

Statement of Witness

Statement of Barry Martin McAuliffe
Age of witness Over 18
Occupation of witness Electrical engineer of Allied Protection (**Allied**)

- 1 I, Barry Martin McAuliffe, of [REDACTED] will say as follows:
- 2 I provide this witness statement in response to a request, pursuant to Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2009, from the Solicitor to the Grenfell Tower Inquiry (the **Inquiry**) dated 21 April 2020 (a copy of which is attached to this statement at Exhibit “**BM01**”: _____) (the **Request**). I refer to the questions set out on pages 2 and 3 of the Request (“**BM01**”: _____) using the numbering therein. I also refer to the statement I gave to Andrew Vernall Managing Director of Allied on 26 June 2017, (a copy of which is attached at Exhibit “**BM02**”: _____).
- 3 **Question 1 of the Request** (“**BM01**”: _____): *Please confirm your qualifications in and experience of servicing fire safety systems. Please provide an outline of your certificates/training that are relevant to the servicing of smoke control systems.*
- 4 I joined Allied as a trainee engineer on 1 September 2016. At the start of my employment with Allied I held the City and Guilds 236 electrical installation certificates, the City and Guilds 2377 PAT testing certificates and the 17th Edition wiring regulations certification. Since joining Allied I have undertaken an emergency lighting course with the Fire Industry Association (**FIA**), various manufacturer-led courses for fire panels and FIA Units 1-5.
- 5 **Question 2(a) of the Request** (“**BM01**”: _____): *Prior to attending at Grenfell Tower on 15 May 2017, what experience did you have of AOV systems?*
- 6 My visit on 15 May 2017 was my first and only visit to Grenfell Tower. I had a basic knowledge of AOV systems, however I had not previously worked on AOV systems in tower blocks.

- 7 **Question 2(b) of the Request (“BM01”:** _____): *Prior to attending on 15 May, what was your knowledge of the AOV system at Grenfell Tower?*
- 8 I was not provided with any information regarding the AOV system at Grenfell Tower prior to my visit on 15 May 2017. The job was listed as a fire alarm service but on arrival I identified that it was an AOV system, having identified the control panel in the ground floor lobby. I conducted a walk through of the floors in Grenfell Tower to identify the smoke detector heads and smoke extraction system in each lift lobby.
- 9 **Question 2(c) of the Request (“BM01”:** _____): *What was the purpose of a ‘preventative maintenance visit’? How often was such a visit scheduled to take place?*
- 10 A preventative maintenance visit is a check of a system to ensure it is functioning properly. The frequency of such visits can be determined by a client specifically but generally involves a monthly test and an annual (or bi-annual) service. From my perspective as an engineer, I simply attend such visits when it is on the job list provided to me by Allied. I am not involved in determining the frequency of such visits.
- 11 **Question 2(d) of the Request (“BM01”:** _____): *When, to your knowledge, had the smoke control system previously been serviced? What information were you given about any such previous servicing or maintenance?*
- 12 From my recollection I did not find any service history information (for example the service logbook). There is usually information on each job on the work system that Allied and its engineers use. However I cannot recall whether there was anything on the system for Grenfell Tower’s AOV system for my visit on 15 May 2017. I remember that I called my manager at the time to check for any information that Allied had before I proceeded with the test of the smoke detector heads, however I cannot recall if any information was provided to me.
- 13 **Question 3(a) of the Request (“BM01”:** _____): *What information did Mr Steadman provide you with regarding Grenfell Tower, and in particular regarding the AOV system?*

