

Southport Inquiry

Participation by DR in the Southport Inquiry

An issue of significance has recently arisen which I have needed to resolve as a matter of urgency. It is important that my decision on this matter is communicated to all the Core Participants at the earliest opportunity. This is set out below.

I recently determined the applications for Core Participant status (“CP status”) from a range of individuals and organisations. As part of that process, I approved the request in this regard by DR, who is the brother of AR. The application – and my decision to grant CP status - was based on each limb of Rule 5(2) of the Inquiry Rules 2006, including that “the person may be subject to explicit or significant criticism during the inquiry proceedings or in the report, or in any interim report” (Rule 5(2)(c)). One of the issues that will fall for consideration during the Inquiry is the extent to which the threat posed by AR was appreciated and appropriately handled, in advance of the attack, by the various immediate members of his family, including DR. Their influence over him, or the lack of it, along with the steps they did or did not take will be the subject of examination during the hearings in September and October 2025. On this and other grounds, I accepted that DR meets the criteria for CP status. However, his significant interest in the events for which he “may be the subject of explicit or significant criticism” includes the events early on the day of the attack only up until the point when AR got into the taxi for the journey to the premises. Thereafter, DR’s legitimate interest in the events, as far as the Inquiry is concerned, ends. It is not credibly suggested that he had any involvement in the attack and there is no support for a contention that he has any appropriate interest in the impact of his brother’s attack on the victims and the families of the victims, along with what happened thereafter. In my judgment, therefore, DR could not reasonably maintain that he has a “significant” interest in the detail of the course of the attack, its effect on the victims or the families of the victims or the events that followed, such as to justify his engagement vis-a-vis those issues as a Core Participant. Any curiosity on his part as to these matters fails to meet the threshold of “significant” for the purposes of Rule 5 of the Inquiry Rules 2006.

In granting the DR’s application I recognised that this may be a sensitive issue for the families (as rightly acknowledged by DR as the Applicant for CP status), and that this would need to be handled with care. But I was satisfied that his application clearly satisfied the Rule 5(2) criteria.

A number of the parents of the child victims and at least one of the adult victims have expressed considerable concern over the possibility that DR will be able to listen, either by being in court or via a live link, to the impact statements and commemorative portraits as delivered by members of the families. In a similar vein, there is a significant

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concern at the possibility of DR being provided with disclosure of any of the highly sensitive materials relating to the narrative of the attack, its effect on the victims and their families and the evidence concerning the events that occurred thereafter.

These anxieties have been expressed in the strongest terms, and I am unreservedly persuaded that it would create a major obstacle to the participation of many of the victims and the families of the victims in the Inquiry if they apprehended that the brother of the perpetrator was watching, either by being in court or via a live link, to the delivery of the impact evidence and the commemorative portraits. As an additional and persuasive factor, concern has been expressed that DR, by having access to this material, may come to learn at least some of their identities and highly sensitive and distressing information about the injuries sustained and medical treatment.

While it is conventional for all CPs to be afforded the same disclosure and there is usually no bar to them attending the entirety of the hearings, there is no rule that compels this approach and as Chairman I have a broad discretion. I have noted that in the Grenfell Inquiry a modular approach limited disclosure to, and the range of issues to be considered by, the various Core Participants, with each module addressing specific aspects of the tragedy.


As a consequence I have decided that:

- i) DR and his legal team will not receive disclosure of any material that covers the narrative of what occurred from the moment AR got into the taxi and they will not receive disclosure of the materials concerning the aftermath (including the injuries inflicted and the various responses by others to what had occurred);
- ii) DR and his legal team will not receive advanced disclosure of the impact evidence or the commemorative portraits;
- iii) DR and his legal team will not attend, either by being in court or via a live link, the part of the hearings when the Inquiry receives the impact evidence and commemorative portraits.

I stress that DR will be able to participate appropriately during the Inquiry in all the matters that properly concern him.

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I also stress that no adverse inference of any kind should be made from this ruling concerning DR's motivation or intent. The basis of this Ruling is the wholly understandable impacts on the victims and their families (all of whom are traumatised) of a member of AR's family having access to sensitive materials concerning the detail of the attack and its impact on the victims. I have also had regard to the Inquiry's Terms of Reference that require me to make pragmatic choices as to the methods and procedures to be adopted in order to deliver the work of this Inquiry within the required timeframe.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Adrian Fulford". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Sir Adrian Fulford

27 June 2025