common law duty of care in tort to attendees of events at the Arena and its workers.
- 4.21 That said, the City Rooms remain a public space, the policing of which lay with BTP, which has specific counter terrorism responsibilities. As the Independent Policing Report [INQ032363] concludes, the City Rooms was demonstrably a public place at the time of the attack [pp 6 - 7] and BTP was responsible for policing the Arena [p 7]. Further, at [p 265] the authors of the report say, *"In our view, BTP had adopted responsibility and primacy for Arena events."*
- 4.22 Moreover, Showsec knew that during events BTP officers patrolled the City Rooms. Given Showsec's responsibilities to be aware of and look out for hostile reconnaissance and suspicious individuals, it assumed, and believes it was right to have assumed, that any police patrol would have had a significant focus on the discharge of counter terrorism duties.
- 4.23 Finally, to put Showsec's role in its proper perspective, Showsec notes that as part of its response to the attack SMG instructed Guidepost Solutions (and not Showsec) to review the suitability of the controls at the Arena. It was as a result of Guidepost's recommendations that a new security perimeter away from the entrances to the Arena was established; controlled

spaces within the perimeter were set up where standardised security checks and searches now take place; walk through metal detectors are used; and, the City Rooms are now closed to non-ticket holders immediately prior to, during and after events: [INQ032858 Allen]. Save in assisting SMG to implement new policies and procedures such as restricted bag policies and dynamic venue lockdown procedures, Showsec was not part of this process. Even with the new security structures there will always be areas (containing both attendees at events and the public) beyond the control and remit of both SMG and Showsec.

iii. The security provided by the relevant private security providers.

4.24 Showsec's operational command and control structure is set out both in [INQ012054] and at [INQ025755 Bailey paragraph 7]. The paragraphs below describe the structure as at 22 May 2017.

4.25 There are three levels in the structure: operational, tactical and strategic.

4.26 At ground level there are three operational tiers. At the bottom are the stewards and SIA licensed staff. The stewards' responsibilities include scanning tickets, showing customers to their seats, giving directions and general customer service. The SIA licensed staff carry out licensed activities including any searches that are required and Access Control.

4.27 At a level above the stewards and SIA licensed staff are the area Supervisors who are responsible for coordinating the stewarding and SIA teams in their respective areas, namely Entrances/Bridge, which includes the City Rooms, Quads, Floor and Pit.

4.28 Above the Supervisors lie the Senior Supervisors who cover front and back of house and whose responsibility is to oversee and lead the operational service at ground level.

4.29 At the tactical level is the Event Control Room, which is staffed by Showsec's Head of Security, Showsec's Event Radio Controller, SMG's Event Duty Manager and the Medic Controller from Emergency Training UK. Information flows to and from the Event Control Room and the Whisky Control Room, which is SMG's permanent control room operational 24 hours a day 7 days a week (by SMG's employees), and the Event Control Room and the Supervisors and/or radio holders. Showsec has no presence in the Whisky Control Room, where the occupants monitor the venue's life support systems such as CCTV, Ice Plant and Fire Panels and manage contact with the Emergency Services.

4.30 Again, because this is SMG's Arena, the Event Control Room is equipped with CCTV provided by SMG. There are four monitors each displaying eight or twelve camera feeds of live footage, which allows Event Control to investigate reports from across the venue. The main focus of the CCTV is to monitor ingress and egress. Unlike the Whisky Control Room, the Event Control Room does not have the facility to pause or rewind the footage and the Whiskey Control Room retains the capacity at any time to override the feed into the Event Control Room. The City Rooms area is one of the areas covered by CCTV. However, at the time of the attack, as Salman Abedi may have identified, the CCTV coverage did not extend to the area of the mezzanine where he concealed himself. Showsec was unaware of this issue at the time, having had no role in respect of the design, installation or maintenance of the CCTV system.