- 14 I remember that Mr Steadman did not provide much information regarding the AOV system at Grenfell Tower. I refer to the fourth paragraph of my previous witness statement (“BM02”: _____) in this regard and confirm that the facts set out in that witness statement remain true to the best of my knowledge, recollection and belief.
- 15 Question 3(b) of the Request (“BM01”: _____): *Your statement refers to a ‘Girder Key’. Was this in fact a ‘Gerda’ key? Please confirm the purpose of this key.*
- 16 I can confirm that “gerda” key is the correct spelling. A gerda key is a special type of key to lock up and unlock risers and fire cupboards.
- 17 At the time of the visit I had recently been allocated to Kensington and Chelsea Tenant Management Organisation (referred to in my previous statement (“BM02”: _____) as “KCTMO”) from Allied’s “West” team. We were providing Allied services to KCTMO. I had not been provided with the necessary gerda key by Allied for Grenfell Tower and therefore requested one from Mr Steadman. I refer to the third paragraph of my previous witness statement (“BM02”: _____) which I believe to be true according to the best of my recollection and belief.
- 18 **Question 3(c) of the Request** (“BM01”: _____): *Were you provided with any written instructions or other documents relating to the operation of the AOV system?*
- 19 I can confirm that I was not provided with any written instructions or other documentation relating to the operation of the AOV system.
- 20 **Question 4 of the Request** (“BM01”: _____): *What was your understanding of the weekly testing of the AOV carried out by Paul Steadman? In particular: a. What parts of the system were tested; b. What was the purpose of this weekly testing; c. How was the weekly testing carried out; d. How were the results recorded; and e. Were you provided with access to the results of the weekly testing?*

- 21 I recall Mr Steadman indicating to me a canister of artificial smoke that was kept by the panel on the ground floor at Grenfell Tower. He informed me that he tested the system himself once a week using it. I do not have any further information on any weekly tests that he may have conducted or any of the other information sought at question 4 of the Request (“BM01” : _____).
- 22 **Question 5(a) of the Request (“BM01”:** _____): *What parts of the AOV system did you test?*
- 23 I arrived at Grenfell Tower early on the morning of 15 May 2017 but could only start testing between 12pm and 12:30pm as Mr Steadman was unavailable and I had to sit and wait for him in the office on the ground floor for at least 2 hours. When I started the job I focused on testing the automatic system in relation to every smoke detector head in the lift lobbies on each floor, (starting from the top floor and using the stairs).
- 24 **Question 5(b) of the Request (“BM01”:** _____): *How did you carry out this testing?*
- 25 I carried out the testing one floor at a time. I set off each smoke detector head using my own artificial smoke (until the red light turned on) and checked that the smoke extract system in the lift lobbies started. I then proceeded to the AOV control panel in the reception lobby and reset the system. I repeated this for each floor, using the emergency stairs for access. I believe the lifts were automatically grounded each time upon the smoke detectors being set off, however I cannot confirm this for sure given the passage of time since my visit.
- 26 As mentioned in the eighth paragraph of my previous witness statement (“BM02”: _____), I was not able to test the smoke detectors on the ground floor lift lobby due to being called away to complete a reactive repair.
- 27 **Question 5(c) of the Request (“BM01”:** _____): *Please confirm whether the doors into the lift lobbies (whether from flats, lifts, or the stairs), were open or closed during the testing.*
- 28 There was no specific door-closer system in place, but I believe all the doors were closing behind me as I undertook the testing. I cannot remember if any doors to flats

were open however I was not paying attention to the flat doors during the testing. There were some people coming and going and so there may have been opening/closing of lift doors, however I believe the lifts may have been grounding while the AOV System was activated.

29 **Question 5(d) of the Request (“BM01”:** _____): *The ‘Inspection and Servicing Certificate’ dated 15 May 2017 refers to a ‘Power Supply test’. How did you test the power supply?*

30 I recall that I did not directly test the power supply as the AOV control panel in the ground floor reception lobby contained a light indicating power was being applied to the panel. As this light was illuminated I could establish that the AOV control panel had power supply (we would usually only directly test panels where there is no such light on the panel or the light was not illuminated).

