

**IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE**

**CHANCERY DIVISION**

**B E T W E E N:**

**CLAIR DOBBS**

**Claimant**

**and**

**NEWS GROUP NEWSPAPERS LIMITED**

**Defendant**

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**STATEMENT IN OPEN COURT**

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**Solicitor Advocate for the Claimant**

1. My Lord, in this action for misuse of private information and breach of confidence, I appear for the Claimant. My learned friend, Anthony Hudson, appears for the Defendant.
2. The Claimant is a publicist specialising in the representation of actors and actresses. She was the founder of CLD Communications Limited. From 1999 until 2010, she was a director of Public Eye Communications Limited and worked with Ciara Parkes, who was also a director at the same company. In the period 2002 to 2006, she represented numerous high profile actors including Christopher Eccleston, Sir Ian McKellen, Sienna Miller and Michael Sheen.
3. The Defendant was the publisher of the '*News of the World*' newspaper which had a considerable readership in this jurisdiction, until its closure in July 2011, and which also published its content on its website [www.newsoftheworld.com](http://www.newsoftheworld.com).

4. From about 2003 onwards, the Claimant, her colleagues and clients began to suspect that private stories were being leaked to the tabloid media causing concern and suspicion. The Claimant was nevertheless shocked to discover in 2010 and 2011 that intercepting mobile telephone voicemail messages had been widespread practice at the News of the World and that some of her friends and clients had been targeted and had had their messages intercepted.
5. In April 2013, the Claimant was contacted by police officers from Operation Weeting and was shown evidence indicating that a journalist from the News of the World's Features Department had been intercepting her voicemail messages. The Claimant was shocked by this information and, after consulting with her lawyers, she issued proceedings on 1 May 2013.
6. In July 2013, the Court ordered disclosure of evidence, which was derived from call data and police interviews with Dan Evans, the former News of the World journalist. Following disclosure, the Claimant's lawyers served the Particulars of Claim on 19 March 2014 setting out the details of the Claimant's case and the distress and damage caused.
7. I am here today to announce that the Defendant accepts that a number of the Claimant's voicemail messages were intercepted and that this activity was wrong and should never have happened. The Defendant has agreed to apologise to the Claimant and to pay a substantial amount in damages for the distress she has suffered and the costs she has had to incur in relation to this matter.

**Counsel for the Defendant**

8. My Lord, on behalf of the Defendant, I confirm everything my friend, Mr Thomson, has said.
9. The Defendant is here today through me to offer its sincere apologies to the

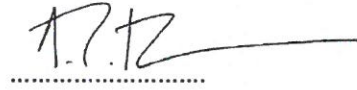
Claimant for the damage, as well as the distress, caused to her by the accessing of her private voicemail messages. The Defendant acknowledges that the information should never have been obtained or used in the manner it was and that the Defendant is liable for the misuse of private information. The Defendant has, in an agreed minute of order, also undertaken to the Court not to repeat such activity.

**Solicitor- Advocate for the Claimant**

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



**Mark Thomson**  
**Solicitor Advocate**



**Anthony Hudson**  
**Counsel for the Defendant**