- 4.31 The strategic lead is provided by Showsec's Head of Security whose task is to ensure that Showsec's operational delivery is carried out. The Head of Security is chosen on the basis of the level of crowd management risk for a particular event. The relevant factors for this event were that the audience was predominantly female, young and accompanied by their parents; further, it was held on a weekday night and was an all-seated concert. Therefore, it was categorised as low risk, Category A event. This meant that the Head of Security had to have completed the Supervisors course and supervised a minimum of 50 events at the Arena or a similar venue, completed an IOSH course in Managing Safely at Events and Exhibitions, completed a Diploma in Crowd Safety and Management and hold an SIA licence.
- 4.32 It is SMG who determine the numbers of staff Showsec are to provide and their category, for example stewards, SIA licence holders and supervisors. [INQ001567] is SMG's risk assessment for the Ariana Grande event. Whilst it specifies the security requirements this is not a document that is seen by Showsec. SMG send an Event Rider to all its contractors including Showsec. The relevant Event Rider is [INQ012112]. The information it contains includes the expected split between male and female, attendees, the age of the audience, show times, venue configuration and search lane requirements.
- 4.33 This document together with Showsec's risk assessment and Operational Plan, information about the artist from prior shows, information from the Touring Party and information from other Showsec Head of Security Reports, then forms the basis of the written Supervisors Briefing [INQ012111]. This is written by the Head of Security and delivered to SMG management present, including the Event Duty Manager and Fire Safety Officer, Showsec's Supervisors and Emergency Training UK.
- 4.34 Thereafter the Showsec Area Supervisors brief the teams working underneath them.
- 4.35 Once the staff have been briefed pre-event safety checks are carried out and noted on a venue checklist [INQ001557]. When these checks have been carried out the Showsec Supervisors inform Event Control and the staff go to their positions.
- 4.36 The City Rooms entrance was staffed by both Showsec stewards and SIA licence holders. In depth bag searches and pat down body searches can only be carried out by SIA licence holders; on 22 May 2017 the Arena had not asked for pat down searches. SIA licence holders also from part of Showsec Access Control teams. Access Control's role is to identify and deal with security risks in relation to customers entering the venue.
- 4.37 On 22 May 2017, David Middleton was the Showsec SIA City Rooms Door Supervisor. Dan Perry and Jordan Beak formed Access Control. The Station Bridge and Emergency Exit were the responsibility of Showsec SIA licence holders Kyle Lawler and Mohammad Agha respectively. Donald Barrett was the Corporate Supervisor and was also working at various points in the evening in the City Rooms. He too was a radio holder. There were initially eight Showsec stewards, but that number could be increased during busy periods.
- 4.38 Once ingress is completed staff can be redeployed within the venue.
- 4.39 Pre-egress checks are carried out in the City Rooms. Although the pre-egress check sheets appear in Showsec's Counter Terrorism Awareness Document [INQ012031], they were in fact created by SMG and were not originally intended to form part of the Counter

Terrorism Awareness Document. The primary purpose of these checks is to ensure that there are no obstructions to the safe egress of event attendees or hazards such as spilled drinks that could cause slips and trips. As the event comes to an end staff assume the same positions they would for an evacuation so that those attending the event can leave safely through the nearest exit.

- iv. The planning, preparation, arrangements and communication (if any) between the above security providers prior to the attack, including (but not limited to) their roles and responsibilities for risk identification, person and bag checking, and responding to a terrorist and/or mass casualty incident.

4.40 Showsec was not asked to assist in the production of, and did not see, SMG's Event Risk Assessment [INQ001567] and nor did Showsec see or play any part in the writing of SMG's document entitled "Operational Procedures Emergency and Contingency Plans" [INQ001359].

4.41 Showsec had no direct contact with the GMP CTSA prior to the attack concerning security arrangements for the venue.

4.42 Showsec's risk assessment process comprised the following documents:

- (i) [INQ012110] the Showsec Manchester Arena Risk Assessment from January 2016 to June 2017, which assessed the individual risk profiles of each event during that period so that an appropriately qualified Head of Security could be appointed.
- (ii) [INQ001477] the Showsec Manchester Arena Risk Assessment, which is a broad health and safety risk assessment relating to the staff of Showsec and their involvement with the Arena.
- (iii) [INQ012031] the document Showsec Counter Terrorism Awareness 2017 Manchester Arena.

