# MEDIA24 ARTICLES STATEMENTS: FABRCIATED, FALSE, MISLEADING, SELECTIVE, ACCURATE

Below is a breakdown of the content of the main articles, dlvided into the various catagories. Additionally the statements known to have come

| FABRICATION SOURCE: DE SWARDT | FALSE | MISLEADING / SELECTIVE |
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| FABRICATION SOURCE: INGE BROAD | | ACCURATE |

| | FABRICATED | FALSE | MISLEADING OR SELECTIVE | ACCURATE |
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| | 73 | 20 | 23 | 12 |
| 1 | "'Whoever gets there first gets the keys. The other tenants' money was put in his pocket, and it's thousands of rands.'" | "Second arrest for Cape Town luxury accommodation 'scammer' suspected of pocketing millions." | "According to him, the man's arrest is related to the fraudulent letting of property in the Cape Town area." | "'He will appear in the magistrate's court in Wynberg on Monday,' says Traut." |
| 2 | "According to Victor and De Swardt, Russell's modus operandi was to let luxury accommodation—usually worth between R40 million and R110 million." | "A British pier fan who is accused of defrauding the owners of luxury mansions on, among others, Cape Town's Atlantic coast out of millions of rands." | "According to Traut, the police seized documents and computer equipment." | "We tried blocking his adverts each time we saw any, but he kept creating new ones." |
| 3 | "According to De Swardt, his modus operandi is the same as in the previous cases. He rents rich men's houses along Cape Town's Atlantic and False Bay coasts." | "A Briton who has allegedly been renting out guesthouses that do not belong to him has finally been arrested where he is hiding in the Upper Cape in one of the rich men's houses he occupies." | "Apparently had not yet given financial instructions to his lawyer when he appeared in the Magistrate's court in Wynberg on Thursday." | "A lawyer representing Russell's lawyer, one T. Swartz, asked the court for an adjournment until March 7.""The stand-in attorney said Swartz had not yet received financial instructions from Russell. "Swartz would apparently use the time to properly consult with Russell." |
| 4 | "According to Inge, after Russell was finally out of the house, she was there one day cleaning up when a family of twelve people arrived from overseas for a wedding in Cape Town." | "He was also arrested on a similar charge in Cape Town on 4 August last year and released shortly afterwards on bail of R30 000.";" | "Col. André Traut, police spokesman, confirmed on Friday that a 52-year-old British man had been arrested for fraud. | "Darren Russell (52) appeared in court on Thursday on charges of fraud." |
| 5 | "A local lawyer and private investigator, representing some of the victims, say there is a coordinated joint effort with the provincial commercial crimes unit to investigate." | "He was first arrested in about mid-2022 and released on bail. He has now been arrested on more fraud charges as more victims have come to the fore." | "Darren Russell, a British citizen who arrived in South Africa in December 2020 on a visitor's visa, remains in custody until a bail hearing in early February." | "Darren Russell's (52) bail application was completed on Monday in the magistrate's court in Wynberg, and he was released on bail on Tuesday.";" |
| 6 | "Wouter de Swardt of Fox Forensics, who investigated Russell at the behest of a homeowner, says that around 20 people were apparently approached, of whom 15 filed complaints." | "He is charged with burglary, theft, and malicious damage to property as well as being in the country illegally because his visa has expired.";" | "De Swardt describes Russell as 'very intelligent and very charming'." | "During his court appearance this week, Adv. Lee Gabriel and two attorneys from the law firm Abrahams & Gross tried hard to secure bail for Russell, who has been sitting in Pollsmoor for more than three weeks now." |
| 7 | "A British man who allegedly defrauded members of the public and tourists out of thousands of rands and damaged property was released on bail of R30 000 on Tuesday." s | "He then appeared in the Magistrate's Court in Wynberg on charges of fraud, burglary, theft, and malicious damage to property, as well as being in the country illegally because his visa had expired.";" | "In Hout Bay, he charged R15,000 for two nights, and in Camps Bay, R18,000 for two nights.":" | "In the dock, Russell clutched his head and sighed 'no!'" |
| 8 | "A British pier fan who is accused of defrauding the owners of luxury mansions on, among others, Cape Town's Atlantic coast out of millions of rands." | "The state claims he rented several luxury homes and then rented out the homes in residential neighbourhoods such as Camps Bay, Llandudno, and Hout Bay to other people without the rightful owner's knowledge or consent." | "In Llandudno, he rented out a five-bedroom house for R15,000 per room for two nights.":" | "Russell was arrested at the mansion in Llandudno in December last year by members of the police's provincial commercial crime investigation unit." |
| 9 | "Apparently Russell also double-rented some of the properties he rented—or, as De Swardt says, even triple-rented." | "The state claims he defrauded the owner of a luxury house in Llandudno out of around R1.2 million." | "However, he was displeased with a few things – including the 'nude portraits' on the walls that he asked to be removed, but this was never done." | "He is due to appear again in the magistrate's court on September 22." |
| 10 | "Among the houses he apparently unlawfully rented out are a R200 million residence of a billionaire from Dubai and a R30 million house in Llandudno." | "He says Russell is not a flight risk and that he does not have a valid passport at this time." | "Russell and Swartz must then tell the court whether Swartz is going to stay, Russell is going to appoint a new legal representative, or whether he is going to use legal aid." | "Russell's attorney, Theodore Swartz, told News24 on Friday that he does not have any comment at this stage." |

