

ICL INQUIRY STATEMENT

COLIN GRANT FOARD

1. I am presently the Commercial Director of Stockline Plastics Limited which is based at Grovepark Mills, Hopehill Road, Glasgow.
2. I joined the company on 1 September 1980 as a Stock Clerk/Management Trainee.
3. At that time Stewart McColl (who lost his life in the disaster on 11 May 2004) and Campbell Downie were Directors of Stockline Plastics. Stewart McColl was the Managing Director.
4. The company was looking for someone to train into a senior position and I became Commercial Director six years after joining the company.
5. Stockline Plastics is a plastics distributing company. They buy sheet plastic and ancillary products, for example, rods/ tubes. A large part of their business is cut to size from client's specification.
6. As Commercial Director I am responsible for the buying of and setting of prices of products sold and overall supervision of the office and warehouse.

7. The warehouse of Stockline Plastics is in a building adjacent to that in which the disaster occurred last year. All of our office staff, however, worked within the main building.
8. Never in the whole time I have been employed by Stockline Plastics did Campbell Downie have any involvement in the running of the company. His principal role was a financial one.
9. Mrs Lorna Downie, Campbell's wife, had a personnel role only. Although she was Company Secretary, the personnel role was her only function.
10. Sheena McColl, Stewart's daughter was appointed sales manager two to four years ago.
11. Robert Warren was store supervisor.
12. In relation to our admin, Monica Flynn was in overall charge of the admin for Stockline Plastics and Anne Trench (who lost her life) worked closely with Monica.
13. I have been asked what Campbell Downie's position was in ICL Plastics Limited. As far as I am aware, although Campbell was a Director, there was no Managing Director of ICL Plastics.

14. Stockline was autonomous with Stewart McColl in charge and me next. Group (ICL Plastics) was like our bank. ICL Plastics was the financial head of the group. We borrowed no money other than from Group for any purchases which we made. The purchase of any assets, cars, plant and machinery was all organised through Group but set against the trading figures for Stockline.
15. If, however, the purchase was a trading purchase such as a large purchase of sheet plastic, if I wanted to buy a large amount of plastic at a high price, I could do so without anybody's say so. This was because it was a trading issue and not a capital investment.
16. Capital purchases were not made often but when they were it would go through Group.
17. The figurehead of ICL Plastics and the whole Group was Campbell Downie.
18. Margaret Brownlee was the Financial Director of the company. She lost her life in the tragedy. She was absolutely meticulous about figures.
19. Stewart McColl was also Director of ICL Plastics and both Margaret and Stewart would refer to Campbell Downie.

20. The Group Directors were Campbell and Lorna Downie, Stewart McColl and Margaret Brownlee.

21. The only Board meetings I ever attended were those for Stockline Plastics.

22. I can recall a couple of meetings where health and safety issues were raised for the company throughout the Group. In order to have a common set of proposals eg, when the law was changed regarding having fire marshals, they would bring in the Directors from the other subsidiaries in order that a common policy be set.

23. As regards Stockline Plastics, Stewart McColl had responsibility for health and safety. I do not know who had responsibility for health and safety in the other two companies.

Risk Assessment

24. In Stockline risk assessments were carried out by myself and Stewart McColl. The risk assessments with the companies were almost identical. They were a number of folders and books in relation to the training and competence. Stewart McColl was very much aware of the importance of risk assessments.

25. We would have meetings two to three times per year regarding new risk assessments and discuss anything we felt deserved it, for example, general maintenance, for example, the floor.
26. In my office I had a folder, which had the appendix of meetings at the rear. It was not a paper exercise, the company was very much aware of the importance. Stewart McColl would review the assessments and everything implemented. Stewart would have to receive a copy.
27. Risk assessments tended to be plagiarised in Stockline and Tech and then possibly across the Group. Constant communication led to this and you would look at the practices of other companies in the Group and adopt these if they appeared to be better than your own. The structure was fairly loose in the companies and there was inter-action between the persons involved in them.
28. Stockline were ISO 9000, which is a quality of performance standard adjudged by the BSI, and we would be regularly audited by them. Because of our ISO rating we had to have formal training schedules in place for staff.
29. Stewart was fanatical about health and safety and risk assessment. I would describe him as positively zealous.

30. He did not want people to be put at risk, for example, I can recall a situation where we were training a person who was new to the company in relation to the carrying of plastic sheeting. Where plastic sheeting is being carried in a large piece there is a specific technique to approaching, lifting, carrying and racking it. I can recall the new member of staff asking what he should do if the piece of sheeting fell and Stewart said "Don't do anything" ie don't attempt to catch it as he would not risk anybody being hurt.
31. Because Stockline Plastics was not a manufacturing company, we were covered by the Environmental Health Department of the Council rather than being covered by the Health and Safety Executive.
32. We also had an insurance assessment every year and rarely did we have anything to do to improve the Stockline warehouses.
33. At one point some information came in to do with seating of staff to do with computer screens and we immediately changed all the seating and altered where staff sat to accommodate information which we received regarding the most suitable relationship between the seating position of persons and the lighting conditions under which they were working.
34. Where any external body, for example, Environmental Health, was engaged with the company, I dealt with them.

