

Witness Name: JUAN MARTINEZ

Exhibits: [JM/01-JM/29]

Dated: 21 August 2025

THE SOUTHPORT INQUIRY

FIRST WITNESS STATEMENT OF JUAN MARTINEZ

I, **Juan Martínez**, will say as follows: -

INTRODUCTION

1. I am the co-founder and director of the company AGEO wholesale UK Limited, trading as Hunting & Knives, and have been since 2015.
2. This witness statement is made to assist the Southport Inquiry (the “**Inquiry**”) with the matters set out in the Rule 9 Request dated 25 July 2025.

FACTUAL ACCOUNT OF INVOLVEMENT

3. AR made two orders from huntingandknives.co.uk, one in October 2023 which was completed, and the second in June 2024 which was not completed. The details of these orders are set out below.

ORDER 1: Machete ordered in October 2023, Order number 100004317 (sale completed)

4. The exchange of emails between Hunting and Knives and AR from September 2023 – October 2023 are set out below. These are exhibited as **JM/01 – HKAW000002**; **JM/02 – HKAW000003**; **JM/03 – HKAW000004**; **JM/04 – HKAW000005**; **JM/05 – HKAW000006**
5. Query received from AR by e-mail on 28th September 2023:

“Hi, In order to verify my age for age restricted items, do you ask for ID online or does the courier ask for it in person?”

6. Answer sent by Hunting and Knives by e-mail on 28th September 2023:

*"Hello, we always request online verification unless it can be verified by the electoral roll and the address matches.
Although sometimes delivery verification is also requested.*

It is also possible to verify your identity if you send us a proof to this email. In the case of online verification, it is only necessary to do it once and your account will be verified.

Despite the exceptions contemplated by law, we always establish the minimum purchase period at 18 years or over.

We hope to have helped you with your query, we remain at your disposal for any other question."

7. Query received from AR by email on 1st October 2023:

"Does the person who receives the delivery have to be the same person on the ID or not?"

8. Answer sent by Hunting and Knives by e-mail on 2nd October 2023:

*"Hello,
Yes, the package is marked with the name of the person who must receive the package and in this type of shipments it is specified that the named person must be the one who receives the merchandise. Otherwise the delivery person would not be doing the job well, since this aspect is what was agreed upon with the transport company.*

It would be possible to schedule a delivery at a collection point if you are not going to be at home; This could be done once the tracking number is received from the transport company's website.

I hope I have helped you with your query."

9. Query received from AR by e-mail on 3rd October 2023:

"What types of collection points are available?"

10. This e-mail wasn't answered by Hunting and Knives.

11. AR ordered a machete from huntingandknives.co.uk on 14 October 2023. The order details are set out below:

- Order date: 14 October 2023
- Payment date: 14 October 2023
- Age verification: The document AR supplied was a drivers licence in the name of **DPA** Olakunle (the copy retained by us is exhibited here **JM/06 – HKAW000007**)
- Delivery date: 24 October 2023
- Tracking number: H00IEA0123404828 for Parcelhub - Evri assigned
- Article: jkr-488 machete

12. The description of this machete at huntingandknives.co.uk at the time of purchase was as follows:

KUKRI MACHETE CONGO 488 JKR (**JM/07 – HKAW000008**)

Like any good kukri machete, the Congo Kukri have 3 parts to their blade, a pointed tip for stabbing, a wide midsection for chopping, and a narrow area near the handle for whittling and carving.

Heavy duty enough to withstand serious cutting and make short work of everything from tall grass to small tree limbs. Its pointed tip pokes and pierces with accurate ease.

The wide midsection chops wood or vegetables powerfully and cleanly. The narrow area above the handle allows for wood carving or whittling of kindling.

Supplier Description

<https://mayoristacuchilleria.com/co-knives-machetes-jkr-2.html>

The kukri machete has its origin in Nepal, the main use of the machete is to mow, prune and cut leaves and branches.

This Congo JKR machete is a machete with a curved blade, made of stainless steel with a length of 30.5 cm. With black nylon sheath.

Its orange ABS and black rubber handle is a perfect tandem, as it has a great non-slip, comfortable and resistant grip.

