

ICL Public Inquiry Publication

Statement by the ICL Support Group, consisting of the families of Annette Doyle, Kenneth Murray, Thomas McAuley, Tracey McErlane and Ann Trench

On 11 May 2004, Annette Doyle, Kenneth Murray, Thomas McAuley, Tracey McErlane and Ann Trench and four colleagues left home for work at Grovepark Mills, the premises owned by ICL Plastics Limited and from which ICL Technical Plastics carried out business.

For many it may seem that today might bring that constantly misused word “closure” for our families as we receive the report, digest the findings and look at how we work with individuals and organisations who have and have said will continue to support us to ensure families never have to suffer in the way we have since May 2004.

Our lives changed forever on that day, physically our family lives have moved on since that day, family events have been tinged with sadness in the absence of our loved ones that could have and should have been there but for the events of 11 May 2004.

Grandchildren, nephew and nieces have been born; children have grown up and gone to school and sadly other family members have passed away without knowing what caused the deaths of those dear to them.

Emotionally, we are still where we were five years although it may appear that lives go on; we have achieved a lot in getting to this point and our aim has always been to find out what happened, how it was allowed to happen and what needs to be done to prevent families having to go through the same tortuous, agonising and protracted process we have had to endure to get answers.

Our families would like to thank Lord Gill for his expressions of sympathy throughout the inquiry and in his foreword to the report. This group believes that this report identifies failings in the enforcement regime that allowed these companies to ignore the significant risk posed by LPG. We also believe that the report identifies a practice that allowed these companies to adopt a total disregard to the role of the Health and Safety Executive as an

enforcement body and in the company's own admission were provided with an opportunity to side-step the HSE on a number of occasions.

We welcome the fact that the Government has issued a deadline on the HSE to respond to the criticisms in the report and welcome the commitment, following a successful meeting with Jim Murphy, Secretary of State for Scotland, that the families will be involved in the ongoing process to implement the recommendation for this report.

We would also like to clarify that while we do believe the truth has come out in the inquiry as to what caused the explosion, we are concerned that the inquiry did not examine the wider health and safety failings that we believe could have led to an unhealthy safety culture in this workplace.

The time has come for the HSE to accept that 'soft touch' regulation does not work and workers throughout the UK, whether they work with LPG or not to have confidence that health and safety regulators have employers quaking in their boots.

We would like to place on record our thanks to the emergency services, especially the fire and rescue services throughout the UK who worked tirelessly in the days after the disaster in the search for our loved ones.

Strathclyde Fire and Rescue, in particular continue to support families at each anniversary and this is very much appreciated. It is with great regret that we note the death of Lothian and Borders Fire and Rescue firefighter, Ewan Williamson and our condolences are with his family and his colleagues in fire and rescue throughout the UK.

We would also like to thank, once again the staff at Maryhill Community Central Halls, Ann McKechin MP, Patricia Ferguson MSP, Thompsons Solicitors, the STUC and the Scottish public for the support they have provided over the last five years.

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