4.43 [INQ012110] was not designed to assess the risks of terrorism. It looked only at the risks arising from the particular profiles of the performers at an event. For example, the risks associated with a boxing audience in terms of the potential for disorder are very different from those associated with an audience attending an Ariana Grande concert. The document was used to determine the choice of Showsec Head of Security for a particular event. The Security Experts in their Addendum dated 2 August 2020 now accept this. At paragraph 381, they note that this is a useful way to predict the risk of poor crowd behaviour. It was not designed to predict the physical security risk arising from terrorism and they accept that there is no evidence that anyone used it in that way.

4.44 [INQ001477] was completed in January 2017 and was based on a number of earlier risk assessments. It reflected the whole range of risks to Showsec staff at events ranging from such diverse topics as slips, trips and falls to substance misuse by a staff member or sub-contractor, the hazards associated with various forms of transport, delays to or cancellation of the event, insect bites and the sudden appearance of VIPs. Counter terrorism was also addressed. It is accepted that in this respect the document was flawed in its recording of the

threat level and its failure to identify (and therefore address) the risk of VBIEDs and PBIEDs attacks.

4.45 [INQ012031] was the third iteration of a document produced in the aftermath of the Bataclan attacks: [INQ018992 2015], [INQ001449 2016]. This document collates Showsec's counter terrorism procedures. It was sent to SMG so that SMG could understand how Showsec was delivering the counter terrorism element of its services. SMG raised no queries or concerns over the contents, whether or not it shared the document with the CTSA's.

4.46 [INQ012031] sets out Showsec's policies and procedures in relation to a wide range of areas including training, security planning, hostile reconnaissance, threat identification including suicide attacks, evacuation and communication. The document accurately records the threat level as severe, as it had been since August 2014, and this informed Showsec's terrorism mitigation strategy in respect of every event for which it provided its services.

4.47 Showsec notes that in their Addendum the Security Experts state [INQ012031] provides some sound counter terrorism security advice [paragraph 569]. Showsec responds to their other comments in its response to TOR 4 v at paragraph 4.69 below.

4.48 The main strands of Showsec's counter terrorism mitigation strategy were:

- (i) training its staff to understand threat levels and the different forms of terrorist attack;
- (ii) training its staff to recognise hostile reconnaissance and suspicious individuals;
- (iii) training its staff how to react in the event that they perceived hostile reconnaissance and/or suspicious individuals;
- (iv) search procedures to deter and/or prevent a terrorist from gaining access to the Arena; and
- (v) training its staff how to react in the event of a terrorist attack.

4.49 Every member of Showsec staff receives counter terrorism training on induction [INQ012048]. Because of the geographical spread of its operation and the fact that the majority of Showsec workers are not employees, Showsec believes that online training is the most appropriate way to train its workers.

4.50 In order to progress through the course an applicant has to click through the various topics. At the end of the module there is an online test, which has to be completed. The module has links to the national threat level and covers the following topics:

- (i) the law and liability;
- (ii) effective planning;
- (iii) searching including HOT procedures;
- (iv) evacuation;

- (v) the different forms of terrorist attack including chemical, radiological and biological attacks, suicide attacks and firearms attacks; and
 - (vi) threat levels.
- 4.51 There are also case studies featuring different forms of attack, namely the Tokyo Sarin incident, which was felt to be pertinent given the Arena's location next to a transport hub, and the Tushino bombings, which took place at an open-air concert. Crowd management and stewarding at open-air events represents a significant part of Showsec's operation.
- 4.52 The training also contained links to Operation Fairway and Eyes Wide Open.
- 4.53 Showsec's training is based on documents such as [INQ020147] NaCTSO Counter Terrorism Protective Security Advice for Stadia and Arenas, [INQ001552] and NaCTSO Guidance Note Counter Terrorism Advice: Hostile Reconnaissance [INQ001478], which makes it clear that security guards have no right to stop and detain those whom they suspect.
- 4.54 The training is supplemented by emails, e newsletters and the members only communication package "Band".
- 4.55 The Showsec Supervisors' Briefing will contain a specific briefing topic in addition to all the standard briefing topics. This is then cascaded down to the staff by the Showsec Supervisors. On 3 to 8 May inclusive the topic was counter terrorism: [INQ025755 Bailey at paragraph 47 3) – 4) pp 18 – 20]. It was by no means necessary to make counter terrorism the subject of the briefing every event night. Showsec has a loyal cadre of experienced workers who receive counter terrorism training on induction, and by way of refresher training regular updates and briefings.
- 4.56 SMG, as operators of the venue, determines the level of searching. In May 2017 there were no Walk Through Metal Detectors. As far as Showsec is aware, at the relevant time The O2 and, possibly, Wembley Arena, both in London, were the only venues in the country that had fixed body scanners. For the Ariana Grande concert, given the audience profile, the search policy was random pat downs [INQ001567 SMG Risk Assessment]. The Event Rider [INQ012112] made it clear search lanes were not required.
- 4.57 Showsec Access Control's primary role was queue management, which included profiling those attending and those in the City Rooms who may pose a threat to attendees.
- 4.58 It was also the task of Access Control to patrol the City Rooms as part of their pre-egress checks. This was undertaken by Showsec's Jordan Beak who has set out the route he took at [INQ011960 pp 3 – 4]. He did not go up to the mezzanine level where the bomber had concealed himself. The Inquiry may have to consider whether it would be appropriate to direct Access Control to search the mezzanine area for potential terrorists without providing extensive, specialist training and/or PPE.
- 4.59 However, as the Inquiry will note, on 22 May 2017, four BTP officers were tasked with patrolling Victoria station and the Arena including the City Rooms. Of these officers only PC Bullough was a police constable; the others were police community support officers.

