

## UK trial shows phone hacking techniques (Update)

October 31 2013, by Jill Lawless

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Andy Coulson arrives at The Old Bailey law court in London, Thursday, Oct. 31, 2013. Former News of the World national newspaper editors Rebekah Brooks and Andy Coulson went on trial Monday, along with several others, on charges relating to the hacking of phones and bribing officials while they were employed at the now closed tabloid paper. (AP Photo/Kirsty Wigglesworth)

News of the World journalists, with consent from top editors, colluded to hack the phones of politicians, royalty and even rival reporters in a

"frenzy" to get scoops, a British prosecutor said Thursday.

Prosecutor Andrew Edis said the "dog-eat-dog" environment led to routine lawbreaking that was sanctioned by those in charge of the Rupert Murdoch-owned tabloid: editors Rebekah Brooks and Andy Coulson.

Brooks and Coulson are on trial, along with six others, on a range of charges related to hacking and bribery. All deny the charges.

The trial stems from the revelation that employees of the newspaper eavesdropped on the phone voicemails of celebrities, politicians and even a murdered teenager, Milly Dowler.

The scandal led Murdoch to shut the 168-year-old tabloid in 2011 and spurred wide-ranging criminal investigations into phone hacking, bribery and other illegal behavior by the nation's newspapers.

In the prosecution's opening arguments Thursday, Edis gave the jury of nine women and three men detailed insight into the inner workings of tabloid phone hacking.

Jurors were shown email exchanges involving private investigator Glenn Mulcaire and News of the World news editor Ian Edmondson—one of the defendants—detailing the hacking in 2006 of former government minister Tessa Jowell, royal family member Frederick Windsor and one-time Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott, who was the subject of a major kiss-and-tell story from a mistress.

Mulcaire also hacked the phones of two journalists at the rival Mail on Sunday tabloid who were working on their own story about the Prescott affair, the prosecutor said.

"In the frenzy to get the huge story ... that's what you do," Edis said.



Rebekah Brooks arrives at The Old Bailey law court in London, Thursday, Oct. 31, 2013. Former News of the World national newspaper editors Rebekah Brooks and Andy Coulson went on trial Monday, along with several others, on charges relating to the hacking of phones and bribing officials while at the now closed tabloid paper. (AP Photo/Kirsty Wigglesworth)

Edis also played a recording of Mulcaire "blagging"—seeking information about a voicemail password from a service provider using a false name.

Edis said Mulcaire—an "accomplished" blagger and hacker—made the recording himself, and also recorded some of the voice mails he hacked.

The prosecutor said the emails, the recordings and pages from Mulcaire's notebooks together provided "very clear evidence" of widespread hacking.

And, he said, senior editors must have known about it.

Edis said Mulcaire was paid almost 100,000 pounds a year under a contract that started in 2001 and ended when he was arrested in 2006 for hacking the phones of royal aides. He and royal editor Clive Goodman were briefly jailed, and Murdoch's media company maintained for years that hacking had been limited to that pair.

That claim was demolished when the Dowler case became public in 2011. Murdoch's company has since paid millions in compensation to scores of people whose phones were hacked.

Brooks, Coulson, Edmondson and former managing editor Stuart Kuttner all deny charges of phone hacking. The trial is expected to last roughly six months.

Mulcaire has pleaded guilty, along with three former News of the World news editors.

Edis said there are few records of what Mulcaire was paid to do by the newspaper, but that senior editors must have known of his illicit activity.

"The question is, did nobody ever ask, 'What are we paying this chap for?'" he said. "Somebody must have decided that what he was doing was worth an awful lot of money. Who was that?"

He said Brooks, who edited the News of the World between 2000 and 2003—the period when Mulcaire was put on retainer—"was actively involved in financial management" and sent editors stern emails

reminding them to keep costs down.

Under Coulson, who succeeded her as editor, Mulcaire's fee was increased to 2,019 pounds a week.

Edis said there was no evidence that Mulcaire's fees were ever questioned.

"You would question it—unless you knew all about it," Edis said.

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Citation: UK trial shows phone hacking techniques (Update) (2013, October 31) retrieved 23 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2013-10-uk-trial-hacking-techniques.html>

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