OPUS₂

Manchester Arena Inquiry

Day 18

October 13, 2020

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11 MR MICHAEL EDWARDS (continued)

12 MR COOPER

MR COOPER: I am grateful.

Mr Edwards, we can ask you some questions now that we were touching on in the other session, but let me introduce it again so we can get some context.

It's about patrols, firstly , please. We have established from you that a number of patrols were undertaken either on dark days, non-event days, or indeed on event days. And I established with you in open session the differences as far as those patrols are

As far as you are concerned, though, just as an introductory question, you were aware, anyway, weren't you, that SMG are responsible for the entire arena

- 1 estate under the terms of certain agreements? You're
- 2 aware of that, were you? 3
- A. Yes, the complex. 4 Q. Yes. Thank you.
 - One of the -- I'm asking you first about dark days, non-event days. One of the things you'd be looking for on non-event days would be locating suspicious-looking people?
- A. Correct. 9
- 10 $\mathsf{Q}.\;\;\mathsf{And}\;\mathsf{suspicious}-\mathsf{looking}\;\mathsf{people}\;\mathsf{in}\;\mathsf{fact}\;\mathsf{on}\;\mathsf{dark}\;\mathsf{days}\;\mathsf{on}\;\;$ 11 the mezzanine area, the McDonald's area?
- 12 A. Yes, that would also cover anywhere on the complex.
- 13 Q. Yes. I'm going to take you to a document in a moment, 14 which is a restricted document, to establish, so the

15 inquiry understand, that SMG were assuming

- 16 responsibility for the McDonald's area during dark days.
- 17 A. Yes.
- 18 Q. Let me take you, please, to $\{INQ001423/1\}$. These are 19 the Deister patrols.
- 20 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: You may not have seen this before and if
- 21 you need time to look at it, please say and I'll give
- 2.2 you time to do that.
- 23 A. I have seen that before.
- 24 MR COOPER: Thank you, Mr Edwards. 25
 - When did you last see it?

- 1 A. I couldn't honestly say.
- $2\,$ $\,$ Q. In accordance with your duties or in accordance with
- your preparation, perfectly properly, for giving evidence?
- 5 A. I have seen it in accordance with my duties.
- 6 Q. Can I just establish, if I may, are you still working 7 for SMG or what SMG are now? I think you were telling
- 8 us they've amalgamated
- 9 A. Yes, I am still working for ASM Global --
- Q. Which is SMG. If we look at this document first,
 please, that you'll have in front of you, I'm not going
 to go, I assure you, through each and every page, let
 alone each and every paragraph, but just to introduce

14 it

"The security team are required to complete a total 15 Deister patrols per shift. This makes 16 17 Deister patrols during any 24-hour 18 period. All patrols will be logged in the control room 19 daily occurrence book and a permanent record will be 2.0 stored in the Deister record file also located in 21 Whiskey Control. The duty control room operator will 22 ensure that all patrols have been completed to the 2.3 required standards and will check these records daily.

Deister patrols are carried out for the safety and

25 protection and prevention of the complex and are listed

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- 1 as follows."
- And you see a list there. If I can take you down to the second bottom, one is "suspicious activities":
- 4 "Anything out of the ordinary or any person found 5 loitering ."
- That is the directive that was that's the rule, to put it another way?
- 8 A. Yes

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- 9 Q. That's the rule that applied in 2017, around and about 10 the time of the bomb; that's right, isn't it?
- 11 A. That's correct.
- 12 Q. Can I ask you, please, Mr Lopez, to go to 13 {INQ001423/16-17} of this document?

These are external patrols in accordance with the Deister patrols during the dark time, as it were, the dark days. Just familiarise yourself, if you can, if you need to, with that document particularly the section which says "external patrols". This is including, as you've already established, what we know as the

- McDonald's area, isn't it?
 A. There's nothing actually on the pages I'm looking at which would distinctly say McDonald's to me.
- 23 Q. It's the mezzanine area, though, isn't it?
- A. That's the lower City Room area, not the actual mezzanine.

1 $\,$ Q. All right. If I can ask you to look at {INQ001423/17},

which is directly opposite:

3 "Ensure all emergency appliances are in correct

4 locations and fully operational."
5 It goes on, and towards the bottom of that:

6 "Check McDonald's lift is fully operational. Check

McDonald's is locked and secure when closed."

8 Do you see that on the right—hand side of the

9 screen? $\{INQ001423/17\}$ at the top.

10 A. Yes.

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- 11 Q. Do you see part of the duties of a Deister control was:
- 12 "Check McDonald's lift is fully operational. Check
- 13 McDonald's is locked and secure when closed."
- 14 So again, part and parcel of the duties for these
- $15~{\rm patrols}$ is regular patrols -- was in that McDonald's
- 16 area?
- 17 A. Yes, but I would also like to add there would be
- a Deister point location on the mezzanine floor

on the mezzanine floo

- 20 Q. Absolutely. But it's right to say, isn't it, that the
- 21 Deister patrols take you the area where McDonald's was,
- including the mezzanine area?
- 23 A. It would do, yes.
- 24 Q. It would do. And that very mezzanine area where we
- tragically later found that Abedi was hiding from CCTV?