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| 11 | "Another alleged ploy was to rent out houses through his private website lacollectionsprestige.com and pocket the deposit or double or even triple book the house, then disappear when the guests arrived." | "Sgt. Muyiselo Duna, the investigating officer, testified that he believed Russell was in the country illegally." | "Russell has also rented out some of the houses on his private website - lacollectionsprestige.com." | "With only a lunchbox with him, he sat in a badly wrinkled shirt on the steps leading to the cells, waiting for the magistrate to make his appearance." |
| 12 | "After he was released on bail in Wynberg magistrates' court on August 23, Russell is said to have continued to rent luxury homes in Cape Town's posh neighbourhoods such as Camps Bay, Llandudno, and Hout Bay from their rightful owners and then sublet them to other people without the rightful owners' knowledge or consent." | "A British citizen who was arrested for fraud on 4 August this year and released shortly after on bail of R30 000 was arrested again on Wednesday on similar charges." | "Magistrate Goolam Bawa told the stand-in attorney that if the case is adjourned until March, it will be almost two and a half months that Russell will be in custody.""He cannot allow it.""'Bail applications must be treated as urgent,' said Bawa." | "Russell's legal representatives Heynes Kotze and Juan Smuts told Netwerk24 on Tuesday that Russell will plead not guilty to the charges against him. According to Kotze, one of his bail conditions is that he must stay at a property he rents in Llandudno and must not make contact with the state witnesses." |
| 13 | "After he was released on bail on 23 August, he reportedly continued to rent luxury homes in Cape Town's posh residential areas such as Camps Bay, Llandudno, and Hout Bay, and then sublet them to other people without the rightful owner's knowledge or consent." | "In another house in Llandudno, he charged R7,000 a night – and up to R19,000 a night in the Royal Suite." | "One of the rich man's houses on Darren Russell's website lacollectionsprestige.com." | |
| 14 | "A wall leading to the storage areas was broken through and some of our private possessions were removed." | "The lawyer came back after a short adjournment and asked the court to adjourn the case until February 7." | "Russell was arrested on August 4 in the Upper Cape after apparently locking himself in a bathroom. He spent two-and-a-half weeks in Pollsmoor Prison, and his bail application began on Thursday." | |
| 15 | "An alleged luxury accommodation scammer, who is suspected of making up to an estimated R34 million during the last two years by defrauding luxury property owners along Cape Town's Atlantic Seaboard, as well as unsuspecting tourists, has been arrested on charges of fraud for a second time." | "The state claims he defrauded the owner of a luxury house in Llandudno out of around R1.2 million." | "The court heard on Thursday that Russell, who has been held in Pollsmoor prison since his arrest, has not yet given any financial instructions to his solicitor." | |
| 16 | "A wall leading to the storage areas was broken through, and some of our private possessions were removed." | "Gabriel argued that the charges against his client were of a civil nature and that it was wrong to charge him criminally." | "The finely built Darren Russell, who according to photos of him and his boyfriend is only used to the best, appeared rather cool this week when he appeared in the Wynberg Magistrate's Court." | |
| 17 | "According to Inge, she managed to find them alternative accommodation at short notice." | "This is not the only charge of this kind that Russell faces." | "The price for one of the properties—Hove Heaven—is listed between R25,000 and R27,000 per day for the entire property. This will then include the main house and the pool villa." | |
| 18 | "As police systematically searched the house, the bystanders – quite a few curious people had already started congregating on August Street – only heard the screams of his boyfriend Lorez de Rodez Benavent as he yelled at the police.": | "He is apparently in the process of renewing his passport." | "'This case looks like a wasp's nest to me,' the magistrate replied before adjourning the bail application until Monday." | |
| 19 | "Darren Russell (52) was arrested by the police at a house in Llandudno on Wednesday after he apparently continued his ploy to rent houses and then sublet them." | "The complaint against Russell is new, and Traut asked that people who may have also been defrauded by Russell call Col. Kallie Lourens, the investigating officer, on 082 522 2786." | "We have to ensure that he does not get out on bail again," says Victor. "Victims who want to join the coordinated process are welcome to contact De Swardt or me at johan@jvaa.co.za or wouter@foxforensics.co.za." | |
| 20 | "Darren Russell, a British citizen who came to South Africa on a visitor's visa in 2020, has been arrested on charges of fraud relating to the subletting of luxury properties along Cape Town's Atlantic Seaboard." | "Detectives attached to the police's provincial commercial crime investigation unit arrested Darren Russell (52), this time at one of the luxury houses in Llandudno that he rents and then apparently sublet." | "When Rapport called at one of the properties in Llandudno, a friendly American opened the door, telling him that he had rented the house for five days." | |
| 21 | "An eviction order will be heard in the High Court in Cape Town on Monday, and a second eviction order on a date that has not yet been announced. This is for four houses he is believed to occupy—one in Hout Bay and Camps Bay and two in Llandudno." | | "That's when the dolls started dancing.": | |