Features

Blade length: 30.5cm

Blade material: stainless steel

Handle material: ABS and rubber

Sheath material: black nylon

Brand description:

<https://www.joker.es/es/machete-jkr-congo-mango-de-goma-y-abs-hoja-de-305-cm-acero-inox460/460/>

RUBBER + ABS HANDLE STAINLESS STEEL 30.5 CM BLADE LENGTH
MACHETE

TROPICANO JKR

Machete JKR CONGO

Rubber + ABS Handle

Acier: S.S 30,5 cm blade length

Nylon sheath

13. This machete is not considered as zombie machete.
14. The machete was discontinued as we are waiting for Ronan's new law to be approved, scheduled for the end of 2025. We are discontinuing machetes until this new law clarifies what is legal and what is not. Since machetes as such are not illegal, as they are considered a working tool for the countryside. At present, only zombie items, which include certain specific models of machetes (the machete in question would not be included in this classification), are being discontinued.

Delivery

15. The Inquiry have asked for details as to who delivered the item (Carrier and name). The delivery company was Evri, with tracking number H00IEA0123404828, but due to the time elapsed, we cannot find any additional information about the delivery, such as the driver's name, in the delivery company's systems.

ORDER 2: Knife ordered in June 2024, Order number 100005276 (sale not completed)

16. AR made his second order on 21 June 2024. He ordered a '135800 kitchen knife'.

17. The description of this knife at <https://www.huntingandknives.co.uk/arcos-niza-chef-s-knife-135800.html> is as follows:

Design: Simplicity at it's best. Light yet durable. Perfect for everyday use.

Blade: Exclusive, high usable and lasting NITRUM stainless steel.

Handle: Exclusive, high usable and lasting NITRUM stainless steel. The lightweight polypropylene (PP) handle is durable and is able to resist temperatures of up to 120-130°C.

Supplier Description

<https://mayoristacuchilleria.com/co-knives-niza-1.html>

SKU: 18-135800 - (CUCHILLOS DE COCINA NIZA)

200 mm Chef's knife

Brand description

https://www.arcos.com/es_ES/cuchillo-cocinero-135800?_gl=1*d2whhr*_up*MQ..*_gs*MQ..&gclid=CjwKCAjw1ozEBhAdEiwAn9qbzYg5zLGMZB1FAL7kkshjIO6QQdLnlfpxBMWaQEUzYyaOciGATZLm_BoCjmKQAvD_BwE&gbraid=0AAAAADymFVQ8-h-xOZ81azVQGqrqYv30J

Niza Series 200 mm Chef's Knife

SKU 135800

Knives with wide blade, smooth edge, stable and strong. Multi-use knife. Cleans, slices and chop vegetables

18. I set out below the exchange of emails between Hunting and Knives and AR from June 2024 – July 2024. These are exhibited as **JM/08 – HKAW000009**; **JM/09 – HKAW000010**; **JM/10 – HKAW000011**; **JM/11 – HKAW000012**.

19. Query received from AR by e-mail on 11 July 2024:

"It has been 20 days since I ordered a product from HK and I still haven't recieved it even though the confirmation email said it would take 20 business days.

When will my order be delivered?"

20. Answer sent by Hunting and Knives by e-mail on 12 July 2024:

"Hello,
can you please tell me your order number?
Thanks."

21. Query received from AR by e-mail on 12 July 2024:

"#100005276

Query by e-mail 13 July 2024

It has been 22 days since I ordered a product from HK and I still haven't recieved it even though the confirmation email said it would take 20 business days.

When will my order be delivered?

Order number: # 100005276"

22. Answer sent by Hunting and Knives by email on 15 July 2024:

"Hello **DPA**

I am sorry to tell you that your order is pending because you haven't paid yet.

You have to pay and we will proceed with the order.

Sorry.

Have a good day."

23. AR didn't make payment so the order wasn't processed.

24. I have searched our systems for all emails received and sent from a.megalaria7@yahoo.com.

a. The following screenshots show the search results of emails received and sent from the e-mail account sales@huntingandknives.co.uk (JM/12 – **HKAW000013** and JM/13 – **HKAW000014**) (a total of 10 emails).

b. The following screenshots show the search results of e-mails received and sent from the e-mail account info@huntingandknives.co.uk (JM/14 – **HKAW000015** and JM/15 – **HKAW000016**). There were no emails found.

25. In addition to these emails, automated emails are sent:

- a. When the customer registers
- b. When the order is confirmed
- c. When payment is confirmed, age verification is requested
- d. When payment is confirmed, an email with the invoice is sent

- e. When the order is shipped
 - f. If the customer is registered for the newsletter, periodic emails with information are sent. This account is not registered for the newsletter.
26. The Inquiry has asked me to include any communication with and orders from AR through the email accounts, a.hyenadon@gmail.com or DPA. We have searched our systems and found no record of the information requested from those emails (see JM/16 – HKAW000017; JM/17 – HKAW000018; JM/18 – HKAW000019; JM/19 – HKAW000020).

