

WITNESS STATEMENT

Criminal Procedure Rules, r27.2; Criminal Justice Act 1967, s.9; Magistrates' Courts Act 1980, s.5b

Statement of: AGHA, MOHAMMAD ALI

Age if under 18: Over 18 (if over 18 insert 'over 18')

Occupation: IT APPRENTICE/PART TIME SECURITY

This statement (consisting of 3 page(s) each signed by me) is true to the best of my knowledge and belief and I make it knowing that, if it is tendered in evidence, I shall be liable to prosecution if I have wilfully stated in it anything which I know to be false, or do not believe to be true.

Signature: M AGHA

Date: 01/06/2017

Tick if witness evidence is visually recorded (supply witness details on rear)

I am the above named person and reside at the address stated overleaf. I am an IT Apprentice and currently work part time as a Security member of Showsec, which involves working mainly at concert venues. I am Security Industry Authority qualified and my badge number is MCR9817 which allows me to work at events.

On Monday the 22nd May 2017 I was rostered to work at the Ariana GRANDE concert at the Manchester Arena,I was asked to be at the Manchester Arena at 17:30 hours, I arrived at 17: 15 hours and made my way directly to the locker room, where I got dressed ready for work. I then made my way to the safety briefing on the concourse of the arena.

This evening I was tasked to work on the fire doors known as the grey doors or the east doors, which are in the area known as the city rooms. This area can be accessed from the Victoria Station Bridge. I started my shift at this location at 17:45 hours standing in front of the east doors; the public attending the concert started appearing at my location at 18:00 hours and continued through to approximately 19:00 hours by this time the majority of the persons attending the concert had arrived, but there were still a slow stream of people passing through this area going to Victoria Station.

Approximately 19:00 hours whilst at my position at the east doors I noticed a male 5 feet 10 inches tall in his early twenties light skin, he was wearing a dark coloured baseball cap, make not known, he had a short beard and also wearing glasses, he was wearing a dark coloured jacket with short sleeves, possibly grey, he was wearing a dark coloured t-shirt and was carrying a rucksack on his back.

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I would describe the rucksack as a large camping type rucksack, the rucksack was black in colour and green in parts with black straps, he was wearing dark blue denim jeans and white trainers with black soles, I specifically remember his trainers because I liked them, they were Jordan Nike trainers.

This male then went and sat on the top of stairs to the left of my position, however, whilst in my position I was unable to see this male all the time, the male remained on the stairs until approximately 20:00 hours when I observed the male come from the stairs area, he then walked towards Victoria Station area and across the bridge out of my sight.

Approximately 10 – 15 minutes later I was talking to a lady who stated she was waiting for someone who was attending the concert, I would describe this lady as white and about thirty years of age, I was checking that the lady was OK, it was during this conversation with the lady I again observed the male returning to the City Rooms area from the direction of the Victoria Station Bridge, I observed him walking towards the stairs, the male was still carrying the rucksack and he went up the stairs and out of my view, once this conversation with the lady finished I saw the male sat on the top stair where he had been sat before.

Approximately 20:50 hours whilst stood by the fire doors I was approached by a member of the public, who stated he was suspicious of a male sat at the top of the stairs to left of my position, he stated he was concerned about this male carrying a large rucksack; I immediately told the male not to worry, I would report his concerns as soon as possible, I would describe this male was white, 40 – 50 years of age, not further described.

Several moments later I observed my colleague Kyle LAWLER, Kyle was the radio holder in this area, he was approaching my position from the Victoria Station Bridge area. I immediately attracted his attention by waving him over.

When Kyle came to me I explained to Kyle the concerns that were conveyed to me by the member of the public regarding the male carrying the large rucksack, me and Kyle then moved to where we could observe this male who was still sat at the top of the stairs on the right near to the wall.

Kyle and I stood staring at this male for about a minute, Kyle watched him for a longer period than me; the male was aware that we were watching him and as a result became nervous and began to fidgeting with his hands, Kyle then told me that he would radio the concerns raised about this male into control.

I was not aware if Kyle radioed through the concerns that had been raised about this man, Kyle went back to his location at Victoria Station; approximately 21:10 hours another member of Showsec staff

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approached me at my position, the member of staff stated he had come to relieve me whilst I took my break for 15 minutes, I left my position and went directly to the locker room for my break.

I returned from my break at 21:25 and took up my position at the east doors, I remained stood in this position for the remainder of the evening; for the next hour there was a steady flow of people cutting through my area either going to Victoria Station or waiting for people who were attending the concert. Approximately 22:30 I was approached by a white male in his late twenties, this male asked me for the directions to the Metrolink, I gave him the directions. Whilst giving directions to this male through my peripheral vision I saw the male carrying the rucksack to my left, he was walking towards the crowd that were now exiting the arena, once I had finished giving directions to the member of public, the male with the large rucksack was about 5 metres to my front.

The male had his phone in his right hand; he was talking on his phone and was smiling as though he was very happy to be talking to the person on the phone, I assumed he was meeting someone and had found his friend, at this point people starting pouring out of the concert I stood looking for this male but he was lost to me in the crowds exiting the arena.

I then started looking for him standing on my tip toes, trying to look over the heads of the exiting crowds, I couldn't see him; seconds later there was a loud explosion and deafening noise, followed by an orange bright light; I was then hit by a great force that lifted me off the floor, throwing me back against the east doors where I ended up lay on the floor, initially I was unable to see or hear anything; my ears were also ringing.

This all seemed to have happened in slow motion, moments later I got to my feet I immediately saw my colleague Kyle LAWLER come running into the area from Victoria Station Bridge; me and Kyle started evacuating people from this area which at this time was chaotic, people were screaming and running in all different directions.

At this time we did not know which way to send people, we had no idea which areas were safe, the emergency services had not yet arrived at the scene; once this area had been cleared of concert goes I then observed that there was dead people all around me, and there were body parts and human organs all over the area.

I then noticed that more Showsec staff started arriving at this location and looked as though they were giving them first aid to the injured, I then moved towards the arena concourse area where I met my friend who also works for Showsec, his name is Ozeair HUSSAIN, we both asked each other if we were OK he

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