

## Hillsborough Inquest concludes 96 fans were unlawfully killed

26th April 2016

Jo Delahunty QC worked alongside Barristers from Garden Court Chambers and Doughty Street who together represented 77 families at the Hillsborough inquests . On 26.4.16 the jury found that the 96 victims of the disaster who died on 15.4.89 were unlawfully killed.

In answering 14 questions set by the coroner, Sir John Goldring, the nine-person jury cleared Liverpool supporters of any blame for the disaster. They also concluded that there were errors and omissions in the emergency response and planning from South Yorkshire Police and South Yorkshire Metropolitan Ambulance Service.

Jo Delahunty QC was responsible for leading the team on behalf of 77 families that successfully exposed the failures of the South Yorkshire Ambulance Service which the jury found led to or caused loss of life.

Question 14: Emergency Response and the Role of the South Yorkshire Metropolitan Ambulance Service (SYMAS)

After the crush in the west terrace had begun to develop, was there any error or omission by the ambulance service (SYMAS) which caused or contributed to the loss of lives in the disaster?

Jurors were advised to consider factors including the overall number of casualties requiring assessment and/or treatment and the effect of the mass casualty situation on the arrangements that could reasonably be made.

Answer: Yes " the ambulance service failed to ascertain the nature of the problem at leppings lane, the failure to recognise and call a major emergency led to delays in response to the emergency.

Jo Delahunty QC was instructed by Marcia Willis-Stewart of Birnberg Peirce. She was the only silk from the Family Division instructed in the Inquests .

More information is available in the [INQUEST](#) press release.

Notes

Hillsborough inquests

Ninety-six men, women and children lost their lives as a result of the events at Hillsborough on 15 April 1989. Following an application by the Attorney-General, in December 2012, the High Court quashed the verdicts in the original inquests and ordered fresh inquests. The fresh inquests started on 31 March 2014 and concluded on 26th April 2016. They were the longest running inquests in legal history

Link to Marcia's comment below :

Solicitors for the families of the victims, Elkan Abrahamson of Broudie Jackson Canter and Marcia Stewart

of Birnberg Peirce & Partners said:

*"It is now 27 years since the Hillsborough families found themselves thrown together by the appalling tragedy that led to the loss of their loved ones. At the outset, that (and support for Liverpool FC) was probably all they had in common.*

*The intervening years have brought much greater commonality: the shock and dismay at the way they were treated in the aftermath; anger at the cover up which started immediately following the disaster; frustration and disbelief at the deficiencies of both the legal and political processes which failed to deliver justice, and, above all, a constant and enduring tenacity and dedication to exposing the truth which has, despite all attempts to derail the process, stood firm over the decades.*

*The jury's conclusions completely vindicate the families' long fight for justice. It is therefore all the more shameful that, rather than focussing on the search for truth and despite having made public apologies, the approach to the inquests taken by South Yorkshire police and the Yorkshire ambulance service was to fight tooth and nail to avoid adverse findings by the jury; this turned the inquests into an adversarial battle that probably doubled the length of time it might otherwise have taken.*

*Notwithstanding the difficulties along the way, the conclusion of the renewed inquests does bring both significant progress on the journey to expose the truth and, we hope, some degree of comfort and sense of closure to the bereaved. There is, however, still a long road to travel; the recent investigations have already taken three years and we therefore now urge the authorities to conduct rigorous and speedy investigations which will lead to criminal and disciplinary proceedings and to the attribution of final and full accountability.*

*We are humbled and inspired by the commitment of the families with whom we have had the privilege to work. Each have their own stories, but the common thread that runs throughout is their unrelenting, unwavering dedication to achieving justice for the 96."*