Age Verification at Hunting and Knives

27. Since 2022, in connection with the murder of Ronan Kanda, customers have been asked to provide proof of age (a driver's license or passport) before submitting an order. Previously, the electoral roll was consulted.
28. Upon accessing the website, a pop-up window appears explaining the age restrictions, both on the page of each item requiring age verification and in the shopping cart (JM/20 – HKAW000021; JM/21 – HKAW000022, JM/22 – HKAW000023).
29. We also have a Cookie and Age Notification message which states "Huntingandknives.co.uk is only for adults over 18 years old" (JM/23 – HKAW000024).
30. We have two pages under 'More Information' (JM/24 – HKAW000025) which provide further details on to age restriction and UK Legislation:
- a. <https://www.huntingandknives.co.uk/age-restriction> (JM/25 – HKAW000026).
 - b. <https://www.huntingandknives.co.uk/knife-legislation> (JM/26 – HKAW000027).
31. When placing your order, you must upload your ID proving your age. If you don't, you'll receive an email with the following text:

Hello,

Thank you for placing an order with H&K.

We're pleased to inform you that we've received your order. However, we are unable to verify your age through our standard procedures. To comply with

current legislation, it is essential for us to confirm your age before processing your order further, you can provide evidence by sending it to info@huntingandknives.co.uk.

Please provide valid proof of age, such as a driver's license or passport, to ensure that we can proceed with your order smoothly. Failure to provide this documentation may result in the cancellation of your order and a refund of the funds.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this process, please feel free to contact us. We're here to assist you.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Best regards,

AR's emails about age verification and delivery points

32. The Inquiry has asked if the emails received from AR asking about age verification arrangements and delivery points caused suspicion, and what our policies are around how such enquiries are handled. We did not observe any unusual behavior during age verification procedures, as customers generally do not wish to provide documents or personal information. In this case, **DPA** (AR) sent us a copy of his driver's licence (JM/06 - **HKAW000007**). Regarding delivery locations, many customers ask about this due to their work schedules, as they are not at the delivery address all day. AR was able to place and receive an order by impersonating someone else.
33. It's common for a new customer (this was their first order) to contact us to find out how online sales work, especially when they're older. At the time, **DPA** (AR) had told us he was 62 years old.
34. Regarding our policy for responding to a customer enquiry, we try to provide as much information as possible to clarify any questions they may have.
35. It didn't raise any suspicions. It's common for customers to ask questions, and more than suspicious behavior, it reflects distrust of online shopping and the fraud cases that occur.
36. The media more frequently reports cases of online fraud than parents who lend their children their credit cards, or identity documents such as driver's licenses or passports, which their owners, who are usually adults, fail to store securely.

Once the facts were known, I must remind you that we thought the buyer was an elderly man unfamiliar with how online shopping works and unsure whether his order would arrive once he paid for it.

Data Protection Requests

37. On 8 January 2024, DC Doyle made a Data Protection Request of huntingandknives.co.uk requesting we disclose details of the June 2024 order (JM/27 – HKAW000028). This was our answer:

*"Hello,
sorry for the delay, we lost the first e-mail, yes, it's right this person made an order with us, but it wasn't paid so the order wasn't complete.
He ordered a kitchen knife. Attached is a resume of the order.*

The information is:

DPA Olakunle
10 Old School Close
Banks, Merseyside, PR9 8SB
United Kingdom
T: 0000000000

The article ordered is: ARCOS NIZA Chef's Knife 135800

Please, let us know if you need any further information, we will be pleased to help."

38. As set out above, the knife was not delivered to AR.

39. On 12 September 2024, the Merseyside Police made a further request from huntingandknives.co.uk under the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR for information relating to a purchase from our website on 15 October 2023 for the sum of £33.85 (JM/28 – HKAW000029). With the information provided in the request, our system did not find any results. The account holder was not listed as a customer, and no transfer for that amount was received by our bank.

40. With the additional information provided by the Inquiry in its Rule 9 Request, we have been able to find details of the two orders placed with by a.megalaria7@yahoo.com

in our records. Full details of those two orders are set out above. In addition, in 2023 the age verification was done at the time of the order was made.