- 4.60 The images from the CCTV show all four officers at various times and for protracted periods between 18:36 and 19:20 in the mezzanine area of the City Rooms where the bomber was later to hide himself. That was the last time the officers went to the mezzanine. The officers did not go to the City Rooms at all between 20:39 and 21:47, during which time the bomber visited the City Rooms twice (between 20:51 – 21:10 and at 21:33). The last visit that any BTP officer paid to the City Rooms until the detonation of the bomb concluded at 21:59.
- 4.61 [INQ025538] is the email from BTP Sergeant Wilson to the four officers in which he makes it clear that he expects the patrols to be carried out by the officers patrolling alone and not in pairs. He also asks that refreshment breaks be staggered between 19:30 and 21:00 so that there is always someone at Victoria.
- 4.62 Not only did the officers in fact patrol in pairs, but according to PCSO Renshaw he and PC Bullough took a break of over two hours from 19:27 to 21:36, which involved them driving away from the station [INQ033296 paragraphs 15 – 17]. It was during this period that the bomber made his last two visits to the City Rooms. In their addendum report at paragraph 404 the Security Experts have incorrectly stated that PC Bullough and PCSO Renshaw spoke to Mohammad Agha in the City Rooms at 21:15. This may be a simple transcription error because in fact the CCTV shows that this conversation took place at 21:55 [INQ032038 p 38].
- 4.63 According to BTP ACC O’Callaghan [INQ025614 paragraphs 43 – 46] BTP had assessed the risk associated with the attendees of the event as low. Whilst this would accord with SMG’s and Showsec’s assessments, BTP appears to have given no consideration at any level to counter terrorism. None of the four officers on patrol seem to have been tasked with counter terrorism duties and according to Andrea Graham who was at the time BTP’s Chief Inspector for the Manchester District, the role of BTP officers outside the Arena *“unless criminal activity was anticipated... was mainly to provide reassurance and direction, and to make sure there was no trouble as people entered and left the stadium”* [INQ029575 paragraph 5].
- 4.64 The Inquiry will no doubt wish to consider, whether a private company in Showsec’s position and with its responsibility for crowd management and stewarding (involving a very limited counter terrorist role) was entitled to work on the basis that the police force with primacy for the venue and the immediate environs would have been actively discharging that responsibility, particularly in light of the knowledge (which reflects Showsec’s position) of the close links which existed between GMP CTSAs and the Arena.
- v. The adequacy of i – iv above, including their compliance with relevant planning, preparation, policies, systems and practices.
- 4.65 Showsec believed and continues to believe that its counter terrorism training is robust and fit for purpose. The company has compressed relevant available information into an accessible and memorable format: the risk associated with lengthy documents or training modules being that the information becomes overwhelming and the recipient does not assimilate it. The initial training was then reinforced through face-to-face briefings and e communications. It should also be remembered that counter terrorism was but one part, albeit an important part, of the training.