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| 22 | "De Swardt was able to locate the Uber driver and told him that he had dropped them off at a house in Schotsche Gorge on the slopes of Signal Hill.": | | "Russell apparently locked himself in a bathroom.": | |
| 23 | "De Swardt said he and 'some strong men' had 'gone to empty' Broad's house. However, the big break came when he received information that Russell and his boyfriend were in a five-star guesthouse in Pringle Bay.": T | | "Russell was first arrested on 4 August at a house in the Upper Cape.": | |
| 24 | "De Swardt said he was investigating four cases against Russell, but that there were about 18 people who passed through." | | | |
| 25 | "Eleven policemen pounced on the house, but the two locked the doors.": | | | |
| 26 | "Fortunately, one of the neighbors remembered that the owner of the house keeps a spare key at his establishment on Loop Street." | | | |
| 27 | "He allegedly rented out the same place to two or three people at a time and disappeared without a trace after being paid thousands of rands." | | | |
| 28 | "He also allegedly carried out illegal construction work on the houses by breaking and building walls, changing kitchens, and laying floors without the permission of the owners." | | | |
| 29 | "He knows it will cost the people thousands of rands, and then they leave it instead." | | | |
| 30 | "He paid the rent three months in advance for a property in Camps Bay at R90 000 per month, and also ended up renting a property in Hout Bay and two in Llandudno. For one of the properties, he paid a total of R1.2 million rent in advance for a lease of 12 months." | | | |
| 31 | "He would live in the properties for a month or two and pay his rent and then stop paying. In the meantime, he then advertises the luxury homes on websites such as Airbnb and Booking.com." | | | |
| 32 | "HIGH DRAMA: Police officers try to get Russell out of a double-storey house while his boyfriend screams over and over again.": "screaming over and over again." | | | |
| 33 | "If the people demand their money back, he says they should take him to court." | | | |
| 34 | "In due course, they became aware of the short-term lettings, and that started causing further issues." | | | |
| 35 | "In some of the incidents, according to De Swardt, the complainant Russell apparently paid as much as R19,000 per night for the 'Royal Suite' in a house in Llandudno." | | | |
| 36 | "Inge (surname withheld) told News24 it was heartbreaking and frustrating to see what was done to her and her husband's luxury property." | | | |
| 37 | "Inge told News24 they had fallen for one of the fraud adverts and paid in advance." | | | |
| 38 | "It is costing us a fortune to repair the damage to our property which was supposed to provide us with an income." | | | |
| 39 | "It is costing us a fortune to repair the damage to our property." | | | |
| 40 | "'It seems he thought he was untouchable. We estimate that he had an income of about R34 million during the past two years,' says De Swardt. | | | |
| 41 | 'In my view, if I did not track him down and find evidence against him, he would still be continuing with his scams even now.'" | | | |