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- 1 A. Yes, I believe so.
- 2 Q. These Deister patrols, clearly, from what we've already
- 3 established, I'm sure you'll agree, included
- 4 counter-terrorism checks?
- 5 A. Yes, that's correct.
- 6 Q. So it'd be right to say that, certainly on dark days,
- 7 SMG's own protocols effectively directed you to go to
- 8 the exact place where Abedi was later found, on another
- 9 day --
- 10 A. It would do, yes.
- 11 Q. -- in the McDonald's area --
- 12 A. Yes.
- 13 Q. -- as we call it?
- So for it to be said that SMG had no responsibility
- for the McDonald's area would be entirely wrong,
- 16 wouldn't it? It had responsibility certainly in dark
- 17 days
- 18 A. Yes, especially on that upper mezzanine level.
- 19 Q. I only mention that because in opening, sir, I think it
 - was Mr Laidlaw that said he'd be surprised if anyone was
- suggesting that. Well, for the avoidance of doubt,
- 22 we are.

2.0

- 23 Forgive me
- 24 That's the directive as far as dark days are
- concerned and as far as SMG and the mezzanine McDonald's

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- 1 area is concerned. Would you agree with your experience
- 2 it would be illogical for that same form of patrol not
- 3 to take place during event days as a matter of common
- 4 sense?

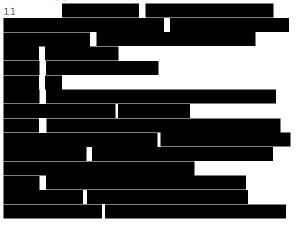
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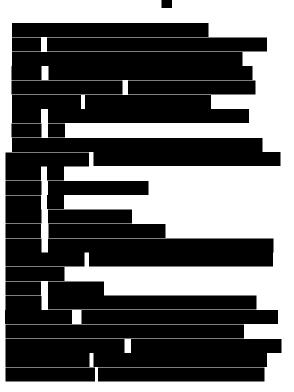
- 5 A. You mean the Deister patrol or a patrol?
- Q. Any form of patrol over the mezzanine area around the 6
 - McDonald's area. It was clearly taking place during
- 8 non-event days, so it would be illogical, at the very
- 9 least, would you agree, for it not to be equally taking
- 10 place during event days? No reason why it shouldn't do,
- 11 is there?
- 12 A. No. there is no reason for that one.
- 13 Q. And in fact, would you agree, there's more reason for
- 14 the patrols to take place over the mezzanine area, the
- 15 McDonald's area, during event days, more reason for it
- 16 to occur than in fact during dark days, during non-event
- 17 days?
- 18 A. Correct, because obviously there's more people in and
- 19 around that area
- 20 Q. Thank you. Take it from me, and I'll be corrected in
- 2.1 due course if I'm wrong -- and you may even know -- that
- 2.2 the facility or the services management agreement in
- 2.3 terms of SMG's responsibilities and ShowSec's
- 2.4 responsibilities make no distinction between event and
- non-event days --

- 1 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Forgive me, I think you're going to
- 2 upset people from ShowSec. They're not a party to the
- 3 facilities management agreement.
- MR COOPER: Then I'll rephrase it, of course.
- 5 So far as the facilities management agreement is
- 6 concerned, no distinction is made between event and
- 7 non-event days. Did you know that? It may be for
- 8 somebody else?
- 9 A. That's for somebody else.
- 10 Q. All right. As a man of experience, and you've given us 11
- your 14 years in this particular job, were you in
- 12 security before you started with SMG?
- 13 A. I did work for ShowSec.
- 14 Q. You worked for ShowSec before you worked for SMG?
- 15 A. Yes, I worked for ShowSec for -- I think it was about 16 3 years.
- 17 Q. Would you agree, with all the experience you've got and
- 18 what we've just put to you, somewhat surprisingly event
- 19 days had a lower level of security? When one compares
- 2.0 the dark day checks over the mezzanine area and the
- 21 McDonald's area that aren't in existence during the
- 2.2 event days, would you agree with all your experience
- 23 that event days in fact had a lower level of security?
- 24 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Mr Cooper, I think at the end of the day
- 2.5 that's probably a matter for me. I think you've

1 probably made your point without having an answer to the 2 auestion.

- 3 MR COOPER: Sir, the only reason I ask the question --
- 4 I think Mr Lavery had a similar question put to him on
- 5 the basis of his experience, but you're the chair, you
- know what helps you and what doesn't help you, I'll move 6 7
- 8 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I can obviously see the point you're 9 making.
- MR COOPER: Then I shall move on. 10





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