- 4.66 The two case scenarios are highly relevant to the type of venues at which Showsec operates. Showsec notes that notwithstanding the criticism of the inclusion of Operation Fairway in the training by the Security Experts, Operation Fairway is also trained out by the SIA.
- 4.67 On behalf of the SIA, Tony Holyland at [INQ029576 paragraph 39] refers to the Door Supervisor Specialist Content [INQ008064 page 17], which sets out the eight learning outcomes of understanding emergency procedures to be followed by a door supervisor. In identifying sources of information on terrorism awareness the document specifically refers to national and local anti-terrorism initiatives including Griffin, Argos and Fairway. Those members of Showsec's staff who were also SIA licensed had the benefit of SIA training in counter terrorism as well.
- 4.68 There is clear evidence that Showsec staff were alert to the risks of hostile reconnaissance and terrorist attack. The Security Experts have set out at paragraphs 607 – 628 and 631 of their Report incidences where SMG and Showsec staff have responded appropriately to suspected hostile reconnaissance. Showsec also notes paragraph 96 of [INQ025576 Miriam Stone] that staff were empowered to act if they saw suspicious behaviour. Showsec was not privy to any reports that the bomber had carried out hostile reconnaissance in the days before the events.
- 4.69 As to the issues raised by the Security Experts in their Addendum at paragraph 569:
- (i) Showsec does not agree that its counter terrorism training was deficient;
 - (ii) It was not necessary to provide a counter terrorism briefing every night;
 - (iii) as the Security Experts have recognised, staff were well trained to spot hostile reconnaissance and to react accordingly; and
 - (iv) it will be for the Inquiry to determine whether staff should have checked a semi-secluded space in a CCTV blind spot for potential terrorists.
- 4.70 On the specific issue of staff training, Showsec notes that in the Addendum to the Security Experts have accepted at paragraph 32 that, *"Showsec staff in and around the City Room were sufficiently trained for them to know that they should report suspicious activity and to know how to do so."* Further, at paragraph 33, they state, *"SMG and Showsec staff had sufficient training, confidence, empowerment and support to report suspicious activity."*
- 4.71 Finally, at paragraph 35, the Security Experts recognise the possibility that *"trained, competent and empowered staff failed to perform their duties correctly and despite their training and empowerment did not report a suspicious individual that had been highlighted to them."* Specifically, at paragraphs 268 and 269 they accept that both Mohammad Agha and Kyle Lawler had received sufficient training to report a suspicious individual and to escalate their concerns appropriately.
- 4.72 Showsec accepts the criticism of the Security Experts that bag searching was being carried out by non-SIA licensed workers. However, it should be noted that the bomber made no attempt to enter the Arena, but instead remained in the public space outside. He had no

doubt recognised, had he attempted to do so, he would have been profiled as someone who did not fit the event profile and his backpack would have been searched.

4.73 As the operator of the venue SMG was in regular contact with GMP CTSA's. Whether or not there was any misunderstanding between Miriam Stone and Kenneth Upham, as far as Showsec was concerned SMG had given no indication at any time before the attack that it had been informed by the CTSA's that the policies, procedures or practices of Showsec were in any way deficient.

4.74 As a result of the disclosure made by the ILT, Showsec has now seen the extensive communication between SMG and the CTSA's. As examples of the feedback being given by the CTSA's and others to SMG, Showsec notes:

- (i) [INQ001444] Although headed "Learning Outcomes of the Manchester Arena Table – top Exercise Manchester 17 December 2014" this document was clearly written following the Bataclan attacks in Paris of 13 November 2015 and contains the following, *"One of the main results of the exercise – and one we have previously learned on anti-terrorism training with the UK police – is that if it is going to happen, it is going to happen. Sad and frightening though it is, we have to mitigate and reduce as much as possible and try to discourage our venues from being the target ... [BTP] are happy that what we do here is as good as it can be. He is confident we are doing as much as we can to achieve the best and safest situation...and is not asking us to do anything further. The Arena has been the subject of an anti-terrorism building security audit by GMP... from which it came out very well" [p 1];*
- (ii) In the same document at p 3 and in the context of a potential firearms attack it is noted that *"The police...are happy that our visible presence on the external of the building coupled with our reputation for random searches, CCTV, robust entry procedures, is as good as possible in discouraging terrorists to see is venue as a viable or effective target";*
- (iii) [INQ001471] SMG document headed "Review of Evaluation of Stewarding Operations Plan and Deployment" dated April 2016, which contains an observation at p 5 that the police would object to automatic entry using fixed scanners on the grounds that visible staffing is a deterrent and staff interaction with customers provides a useful means of identifying suspicious behaviour;
- (iv) In the same document at p 6 during a discussion of whether full searches should be carried out on every customer entering the venue it is noted that *"[SMG] have had extensive conversations with both GMP and BTP with the intention of avoiding these additional costs and they are comfortable with our [SMG's] current levels of searches and staffing";*
- (v) [INQ001548]: p 6 an email to SMG from GMP CTSA dated 23 March 2017 following the Westminster Bridge attack of the previous day, which states that the threat level remains severe but *"there is no specific intelligence that further attacks are imminent...we would urge all sites to remain vigilant and to report suspicious behaviour."*

4.75 Further, Showsec notes that Exercise Sherman was a Marauding Terrorist Firearms Attack exercise run by GMP for a year with input from GMP CTSA Upham. Although the scenarios included a mass casualty shooting at Victoria station and in the area of the Arena, described as having taken place from where McDonalds had been, Showsec was neither invited, nor

aware of this exercise at the time: see [INQ030896] and [INQ001951]. It is perhaps surprising that Showsec (as the provider of crowd management and stewarding services to the Manchester Arena) was not invited to participate, although it is also reflective of the limited role, in this area, that Showsec could be expected to discharge.

4.76 In relation to the issue of pre-egress checks, Showsec's stance is that the description of the checks set out in the Counter-Terrorism Awareness Document [INQ021031] determined what it was that Jordan Beak was expected to do. Jordan Beak at [INQ006521 p 2] states that he went round the City Rooms to check the lifts and to ensure that nothing had been left behind, parents were not blocking the doors and that the evacuation routes were clear. He did not check the area where the bomber had concealed himself, which was not an evacuation route. Showsec would only search the mezzanine area in response to a specific request or if a suspect package had been brought to its attention.

4.77 Showsec also queries the Security Experts' use of the term "counter-terrorism sweeps." Showsec's understanding is that a counter-terrorism sweep would involve shutting down a particular area, clearing it of people and then conducting a detailed sector by sector search. This was never part of Showsec's capability or function. Showsec repeats the observation at paragraph 4.58 above as to how appropriate it would be to send its staff to carry out a search for suspected terrorists.

vi. The impact, if any, of any inadequacies in the security arrangements, including whether any inadequacies contributed to the extent of the loss of life that occurred.

4.78 Showsec accepts that its Manchester Arena Risk Assessment [INQ001477] was deficient in that it misidentified the threat level as low when it was severe, as it had been since August 2014; further, it underestimated the casualties likely to be caused by an act of terrorism; and finally, it failed to identify VBIEDs or PBIEDs as methods of terrorist attack and thus to address that risk.

4.79 It is, however, important to note, that [INQ012031], Showsec's Counter Terrorism Awareness 2017 Manchester Arena document, does correctly identify the threat level and deals with all the relevant methods of terrorist attack including VBIEDs and PBIEDs together with the steps to mitigate the risk of each.

4.80 Therefore, notwithstanding the deficiencies of [INQ001477], Showsec does not believe that this document influenced the outcome in any way.

4.81 Similarly, while Showsec accepts the comments of the Security Experts in relation to bag searches being carried out by non-licensed personnel, the bomber at all times remained in a public space and did not attempt to enter the Arena. Had he done so, either Showsec Access Control or the Showsec Area Supervisor would have profiled him and searched his bag.

4.82 It will be for the Inquiry, when possessed of all the evidence, to determine whether there were missed opportunities by either Kyle Lawler or Mohammad Agha prior to 22:14. By way of observation Showsec does not believe, when the bomber walked out of the lift and turned to go to the City Rooms at 20:50, there was any reason for Kyle Lawler to have found him suspicious given that he was coming from the station and was heading towards a public area

that led to Trinity Way and the Cheetham Hill part of Manchester. Showsec staff are trained, rightly, not to profile people based on their ethnicity.

