

In The Matter Of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry

**Witness Statement Of
Michael Thomas Phillip Paramasavian**

Current Address: [REDACTED]

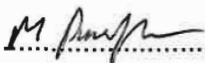
Date of Birth: [REDACTED] 1979

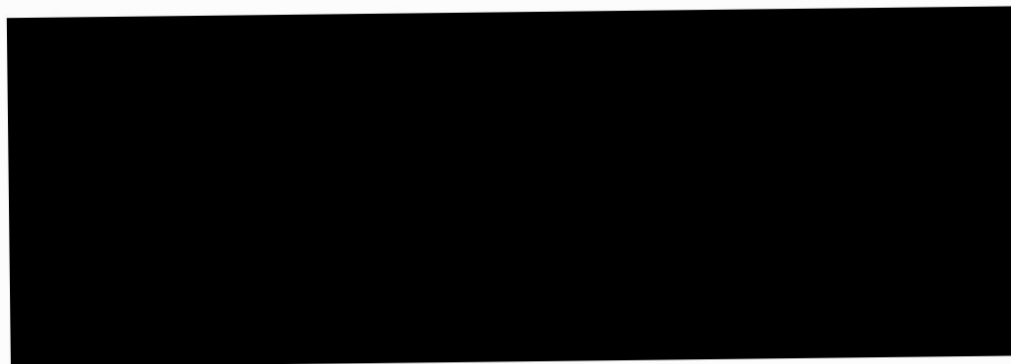
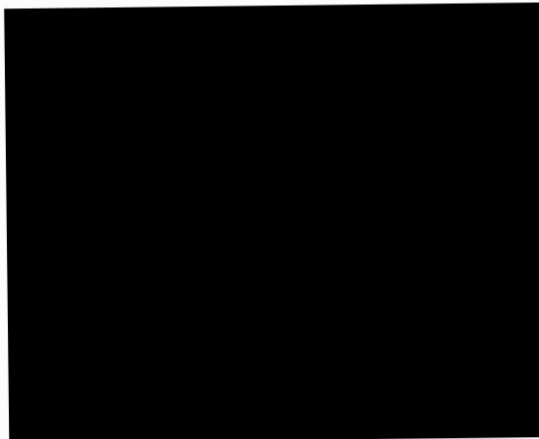
1. On the night of the Grenfell Tower fire I was living in Flat 45, Grenfell Tower with my partner at the time Hannah West and Hannah's daughter [REDACTED] who is now aged 7. Flat 45 is on the 7th floor of Grenfell Tower. Hannah West was the actual tenant of this flat.


2. Prior to the fire I was in a good state of physical and mental health.

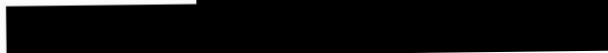
3. I do not suffer form any mobility problems. Occasionally I suffer from slight pain when I am climbing stairs. This is due to a very old injury. Prior to the fire I did not suffer from any breathing difficulties, however, I believe that I have been affected by the inhalation of smoke and fumes on the night of the fire and I am due to attend hospital for a chest x-ray and other tests to my lungs in the near future.

4. [REDACTED]

Signed 



5. Neither Hannah West nor her daughter suffered any health related difficulties prior to the fire. 



6. Hannah West was not pregnant at the time of the fire.

7. I moved in Grenfell Tower to live with Hannah West in March or April 2016. The flat was generally in a good state of repair during the period that we lived there.

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8. I was not given any information about fire safety when I moved into the flat and I did not receive any information about fire safety during the time that I lived there.

I was not provided with any specific information about evacuation procedures from Grenfell Tower. I was not aware whilst living in Grenfell Tower that the London Fire Brigade carried out home fire safety checks. Prior to the 14th June 2017 I believed that in the event of a fire I would simply evacuate from the block. This was a logical/instinctive belief. I was not aware of a fire alarm system in the block. There was a smoke alarm in the hallway of flat 45. This was in place when I moved into the flat. The smoke alarm was in working order as far as I was aware although I had never actually tested it although it did activate if smoke was present in the flat. As far as I was aware the smoke alarm was in working order on the 14th June 2017.

9. The front door of Flat 45 did not have a device fitted which would cause it to close automatically. I do not know if the front doors of neighbouring flats closed automatically. There was not any damage to the front door of Flat 45 prior to the 14th June 2017 or which had not been fixed by the 14th June 2017. The front door of Flat 45 was not changed during the period when I occupied the flat. The TMO replaced the lock to the front door of Flat 45 whilst I was living there and prior to the 14th June 2017. The front door of the flat had 2 or 3 hinges as far as I am able to recall. There were no gaps between the doorframe and the door. The door had a letterbox and draft seal. The letter box sprang shut after being used. I cannot recall if the spring mechanism on the letterbox was in working order. Each of the

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rooms in Flat 45 had doors which opened and shut but I did not have any particular habit about keeping the interior doors open or shut.