41. As set out above, the age was verified by providing the driver's licence (JM/06 – HKAW000007).

REFLECTION ON EVENTS

42. We haven't conducted any internal investigations; we were unaware that A.R. had been involved in any type of attack. However, since Ronan Kanda's murder, we have removed all potentially illegal items from our catalog, becoming even stricter. Since then, we have been working to find shipping companies that verify the recipient's age and ensure that the item is actually delivered to the adult who purchased it. This statement is becoming an internal review. To answer all these questions, I need to analyze how the entire process was carried out and explore details I wasn't fully aware of.
43. As for the possibility of having handled the situation differently, honestly, despite the enormous helplessness and emotion I feel as a father and citizen in the face of the murder of these three young people, and going further, if this same case had involved adults, I don't think we could have done our job more efficiently at the time.
44. From today's perspective, I believe our organization should implement an internal protocol to detect potential cases of attempted identity theft until the "Ronan Act" is passed.
45. The Inquiry has asked if Hunting and Knives have improved or tightened our age verification or controls on access to its website since the sale to AR in October 2023 and attempted purchase in June / July 2023. The answer to this is yes.
- a. All packages shipped require signature verification upon delivery by an adult over the age of 21, even if this has resulted in higher costs.
 - b. We now have double age verification, at the time of ordering and upon delivery, ensuring traceability of the sale and ensuring that the person who pays and has identified themselves as an adult is the one who collects the item.
46. I am very grateful to the authorities for asking us to collaborate and participate in everything that improves our society. At the same time, I would like to receive more support from the authorities to improve in the future and be part of the solution.

47. The Inquiry has asked if there is now a process / policy if an online customer is asking questions that might suggest they are a child seeking to test what the age verification procedures will be. The answer is no, the methods described above are the ones used to verify age, and many orders are declined because they cannot be accurately verified. We sincerely believe that with the double age verification we perform, none of these items should reach a minor.
48. We do not follow up or investigate cases where the requested documentation is not provided; we assume the customer has simply decided not to make the purchase.

Recommendations

49. I believe legislative measures are needed to raise awareness in society and better control the sale of these products to both minors and adults. The age range from minor to adult is under 18 or over, and can even be reduced to 16. In these cases, it's clear that there may be underlying mental health issues, whether it's a machete murder, a kitchen knife within easy reach of everyone in any home, or a person using a car to run over a crowd.
50. In this case all courier companies should be required by law to verify age, regardless of the product, as illegal activities could be occurring through online sales, not only of knives, but also of counterfeit products, unregulated pharmaceuticals, etc. Online sales have generated a significant increase in the turnover of these companies, and they must ensure who their packages are delivered to, so we know who is ultimately responsible for the purchase and who could be committing a crime or could do so in the future.
51. Creation of an agency specializing in monitoring online sales, with the primary objective of ensuring compliance with the law in this market and preventing sanctions by reviewing websites and reporting non-compliant products, and publishing cases of detected items on a dashboard accessible to citizens and businesses.
52. Bank control of payments and require the various payment gateways to inform online sales companies, in addition to the amount paid, of the cardholder's name and phone number to verify that the order has been paid by the person who placed it.
53. Creating a list of people who cannot purchase these products due to mental health issues, criminal records, etc. Nowadays, it's very easy to create a restricted-access website so companies can check if a potential buyer falls into this category. Once verified, the company is required to inform the appropriate authorities.

54. In both the cases of Ronan's murder and AR's, a fundamental issue is identified: identity theft in the purchase. In Ronan's case, the purchase of the buyer's mother is a matter of parental responsibility.
55. A minor should not have a credit card enabled for online purchases or be able to make bank transfers. If they cannot make the payment, the purchase cannot be made.
56. Greater control of video games. It seems that minors are using violent video games from a very young age, and when they reach adolescence, they want to imitate the video game's protagonists. I can't understand any other way that a minor or adult, with a machete, would start killing other people without any qualms, and not even think at that moment that they are the protagonist of the video game. I think research should take this into account and analyze it.
57. Parental control and control by the educational community of extreme behavior.

