

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE
BUSINESS AND PROPERTY COURTS
OF ENGLAND AND WALES

Claim Number: HC-2019-000076

IN THE MATTER OF THE MOBILE TELEPHONE
VOICEMAIL INTERCEPTION LITIGATION

BEFORE: THE HONOURABLE MR JUSTICE MANN

B E T W E E N:

CHRISTOPHER MARSHALL

Claimant

and

NEWS GROUP NEWSPAPERS LIMITED

Defendant

STATEMENT IN OPEN COURT

Solicitor for the Claimant

1. My Lord, in this action for misuse of private information, I appear on behalf of the Claimant, Mr Christopher Marshall. My learned friend, [], appears on behalf of the Defendant, News Group Newspapers Limited.
2. The Claimant is an actor, who is best-known for his role in the romantic comedy film *Love Actually*, as well as for his roles in television programmes such as *My Family* and *Death in Paradise*. He also starred in the BT advertising campaign which ran from 2005 to 2011, and he regularly appears in theatre productions. As a result of this, the Claimant was a person of interest to the press.
3. The Defendant was the publisher of the *News of the World* which, until its closure in July 2011, was the UK's biggest selling Sunday newspaper with a very considerable readership in this jurisdiction. The Defendant was, and remains, the publisher of *The Sun* which still enjoys

a substantial circulation and readership in this jurisdiction both in the hard copies of its publications and on its website.

4. In January 2019, the Claimant issued proceedings against the Defendant. Mr Marshall claimed that his voicemail messages were intercepted by the Defendant's journalists and that as a result, these journalists would have been privy to private and confidential voicemail messages left on his mobile telephone by others, such as his family and friends. The Claimant also claimed that the Defendant had obtained his personal information by deception. The Claimant alleged that he was targeted by the Defendant due to the popularity of the productions in which he appeared.
5. The Claimant identified a number of articles containing his private and confidential information which were published by the Defendant's newspapers between 2002 and 2010, which he alleged were suspicious. During this time, the Claimant used his voicemail extensively – particularly whilst on set filming – and he would regularly receive and leave voicemail messages.
6. As a result of these publications, the Claimant claims that he became paranoid and suspicious as to who might be the source of the private information that was being published by the Defendant's newspapers. The Claimant is a very private individual.
7. The Claimant is pleased to confirm that he has accepted the Defendant's offer to resolve his claim on terms confidential between the parties, but which involve the Defendant agreeing to pay damages to the Claimant as well as his reasonable legal costs of bringing the claim. The Defendant has also provided appropriate undertakings to the Court and the Claimant, and it has agreed to join in this statement to apologise to the Claimant publicly for the distress caused to him by the invasion of his privacy by individuals working for or on behalf of the *News of the World*. The Defendant makes no admission of liability in relation to the Claimant's allegations of voicemail interception and/or other unlawful information gathering at *The Sun*.

[Solicitor/Counsel] for the Defendant

8. My Lord, on behalf of the Defendant, I confirm everything my learned Friend has said.
9. The Defendant is here today, through me, to offer its sincere apologies to the Claimant for the distress caused to him by the invasion of his privacy by individuals working for or on behalf of the *News of the World*. The Defendant accepts that such activity should never have taken place, and that it had no right to intrude into the private life of the Claimant in this way.

Solicitor for the Claimant

10. My Lord, in light of the order that has been made, and this public statement, the Claimant considers that the matter is now concluded.

Hamlins LLP

Clifford Chance LLP

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Hamlins LLP
Solicitors for the Claimant

Clifford Chance LLP
Solicitors for the Defendant