

WITNESS STATEMENT

Witness Name: Philip Redman

Exhibits: PR01

Dated: 12th August 2025

THE SOUTHPORT INQUIRY

First WITNESS STATEMENT OF PHILIP REDMAN

I PHILIP REDMAN will say as follows:

INTRODUCTION

1. I PHILIP REDMAN am the current Managing Director and majority owner of Premier Seeds Direct Ltd. I took ownership of the business in August 2023 following a share purchase agreement from Robert & Kerrie Tenucci. While I was not at the business at the time, I have a good understanding of the operations and what occurred at the time of the incident.
2. This witness statement is made to assist the Southport Inquiry (the "Inquiry") with the matters set out in Rule 9 dated 15th July 2025

BACKGROUND

3. As per the context provided the perpetrator ordered Ricinus (Castor Beans) that were sold by Amazon. I can confirm that Premier Seeds Direct sells the majority of it's catalogue through Amazon using two different methodologies including FBA (fulfillment by Amazon) and FBM (fulfillment by manufacturer). The product in question was ordered using the FBM methodology. The product itself was originally listed on Amazon in May 2021. As per FBM, the perpetrator would have placed the order through the Amazon platform on the 19-01-2022, once the payment is confirmed through Amazon the order is automatically pushed through to the Premier Seeds Direct dispatch system. The order was picked and dispatched by Royal Mail (2nd Class) on 19-01-2022 – please note I can confirm this through our system and differs from the context which suggests the delivery

was from Hermes. I cannot confirm the exact date of delivery as these records for Royal Mail do not go back that far.

4. I can confirm that Premier Seeds Direct would not have been aware that the purchaser was a child, used a pseudonym email account or ordered the product to go to a different address. Premier Seeds Direct particularly in January process thousands of orders a week and all the above are not unusual situations. In addition I can confirm that even if Premier Seeds Direct had known these facts it would still have processed the order as there is no legal restrictions on the sale of Ricinus, and as pointed out is commonly sold by many Seed Suppliers.
5. The packaging label did not include any information on toxicity, and I can confirm the packaging would have looked as per the image supplied, as this is the packaging used for this type of product [PR/01 - MERP002936/20].
6. It is correct that there is no legal age restriction on the purchase of Ricinus in any quantity including the bulk pack of 150 seeds purchased and as such there was no age check carried out either at the point of delivery or at the point of purchase.
7. Premier Seeds Direct did not have a policy for age verification at the time of the purchase and has not added age verification for this product at this time. Nor has a company policy been developed at this time.
8. I am not aware of any industry guidance or discussion on this matter, and have not seen any competitors adding age verification.

REFLECTION ON EVENTS:

9. This product is widely grown for ornamental use and despite this one incident being of a horrific nature, I do not believe Premier Seeds Direct would have done anything differently at the time. On further reflection the provision of the bulk pack is increasing the ease of access to a larger number of Ricinus Seeds, as such Premier Seeds Direct have taken the decision to de-list this pack size, so the product will only be available in packets of 15 seeds.

IMPROVEMENTS:

10. I cannot confirm if this was already in place at the time of the events or have been added since, however, I can confirm at this time that Premier Seeds Direct applies a warning on the product listing "Please note this seed is Toxic if eaten, please wash hands after handling". I can also confirm that similar warnings are also included on competitor

listings of these products. Beyond this I am not aware of any other improvements that have been made either at Premier Seeds Direct or in the wider industry

11. Further recommendations, practically it would be possible to restrict the quantity purchased in any single transaction to reduce the quantity of seeds that can be purchased by any individual. While there is technology that can support age verification at the point of sale, if this were to be the recommendation I believe we would choose not to sell the product as opposed to adding this complication for this individual product.

OTHER MATTERS

12. There are no other matters that I deem relevant to draw to the attention of the Chair

DISCLOSURE

13. I can confirm that the only relevant document to the inquiry is the copy of the invoice that has already been supplied

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.

Signed: **Signature**

Dated:12/08/25.....