10. The only problem in the flat which occurred in relation to the supply of electricity was when several appliances were plugged in; the electricity would often cut out. The electricity supply in the flat was not checked by anyone. It was possible to smell cooking from other flats whilst inside flat 45 but I was not aware of how these smells actually entered Flat 25. The smells of cooking from other flats did not get noticeably worse during the period that I lived there.
11. I could not noticeably hear noise from neighbouring flats whilst I was inside Flat 45.
12. I regularly used the lifts in Grenfell Tower which on the whole were unreliable. When the lifts were not operating, it seemed to take quite a long time for the necessary repairs to be carried out. I cannot recall if there were any warnings or instructions in or near the lifts warning that the lifts must not be used in the event of a fire.
13. There were occasions when the lighting failed on the landing for Flat 45. I cannot recollect how often this happened but there was no emergency lighting installed. I cannot recall the last time when the lighting on the landing failed but the necessary repairs were normally carried out the following day.
14. There was a problem about rubbish and other materials on the landing of flat 15. At one time a vagrant was sleeping in bin cupboard on the landing and he was

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asked to leave after I discovered that he was using drugs. On the 13th June 2017 there could have been rubbish littered around the area where the dustbins are located.

15. I frequently used the stairs at Grenfell Tower. The lighting on the stairs was fairly dim but there were no unusual features on the stairs apart from the fact that the stairs were not very clean. I cannot recall if there was damage to any of the doors to the staircase which had not been repaired by the 14th June 2017. A Caretaker was responsible for Grenfell Tower. I do not know the name of the Caretaker. The Caretaker's office or Contact Office was located close to Grenfell Tower.

16. Prior to the 14th June I did have concerns about the width of the stairs in Grenfell Tower particularly as the stairs would provide the only means of escape in the event of a fire but I did not mention this concern to anyone. I was also concerned about the absence of fire extinguishers in the common parts but did not mention this concern to anyone as far as I am able to recall. Obviously I would have agreed to the installation of sprinklers in the flat I occupied.

17. In April or May 2017 as far as I am able to recall, the TMO installed new gas pipes in Grenfell Tower and the general position of the pipes did make a bit concerned. I did not mention this concern to anyone.

18. I was at home in Flat 45 when the fire started on the 14th June 2017. I had been in the flat for most of the day. At 11.00pm on the 14th June 2017 my partner Hannah West and her daughter [REDACTED] were also in the flat. There was a recurring problem

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with the electricity supply in Flat 45 when the iron was plugged in; the electricity frequently short-circuited with the result that the supply cut out. This occurred on the 14th June 2017.

19. On the night of the 14th June 2017 the first indication which I recall that there was a fire or something else unusual was happening was a smell of plastic. This was at approximately 1.00am on the 14th June 2017. I was in bed at the time but awake watching a film. Both my partner and her daughter were asleep. The smoke alarm in Flat 45 did not activate at the time nor did I hear a smoke alarm activated in any neighbouring flat. Immediately I realised that there was a fire in Grenfell Tower I woke up my partner and her daughter and we evacuated the block. I believe at this stage the actual location of the fire was 3 floors above the floor on which flat 45 is located which is the 7th floor. The smoke appeared to change colours as the fire progressed. The colour of the smoke appeared to be blue at the time that explosions which I assumed were caused by gas occurred in the block and the smoke then appeared to take on orange, red and yellow shades. The smoke was very dense and also took on shades of black, white and grey.

20. I did not actually see the fire spread outside of the block and I did not take any pictures or recordings of the fire. The fire appeared to spread upwards from the 4th floor of Grenfell Tower before engulfing the whole building. Within 15 to 20 minutes of evacuating Grenfell Tower the whole building appeared to be ablaze and the fire was producing a distinctly acrid smell. Apart from the flames the entire building appeared to also be engulfed in smoke. I did not call 999 as in the

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panic I left my phone in the flat. The maximum time I remained in the flat before evacuating with my partner and her daughter was 5 minutes. As we were making our way down the stairs to evacuate I definitely recall a person in uniform who I assume was a firefighter shouted "stay in your flats" or words to that effect. I did not have any contact with firefighters before vacating the flat.