35. The insurance people would come in and we would ask questions.
36. We also received regular fliers re impending changes in legislation and we would make changes accordingly. We also arranged for courses to be held and training to be given.
37. I was shown - Letters to Mr P Goggins of Environmental Services and Stockline Plastics Limited Health and Safety Programme at Risk Assessment. **[ICL/ 13105- 13128]**
38. This was a letter from me with risk assessment appended sent to Mr Goggins on 30 September 1997. This risk assessment was only we had done as we would update them. There is nothing in the risk assessment regarding the offices but it was maybe added later. We definitely had a risk assessment for the office staff.
39. I am described at **[ICL/ 13110]** as a "safety representative". This entailed liaising with the Managing Director (Stewart McColl) to ensure that risk assessments and continuous improvements were carried out in the manner proscribed by the company bearing in mind both it's legal and moral obligations. We had meetings, latterly at approximately four monthly intervals where we would assess the current situation inside the Stockline office and warehouse, and then take any action that was required.

40. The hazards in Stockline were identified using the risk assessment in the document dated 30 September 1997. The estimation of risk would be calculated by likelihood and severity. These were calculated in conjunction with the Managing Director. I was asked whether LPG had ever been identified as a hazard in Stockline Plastics Ltd. Other than the form of gas bottles used to power one of the forklift trucks (see the risk assessment for gas/ electricity) Stockline did not use LPG.
41. I was asked to describe once risks were identified how they were followed through. The follow through of actions concerning any risks that we identified were recorded in the meeting from the health and safety meetings.
42. I was shown photograph of a labelled pipe [ICL/ 008929]. I am also referred to in the minutes of the Health and Safety meeting 3.27 June 1997 [ICL/13121] which describes the arranging of new safety signs for the stores area. I was asked if I was ever tasked with labelling pipes . As Stockline only had a mains gas pipe running through its' building and this was colour coded beige/ yellow to identify its' purpose I did not ever label pipes. Stockline had no LPG pipe work in either the warehouse or the office.

43. We wouldn't have considered the risk assessment for any risk in the course of ICL Tech's work as that would be for them to assess. Nobody from Environmental Health ever queried our risk assessment.
44. The more recent risk assessment would have been in the offices in the main building which came down on 11 May.
45. Their main supply from the gas company was a yellow/ beige pipe which ran through the main Stockline premises and out the back of the premises. As far as I'm aware it was the main supply to the building. I had no involvement with the ovens. The ovens were used by ICL Tech. I had no working with them. How they were fuelled I don't know.
46. In Stockline Plastics Warehouse there was a no smoking policy and any employees if smoking would have to go outside. We were in the process of building smoking shelters.
47. Campbell Downie would not be in the office on a daily basis. You would normally see him on a Friday evening. He worked from home and was involved in financial matters and projects for Group.
48. I have been asked about a paragraph in a statement which I provided to the police in which it was noted that in the Stockline premises we had a couple of gas leaks. I have no idea to what that refers as I have no recollection of there being any gas leaks.

49. I know that the main supply of gas into the main building was metered in the Stockline building for some reason. The pipeline ran along the Stockline building and into the main mill building.

50. As far as I am aware, mains gas may have fuelled one of the ovens in the building on the ground floor and also the central heating in the building.

51. There was a boiler in each side of the third floor of the building and in the Stockline building we had three radiant heaters in the stores.

52. Initially we could not get access to the Stockline building but the police and those working on the site to clear it, would then stop work for an hour or so every day to enable us to get the plastic out of the warehouse building to service other companies.

53. DCI Darling who was on site asked me something about a maintenance plan and I told him that the Stockline risk assessments were kept beside me in the office.

54. I gave DCI Darling the maintenance plan from our office in the warehouse building at either the end of the first week following the disaster or in the second week. He took it and sent me a copy.

55. Of the staff which I had in Stockline Plastics, Claire and Sheena (who lost her leg) are back working with me on the office side. Robert Warren and James Anderson are the only persons who came back to the warehouse. None of the others returned to work.

56. I have assisted in showing what the layout was of the offices. **[ICL/11845-7]** I can confirm the seating arrangements for those who were on the second floor. Of our office staff on the second floor, Tracy McErlane, Anne Trench, Tim Smith and Annette Doyle all lost their lives. Nicole and Stacey Eaglesham did not return to their jobs and nor did Charlene Howarth.

I confirm that the contents of this statement are true.

Witness signature _____

Date _____