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| 42 | "Johan Victor, the legal representative of some of the victims, and Wouter de Swardt, a private investigator, are coordinating the various claims and suspect there might be even more victims they do not know of yet. Currently, there are six criminal and six civil charges against Russell." | | | |
| 43 | "No matter what we tried to get him out legally, the odds seemed always to be stacked in his favour." | | | |
| 44 | "Once there, he heard that the two had just left in an Uber rental car." | | | |
| 45 | "One family from Canada paid R780,000 in advance for eight days only to arrive to find a double booking." | | | |
| 46 | "Russell allegedly rented properties from the owners and then advertised the properties on global platforms, sometimes making double or even quadruple booking for the same dates." | | | |
| 47 | "Russell allegedly rented properties without the owners' consent." | | | |
| 48 | "Russell is accused of renting and subletting at least four luxury homes in Hout Bay, Camps Bay, and Llandudno without permission." | | | |
| 49 | These advance payments usually put the owners and their agents at ease. | | | |
| 50 | He then set about advertising the properties on platforms like Booking.com, Airbnb, sometimes making double, triple, or even quadruple bookings for the exact dates. | | | |
| 51 | . It seems he sometimes uses various aliases or variations on his name | | | |
| 52 | Visitors started arriving only to find other people already in the properties." | | | |
| 53 | "Since his second arrest on December 9, families who booked and paid via his adverts arrived for what they thought was their luxury summer holiday. They were from as far as Canada, Sweden, Germany, and Dubai, according to de Swardt." | | | |
| 54 | "Some owners reportedly suffered up to R300,000 in damage." | | | |
| 55 | "Some properties he also apparently subleased in the long term, with the owners dying to get rid of the wrongful tenants or get their hands on the slippery Russell.": | | | |
| 56 | "That was despite the damage caused to the property." | | | |
| 57 | "That way, apparently, he could make thousands a day." | | | |
| 58 | "The claim is that he usually faithfully pays his rent for a few months and then quits. | | | |
| 59 | "The 52-year-old Briton allegedly rented several multimillion-rand properties along the Atlantic and False Bay coasts and then unlawfully operated them as guest houses by advertising them on websites such as Airbnb." | | | |
| 60 | "The rental agent for a luxury villa in Llandudno who requested to remain anonymous but whose identity is known to News24, said he believed he avoided falling victim. He relates that he encountered Russell but insisted on being paid upfront in full. When he was made aware of Russell's alleged schemes, the latter's lease was up, and he got him to leave." | | | |
| 61 | "The flooring was changed, and the furniture reupholstered." | | | |
| 62 | "The laws are really not fair towards property owners." | | | |

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| 63 | "The owner of the luxury property complained about the steep repair costs." | | | |
| 64 | "The owner of the luxury property in Hout Bay was retired but due to the financial loss caused by Russell not paying rent, he had to go back to work again." | | | |
| 65 | "The prevention of illegal eviction from an unlawful occupation of land ACT (PIE) provides procedures for the eviction of occupants and prohibits unlawful evictions. When owners tried to evict him, he simply claimed the property was his residence, and then the owners had to turn to the courts—a long and expensive procedure." | | | |
| 66 | "The prevention of illegal eviction laws in South Africa is problematic for owners like us." | | | |
| 67 | "The private detective Wouter de Swardt from Fox Forensics said on Friday that there are now four or five new complaints against Russell." | | | |
| 68 | "The pumps of the Jacuzzis burnt out, the inverter was not working, the steam bath was not working, and neither was the sauna." | | | |
| 69 | "Those who managed to track him down and confront him about what he was doing were told to 'take me to court.'" | | | |
| 70 | "Duna says that while Russell was renting the house from Broad, items worth R836,000 were stolen." | | | |
| 71 | "The walls were spray painted. The house was filthy." | | | |
| 72 | "They were even told the property was wheelchair-friendly as they had an octogenarian coming along when the property is not suited for that." | | | |
| 73 | "Visitors started arriving only days after Russell's eviction, further complicating matters." | | | |