

B E T W E E N: -

SAMANTHA THOMSON

Claimant

- and -

MGN LIMITED

Defendant

STATEMENT IN OPEN COURT

Solicitor for the Claimant

1. In this action for misuse of private information, I appear for the Claimant, Samantha Thomson. My friend, [], appears for the Defendant.
2. The Claimant is the former wife of John Thomson, the well-known television actor and comedian, and mother of his two children. The Claimant and Mr Thomson started their relationship in mid-2000. They were married in 2005 and separated in 2015. The Claimant is a private person and was only in the public eye as a result of her relationship with Mr Thomson.

3. The Defendant is the publisher of the Daily Mirror, Sunday Mirror and the People newspapers.
4. The Claimant discovered through Mr Thomson's claim that she was the victim of phone hacking by MGN. It subsequently became clear from the disclosure that the Claimant was targeted by journalists at MGN with the sole aim of obtaining private information about her and her relationship with Mr Thomson. The Claimant was shocked to find out that there was call data to her phone and that on eleven occasions between October 2001 and August 2005 (five of which were in January 2003) private investigators had been instructed by MGN to undertake enquiries into her. She was also appalled to find out that her mother may have been targeted by private investigators on five occasions between July and November 2002.
5. The Claimant was very distressed to discover that MGN had published a number of highly intrusive articles which had some of their origin in this unlawful activity. Some of the articles, published between January 2002 and December 2005, contained personal details of the Claimant's relationship with Mr Thomson, details of her private medical information during her first pregnancy and details of Mr Thomson's battle with alcoholism. The Claimant is horrified that the content of voicemail messages, which she used extensively as a means of contact with Mr Thomson, were listened to by journalists then employed at MGN. This prolonged and sustained intrusion caused considerable damage to her relationship with Mr Thomson, which later broke down irretrievably in 2015.
6. In their Defence, served on 10 March 2016, the Defendant admitted that journalists then employed at MGN unlawfully accessed or intercepted voicemail messages left for the Claimant on one day in October 2002, on two days in November 2002 and on

one day in August 2004. MGN also admitted that, between 2000 and 2005, messages left by the Claimant on Mr Thomson's voicemail would have been accessed. Out of the 35 articles pleaded by the Claimant, the Defendant admitted that 14 had some of their origin in unlawful activity, including the accessing of the Claimant's voicemail messages.


7. I am here today to announce that on 6 October 2016 the Claimant and the Defendant resolved this matter. The Defendant has paid damages to the Claimant and has also agreed to pay her reasonable legal costs. The Defendant has also undertaken not to access the Claimant's voicemail messages in the future.


Counsel for the Defendant

8. My Lord, on behalf of the Defendant, I confirm everything my Friend, [], has said.
9. The Defendant is here today through me to offer its sincere apologies to the Claimant for the distress caused to her through the misuse of her private information, including the accessing of her voicemail messages, many years ago. The Defendant acknowledges that the Claimant's information should never have been obtained or used in the manner it was.

Solicitor for the Claimant

10. In the light of the order which has been made and this statement, the Claimant considers that she is fully vindicated.


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ATKINS THOMSON
(6 APRIL 2017)
Solicitor for the Claimant


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Rose, RPC (6 APRIL 2017)
Solicitor for the Defendant