31 **Question 5(e) of the Request (“BM01”:** _____): *How did you test the wiring of the system? Did this involve checking the wiring to the dampers?*

32 I did not test the wiring as there was no requirement to do so.

33 **Question 5(f) of the Request (“BM01”:** _____): *In addition to testing automatic operation, did you test the manual function of the smoke control system?*

34 I did not test the manual function. Due to time constraints I focused on testing the automatic operation.

35 **Question 5(g) of the Request (“BM01”:** _____): *Did you test, or assess in any way, the environmental function of the AOV system? What was the condition of the environmental aspects of the system?*

36 I did not test the environmental function and I do not know the condition of the environmental aspects of the system at the time of the visit.

37 **Question 5(h) of the Request (“BM01”:** _____): *To your knowledge, were the Ground Floor lobby smoke detectors tested after you left Grenfell Tower?*

38 I do not know.

39 **Question 6(a) of the Request ("BM01": _____):** *The 'Inspection and Servicing Certificate' says that the vents were left in the closed position. Please can you confirm which vents did this relate to?*

40 This relates to the smoke extraction system in each lift lobby that automatically starts once the smoke detector heads are activated. The smoke extraction system stops once the AOV system is reset at the control panel in the ground floor reception lobby. I noted that the extraction system was closed down on reset.

41 **Question 6(b) of the Request ("BM01": _____):** *Why were the vents left closed?*

42 The vents opened when the smoke extraction system was activated by the testing. The smoke extraction system turned off and the vents closed down upon reset of the AOV system.

43 **Question 6(c) of the Request ("BM01": _____):** *Were the vents closed when you found them?*

44 The vents were closed prior to testing and opened when activated. They closed again on reset.

45 **Question 6(d) of the Request ("BM01": _____):** *What impact, if any, did closing the vents have on the environmental ventilation system?*

46 I do not know the impact of the closing of the vents on the environmental ventilation system.

47 **Question 6(d) of the Request ("BM01": _____):** *Would the vents have reverted to an open position through the automatic operation of the system (and if so, when?) or would manual input have been required to open them?*

48 The smoke extraction system turned on automatically when the smoke detection head was activated. When the system was reset, the smoke extraction system turned off.

49 Due to time constraints I was focusing on the automatic systems.

- 50 **Question 7 of the Request (“BM01”:** _____**):** *You say that you were not aware of the override switches on each floor. Why was this? If you had been aware of the override switches, would you have tested them in any way?*
- 51 I was focusing on the automatic system due to the time constraints arising from the initial delay in waiting for Mr Steadman upon my arrival at Grenfell Tower. If I had time I would have gone to check the other systems after the automatic system tests had been completed and conducted tests on these systems and the override switches. However I was called out to an emergency job and therefore was unable to do any further work due to time constraints.
- 52 I am not able to confirm, however, I may not have had the correct keys at the time in order to access and test the override switches in any event.
- 53 **Question 8 of the Request (“BM01”:** _____**):** *What conclusions did you reach regarding the AOV system?*
- 54 I concluded that the AOV system at Grenfell Tower was functioning. Every smoke detector head tested activated when tested with the artificial smoke and the local smoke extraction system automatically switched on upon activation of the smoke detector heads.

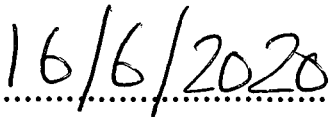
55 **Question 9 of the Request** (“BM01”: _____): *Did you have any concerns about the operation of the AOV system?*

56 I do recall being surprised that there were no sounders present at Grenfell Tower however I subsequently learnt that an AOV system would not have sounders installed. In my opinion the AOV system was working and compliant at the time of the visit.

This statement consisting of 8 pages together with exhibit “BM01” consisting of 4 pages, and Exhibit “BM02” consisting of 1 page, each signed by me, is true to the best of my knowledge and belief and I make it knowing that, if it is tendered in evidence, I shall be liable to prosecution if I have wilfully stated in it anything which I know to be false or do not believe to be true. I am willing for this witness statement to form part of the evidence before the Inquiry and published on the Inquiry’s website, provided that all confidential personal information has been removed prior to such publication.



.....
Signed



.....
Date