

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE

CLAIMS NO: HC11C02416

CHANCERY DIVISION

BETWEEN:

LISA GOWER

Claimant

and

(1) NEWS GROUP NEWSPAPERS LIMITED
(2) GLENN MICHAEL MULCAIRE

Defendants

STATEMENT IN OPEN COURT

Solicitor Advocate for the Claimant

1. In this action for misuse of private information and breach of confidence, I appear for the Claimant. My learned friend, Michael Silverleaf QC, appears for the First Defendant.
2. The Claimant is a private Individual, who has never been a public figure in her own right. The Claimant was, at all material times, in a relationship with a well-known individual, Steve Coogan, which is why she became of interest to the Defendants.
3. The First Defendant was the publisher of the News of the World newspaper which had a considerable readership in this jurisdiction and which also published its content on its website www.newsoftheworld.com. The Second Defendant was a private investigator engaged by the First Defendant to carry out various investigative

activities. His methods included blagging information from mobile phone companies and the unlawful interception of voicemail messages.

4. In late 2005 and 2006, the Claimant was concerned about the security of her mobile telephone. In 2005, the Claimant was telephoned by her mobile phone provider and informed that an individual had telephoned asking for the Claimant's most commonly used numbers and that they had hung up after they had been asked for a password. In addition to this, on a number of occasions, the Claimant had friends complain that she had not responded to their voicemail messages when she had never received them.
5. The Claimant did not have a personal pin number set up on her voicemail messages to access her voicemails remotely. As a result, the Defendants were able to access the Claimant's voicemail messages by dialling her mobile number, getting through to her voicemail service and using the 02 default pin number.
6. In June 2011, after the commencement of Operation Weeting, the Claimant was approached by the Metropolitan Police and was shown evidence that her voicemail messages had been intercepted by the Defendants. The Second Defendant had recorded, amongst other things, the Claimant's mobile phone number, her account number, her password and other sensitive private information in his notes. He had also recorded the mobile phone numbers and confidential information of those close to the Claimant, including Mr Coogan and her mother. The Defendants had also recorded, in an email, the number of phone calls between the Claimant and Mr Coogan over a five week period.
7. On 13 July 2011, the Claimant issued proceedings against the First and Second Defendants for misuse of private information and breach of confidence.
8. On 13 December 2011, the First Defendant made a series of extensive admissions in

relation to the general practice of intercepting voicemail messages at the News of the World. It has become clear and the First Defendant now accepts that the Defendants targeted the Claimant and the Claimant's voicemail messages in 2005-2006.

9. I am here today to announce that the First Defendant has accepted liability and has agreed to pay damages to the Claimant in the sum of £30,000 plus her legal costs. Furthermore, both Defendants have also undertaken not to further access the Claimant's voicemail messages or to publish the Claimant's unlawfully obtained private information.

Counsel for the First Defendant

10. My Lord, on behalf of the First Defendant, I confirm everything my Friend, Mr Thomson, has said.

11. The First Defendant is here today through me to offer its sincere apologies to the Claimant for the damage, as well as the distress, caused to her by the blagging of her confidential information from her mobile phone provider and the accessing of her voicemail messages. The First Defendant acknowledges that the information should never have been obtained or used in the manner it was and that the First Defendant is liable for misuse of private information and breach of confidence.

Solicitor- Advocate for the Claimant

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


Mark Thomson


Michael Silverleaf QC