4.83 Thereafter, the Inquiry will, no doubt, be anxious to investigate precisely what Mohammed Agha and Kyle Lawler knew, suspected and did at the relevant time and what they should have known, suspected or done including whether either or both failed to behave and react as trained. What is clear is that both Agha and Lawler had received the appropriate counter terrorism training from Showsec [INQ012118] and the SIA.

5. **TOR 5 The emergency response to the bombing including:**

i. **Planning and preparation for responding to terrorist and mass casualty incidents, including inter-agency planning, preparation and exercises prior to the attack.**

5.1 Emergency Planning was the responsibility of SMG. SMG produced [INQ001359] "Operational Procedures Emergency and Contingency Plans". Showsec was on the distribution list for this document [p 2] and was sent a Consultation Copy.

5.2 Showsec's role during an emergency evacuation, pursuant to clauses 3 and 7 of the Stewarding Services Agreement [INQ012126 pp 51 and 53] and its common law duty of care, and whether it followed a terrorist or mass casualty incident or not, was to ensure the safe evacuation of all attendees, visitors and staff.

5.3 Showsec was invited to attend bi-annual multi-agency planning meetings, which are arranged by SMG and held at the venue. Thomas Bailey sets out the attendees and subject matter in his statement [INQ025755 p 9 paragraph 25].

5.4 SMG, with help from Showsec as was required pursuant to clause 7 of [INQ012126 p 53], also put together tabletop exercises, which dealt with a number of scenarios including a firearms attack at Victoria Station [INQ012041], a sinkhole at the bottom of Hunts Bank steps and a bomb threat at Piccadilly station [INQ012042]. During these exercises topics under consideration included evacuation procedures and the involvement of the emergency services.

ii. **Policies, systems and practices relevant to the above.**

5.5 At [INQ001359 p 12], SMG's "Operational Procedures Emergency and Contingency Plans", is SMG's risk assessment for acts of terrorism within the venue, which includes bomb detonation causing multiple deaths and at [pp 13 – 14] its risk assessment for acts outside the venue, including "*Explosions. Detonation of improvised explosive device.*"

5.6 At [pp 61 – 63] is the section dealing with bomb and terrorist threats. The general procedure to be adopted is set out at [p 63].

5.7 The Showsec Operational Plan for the Manchester Arena 2017 [INQ012033] states that:

(i) Showsec's areas of responsibility include assisting the designated person, a member of SMG's staff, responsible for safety and the emergency services in any evacuation of the venue in accordance with the agreed emergency plan written by the venue [p 7];

- (ii) Showsec will adhere to the venue emergency procedures [p 29];
 - (iii) In the event of a major incident the Crowd Management Team will hand over all its resources to the police and be directed from thereon [p 4];
 - (iv) Showsec will not be responsible for the provision of direct medical services [p 4]; and
 - (v) An emergency egress should be a joint decision between the Duty Manager (SMG) and the Head of Security (Showsec) [p 29].
- 5.8 The procedures for an emergency evacuation of the City Rooms can be found at [p 36], Hunts Bank at [p 42], Trinity Roller at [pp 46 – 47], the Quadrants and Seating Blocks at [pp 51 – 52] and the Floor [pp 58 – 59].
- 5.9 A record of the training of Showsec's Heads of Security, which includes responding to emergencies, can be found at [INQ025467].
- 5.10 Showsec staff received training in evacuation as part of Showsec's Counter Terrorism module [INQ012048], which included Operation Fairway, and in basic first aid in Emergency Aid at Events [INQ120100]. This is not a first aid qualification and Showsec was not contracted or expected to provide first aid. Medical services were provided to the Arena by Emergency Training UK [INQ025754 Rigby paragraph 43].
- 5.11 There is an online training module [INQ012047] for all Showsec staff who are to work at the Venue, which covers evacuation procedures. Showsec created this module in conjunction with SMG's Miriam Stone [INQ025576 Stone paragraph 13].
- 5.12 As part of their training and before beginning work at the Arena for the first time, Showsec staff are taken around the venue in order to familiarise themselves with it. During this process, the emergency procedures are discussed. Then on each event day the Showsec Supervisors brief out the emergency procedures to each member of staff. This includes the task of each individual during an evacuation [INQ025754 Rigby paragraph 87].
- 5.13 The final decision whether to evacuate lies with SMG's Head Duty Manager (Miriam Stone on 22 May 2017) who will take advice from the SMG Fire Safety Officer and Showsec's Head of Security [INQ025754 Rigby paragraph 83], [INQ025576 Stone paragraph 61].
- 5.14 Liaison with the Emergency Services is through the SMG Fire Safety Officer and/or the SMG Head Duty Manager [INQ025754 Rigby paragraph 86].
- iii. The operational responses of relevant emergency services, those contracted to provide first aid to concert goers, the operator of the Arena venue, and relevant security advisers, including their adequacy and compliance with relevant planning, preparation, policies, systems and practices.
- 5.15 The evacuation procedures went as planned and as set out above.

