

OPUS2

Manchester Arena Inquiry

Day 18

October 13, 2020

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1 Tuesday, 13 October 2010

2 [REDACTED]

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1 [REDACTED]

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1 [REDACTED]

11 MR MICHAEL EDWARDS (continued)

12 [REDACTED] MR COOPER

13 MR COOPER: I am grateful.

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

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

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

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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.

5 One of the -- I'm asking you first about dark days,
6 non-event days. One of the things you'd be looking for
7 on non-event days would be locating suspicious-looking
8 people?

9 A. Correct.

10 Q. And suspicious-looking people in fact on dark days 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
22 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?

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1 A. I couldn't honestly say.
 2 Q. In accordance with your duties or in accordance with
 3 your preparation, perfectly properly, for giving
 4 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 --
 10 Q. Which is SMG. If we look at this document first,
 11 please, that you'll have in front of you, I'm not going
 12 to go, I assure you, through each and every page, let
 13 alone each and every paragraph, but just to introduce
 14 it:
 15 "The security team are required to complete a total
 16 of [REDACTED] Deister patrols per shift. This makes
 17 a total of [REDACTED] 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
 20 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
 23 required standards and will check these records daily.
 24 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."
 2 And you see a list there. If I can take you down to
 3 the second bottom, one is "suspicious activities":
 4 "Anything out of the ordinary or any person found
 5 loitering."
 6 That is the directive that was -- that's the rule,
 7 to put it another way?
 8 A. Yes.
 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?
 14 These are external patrols in accordance with the
 15 Deister patrols during the dark time, as it were, the
 16 dark days. Just familiarise yourself, if you can, if
 17 you need to, with that document particularly the section
 18 which says "external patrols". This is including, as
 19 you've already established, what we know as the
 20 McDonald's area, isn't it?
 21 A. There's nothing actually on the pages I'm looking at
 22 which would distinctly say McDonald's to me.
 23 Q. It's the mezzanine area, though, isn't it?
 24 A. That's the lower City Room area, not the actual
 25 mezzanine.

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1 Q. All right. If I can ask you to look at {INQ001423/17},
 2 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
 7 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.
 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 patrols is regular patrols -- was in that McDonald's
 16 area?
 17 A. Yes, but I would also like to add there would be
 18 a Deister point location on the mezzanine floor
 19 on the mezzanine floor
 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,
 22 including the mezzanine area?
 23 A. It would do, yes.
 24 Q. It would do. And that very mezzanine area where we
 25 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?
 14 So for it to be said that SMG had no responsibility
 15 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
 20 was Mr Laidlaw that said he'd be surprised if anyone was
 21 suggesting that. Well, for the avoidance of doubt,
 22 we are.
 23 Forgive me.
 24 That's the directive as far as dark days are
 25 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?
 5 A. You mean the Deister patrol or a patrol?
 6 Q. Any form of patrol over the mezzanine area around the
 7 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
 21 due course if I'm wrong -- and you may even know -- that
 22 the facility or the services management agreement in
 23 terms of SMG's responsibilities and ShowSec's
 24 responsibilities make no distinction between event and
 25 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.
 4 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
 20 the dark day checks over the mezzanine area and the
 21 McDonald's area that aren't in existence during the
 22 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
 25 that's probably a matter for me. I think you've

1 probably made your point without having an answer to the
 2 question.
 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
 6 know what helps you and what doesn't help you, I'll move
 7 on.
 8 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I can obviously see the point you're
 9 making.
 10 MR COOPER: Then I shall move on.

11 [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]