21. Prior to the fire Flat 45 was in a good state of decorative repair. I was informed after the fire that there was fire present in Flat 45. I was unable to do anything to stop the fire spreading. There was no actual smoke in Flat 45 prior to our evacuation but there was dense smoke on the landing and stairs. We did not take any possessions with us when we evacuated the flat. We were in genuine fear for our lives and were completely focussed on leaving the block. We did not take any protective clothing when we evacuated; to protect my partner's child from smoke inhalation I covered her with my dressing gown as we made our way down the stairs. There was nobody left in the flat following our evacuation. No one helped us to evacuate. I think the front door of the flat was left open when we evacuated and no-one provided any advice or assistance about evacuation procedures. As we left the flat, the smoke was quite dense on the landing and stairs. I was aware of other persons probably neighbours on the landing. I felt very scared but focused on protecting my partner and her daughter and just getting out of the block as quickly as possible. I was holding [REDACTED] my partner's daughter and Hannah my partner was in front of me. I was not aware a large number of other residents on the stairs as we evacuated. The smoke caused an acrid smell and I was aware of this acrid taste as I breathed. Although there was smoke on the landing I did not

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see any actual flames. Because of the smoke I did not see any other flat doors on the landing as we evacuated. To the best of my recollection I saw 3 other people on the landing as we evacuated Flat 45 – I believe one of these persons was a firefighter. This was the person who shouted, “Get back to your flats”. I did not respond to this advice. My only concern was to evacuate with my partner and her child as quickly as possible. I had to open the door between the landing and the stairs and we immediately descended the stairs. I could hear people screaming. Because of the thick smoke I could not actually see my feet until we reached the second floor. I could only see about 2 steps in front of me until we reached the lower floors. I did not use the handrail and as I was holding [REDACTED] I could not say if I could see my outstretched hand. I held my breath for as long as possible between breaths to avoid inhaling the smoke. The temperature was very high – I perspired. It took approximately 10 minutes to evacuate the building. The stairs were not slippery and there were no obstructions blocking our path. It did not occur to me or cross my mind to evacuate via the lift as I knew that this could potentially present a greater danger and impair our escape. We immediately made our way down the stairs and left the block by the communal doors which were open. When we got out of Grenfell Tower we were shepherded to a nearby block, then to Chelsea and Kensington Town Hall and then to the Latimer Road Christian Centre. As we moved from one location to another we spoke to other residents and people watching the fire. I recall that one lady was in hysterics as her child had not got out of the block.

Signed 

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22. I did not seek medical treatment in the immediate aftermath of the fire however as [REDACTED] I have arranged for an x-ray of my lungs due to the possibility of injury caused by smoke and noxious fume inhalation.

23. Having evacuated I did not re-enter Grenfell. During the hours after evacuating I was in the Latimer Road Community Centre. Either at the Latimer Rd Community Centre or at RBKC Town Hall I was assured together with other residents who had managed to evacuate that we would be provided with alternative accommodation. We were served with food and drinks and where necessary provided with clothing. However, I would describe the whole experience of evacuating and watching the progress of the fire as it engulfed Grenfell Tower as like being in a horror film. Alternative accommodation in a nearby hotel was arranged immediately. The only assistance which I requested from RBKC in the days following the fire was in relation to accommodation. A Key Worker was assigned to me who has since the fire assisted in my accommodation and medical needs. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] I did not seek any help from the TMO in the days following the fire. I attended the relief centres at Latimer Road Community Centre and Westway in the days after the fire. These places were a focal point for residents of Grenfell Tower and the support services provided by various organisations. The help and support provided by these centres was as good as could be expected in the circumstances.

Signed 

24. The main point I would wish to emphasise in this statement is that almost a year after this devastating experience I am still suffering [REDACTED] the symptoms I have described in paragraph 4 of this statement remain acute and have prevented me from being employed or living my daily life in any sort of normal way.

25. I have made statements to the police about the fire and my experiences. The statements were made in writing by the officers. As on all occasions when I have had to recount the events of the night of the fire, the experience was very traumatic and left me feeling emotionally drained and exhausted. The police have not allocated a Family Liaison Officer to me. I was interviewed by Sky News and the BBC following the fire and these interviews were televised.

26. Although it would be a great ordeal I am prepared to give evidence at the Inquiry. I agree to this is the knowledge that to fulfil it's aims and objectives the Inquiry will need to hear from survivors such as myself although no oral narrative could fully describe the horror of the fire and the effect that it has had on my life.

The contents of this witness statement are true.

Signed.....

Michael Paramasavian

Dated the 17 May 2018

Signed.....