- 5.16 Showsec's response to the bombing is fully set out in [INQ025754 Rigby paragraphs 113 – 128] and summarised below.
- 5.17 When the bomb detonated the CCTV screens in the Event Control Room went blank. Almost immediately staff radioed in that there had been an incident in the City Rooms. The Event Control Room notified the Whisky Control Room that there had been an incident and instructed them to notify the Emergency Services. The SMG Event Duty Manager, Miriam Stone, issued instructions for all onsite medical staff to go to the City Rooms.
- 5.18 Showsec Supervisors and all Showsec staff with radios were instructed either by Tom Rigby or at his request to change radio channels and to maintain radio silence. Tom Rigby then instructed all Showsec staff who were not in the City Rooms to divert people from that area and to use all other available exits. Diversions were put in place so that people could not access the City Rooms from the Arena. The effect of this was not only to leave the City Rooms clear for the arrival of the Emergency Services but also to spare the audience, many of whom were young children, from seeing the terrible results of the bombing.
- 5.19 Tom Rigby directed that the crowd control barriers that separated the seating from standing areas be removed to avoid a crush.
- 5.20 At Miriam Stone's request Tom Rigby asked for those Showsec staff who had first aid training to attend the City Rooms. As a result, five staff members did so along with others who had already attended in order to help, notwithstanding the fact that they could have had no idea whether there was a secondary device in that area.
- 5.21 Tom Rigby then organised sweeps of the venue to ensure that it was cleared. The venue was completely evacuated in approximately 7 – 8 minutes.
- 5.22 Showsec notes the comments of the Security Experts at [INQ032612 p 19] paragraphs 50 and 51 that by 22:45 the Event Control Room staff, under enormous pressure, managed with the assistance of the police a successful emergency evacuation of 14,000 people, many of them children and young persons, without a major crushing incident.
- 5.23 The Security Experts' opinion is that this was to the credit of those involved in the venue design, the evacuation procedures and the evacuation itself.
- iv. The inter-agency liaison, communication and decision-making between relevant emergency services, and with others, including their adequacy and compliance with relevant planning, preparation, policies, systems and practices.
- 5.24 Showsec has nothing to add to its responses above.
- v. The impact, if any, of any inadequacies in planning, preparation and/or the emergency response, including whether any inadequacies undermined the ability of the response to save live and/or contributed to the extent of the loss of life that occurred.
- 5.25 For the reasons set out above, Showsec does not believe that there were any inadequacies in its planning, preparation or response or that the actions of its staff undermined the ability to save life or contributed to the extent of the loss of life that occurred. Showsec

repeats its comments concerning the bravery and dedication of its workers who attended to help.

6. **TOR 7 The immediate cause and mechanism of each death including:**

iii. **Survivability, including whether any inadequacies in the emergency response contributed to individual deaths and/or whether any individual deaths could have been prevented.**

6.1 Showsec does not believe its response to the bombing contributed in any sense to the deaths. To the contrary, in the terrible circumstances of the City Rooms members of its staff did all they could to assist the dying and the injured.

7. Finally, in their various statements, the directors and senior management of Showsec have already expressed their condolences to the bereaved, whose loss can scarcely be imagined, and to the survivors of this atrocity. Both they and all those participating in the Inquiry on behalf of Showsec again express their sorrow and assure both the bereaved and the survivors that Showsec will co-operate to the fullest extent with them and the Inquiry, so that the truth, however uncomfortable, can be uncovered and lessons learned from this tragedy.

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