Additional questions relating to huntingandknives.co.uk

58. The Inquiry has asked about the section on our website with knives for sale listed as "Tactical knives" and in particular, why they are sold and for what purpose. The buyer's mentality has evolved. Many people believe that a hunting knife is used to kill animals, and society has shifted from rural areas, where knives are work tools, to cities, where they are not perceived in the same way.
59. Following this line of thinking, many nature lovers practice survival as a sport for various reasons that are not worth examining here. Tactical knives can be found in this category, and machetes are also used by this group.
60. On the other hand, there is a high percentage of customers who collect these items as they would any other type of thing, but there is no collectors' association.
61. The Inquiry has noted that on the front page of our website there are links to a blog on machetes and has asked why they are sold, their purpose, how they differ from unlawful zombie machetes, and why we provide the link to the blog.
62. We understand that all cutlery items are working tools, designed for a specific purpose. Machetes were originally developed as a field tool, but they are also used by bushcrafters. The difference between using one tool or another depends on the natural conditions of the location where the sport is practiced. Any type of knife, being a cutting tool, can be used as a weapon, be it a pocket knife, a kitchen knife, or even other tools or utensils such as a hammer, a baseball bat, or a simple crowbar. The

issue is not the tool itself, but the hand that wields it and the mind that directs its use. Recently, we have even seen cars used to attack people.

63. The main purpose of the machetes listed as 'Tactical knives' on our website, is to clear a path through undergrowth, cutting branches, reeds, or any vegetation blocking a path. Their shape is only important in terms of ergonomics, depending on what the user finds most comfortable.
64. This is the description in the law of prohibited articles:
- "Zombie knife: A knife with a cutting edge, a serrated edge and images or words suggesting it is used for violence."*
65. Taking into account the legal description, the machete bought by AR would not be classified as a Zombie machete because it doesn't fit to this description, unless the new law changes this description.
66. Illegal zombie machetes are basically prohibited because they are decorated with motifs considered aggressive and can incite violence. In reality, their use should be the same, but perhaps the designs are also more aggressive.
67. The blog post link referenced above was an old link that is now deactivated. Links on websites are usually created based on recommendations from SEO tools. They are used to increase website visibility and improve search engine rankings. When I was asked about this link in the Rule 9 Request, I hadn't realised it was still active, and it was deactivated because the machetes had been removed from our catalogue and it made no sense to advertise a product that was no longer available.
68. The Inquiry has asked me to consider whether AR's access to our website and past purchase and attempted further purchase has caused our organization to reflect on the website content and controls.
69. AR has not made multiple purchases or attempted multiple subsequent purchases. As mentioned in the statement, he made one purchase impersonating an adult and attempted another.
70. We are constantly working on the website to improve all aspects, ensuring compliance with the law at all times. In this regard, we believe that verifying the buyer's identity at the time of purchase and at the time of delivery is sufficient. Our concern is verifying the delivery address. Some buyers may prefer delivery to their

workplace or a pickup point due to work-related reasons. This should be completely legal and should not affect age verification in any way.

71. Delivery to a third party who can prove their legal age and is not the purchaser should also be possible. In many cases, an adult (for example, a child) makes a purchase to send to another adult (for example, a mother) as a gift. If both the purchaser and the recipient are adults and their age has been verified, there should be no shipping restrictions.
72. Our organization, like any business where there is uncertainty, is affected by the current situation, faced with the uncertainty surrounding the development of a law that seems to not to be approved at the moment.
73. It would be very helpful if legislators implemented an online customer verification system, not only for age, but also for adults who have been convicted of any type of criminal offense.
74. I think the approach taken with the future "Ronan Law" is not correct. It seems to focus on restricting the sale of items that, when properly used, are still tools for work, leisure, decoration, or collectibles. I think the following should be addressed in greater depth:
 - a. Responsibility of the adult parent or guardian of the minor.
 - b. Responsibility of the educational system.
 - c. Modification of banking legislation and minors' access to credit cards enabled for online purchases, as well as the ability to make transfers.
 - Restrictive legislation on minors' access to violent content, video games, television, and digital platforms via computers or mobile phones.
 - Prohibition on the sale of items on Marketplaces, social media, and peer-to-peer sales websites. Ultimately, these sites are not companies, but individuals who can use multiple sales accounts, opening and closing accounts, and even creating fake ones that are deliberately created to avoid any liability.
75. We do not have the means to recognize and identify a person who attempts to act fraudulently and may commit a crime in the future. If a minor or adult exhibiting suspicious behavior is not identified by their family or academic circle, who have had

direct, daily contact with them for many years, it is difficult for us to identify them with the means at our disposal.

76. We are attentive to any advice or guidelines provided by the authorities to minimize the risk and implement them.

77. After reviewing the declaration and documentation, I consider that everything requested has been reported and exhibited.

Statement of Truth

I believe that the facts stated in this witness statement are true. I understand that proceedings may be brought against anyone who makes, or causes to be made, a false statement in a document verified by a statement of truth without an honest belief in its truth.

X

Signature

JUAN MARTINEZ
DIRECTOR

Signed: Juan Martínez

Dated: August, 21st 2025