

WITNESS STATEMENT

Criminal Procedure Rules, r27.2; Criminal Justice Act 1967, s.9; Magistrates' Courts Act 1980, s.5b

Statement of: DUDLEY, MARK

Age if under 18: Over 18 (if over 18 insert 'over 18')

Occupation: POLICE OFFICER

This statement (consisting of 2 page(s) 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.

Signature:

Date: 07/09/2017

Tick if witness evidence is visually recorded ☐ (supply witness details on rear)

ON 14TH JUNE 2017 i was in uniform working a night shift. i was tasked with Ct patrols in central london on a serial with 6 other officers and SERGEANT BOURNE. We were to patrol the area of CHARRING CROSS STATION.

at some point during the night we heard over the radio that a fire had broken out in a block of flats near chelsea.

not long after our serial was told to make way on blue lights to GRENFELL TOWER KENSINGTON.

as we approached the area not long after we could see from some distance a large cloud of dark smoke. as we got closer we could see the tower and large flames smothering the building from around half way up and reaching the top of the tower.

as we got closer on WALMER ROAD the traffic became heavy, cars were parked everywhere and we struggled to make way through the small roads of the estate.

it was late but there were many people on the streets looking at the tower.

we eventually got to a rendezvous point at BOMORE ROAD parked up and walked towards the tower. as we turned a corner i could see the tower fully. it was completely engulfed in flames. there was lots of smoke. the noise was loud, crackling and sounds of falling debris, through the black smoke i could see large chunks falling from the tower. im unsure what these were. the smell was strong of burning and slightly toxic that it irritated.

as we approached the tower it descended into chaos. there was people everywhere, some running towards the tower, others standing by looking, there were people shouting and screaming whilst others were

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crying. there was so many fire engines completely blocking the road. ambulances seemed to arrive every minute with emergency officers running in all directions. paramedics appeared to be setting up a makeshift emergency area at a sports centre on BOMORE ROAD.

it appeared as though people were leaning out of windows but it was hard to tell through the black smoke. there was no cordons in place so my serial and other officers that were arriving all the time got out some tape and started to push people back towards AVONDALE PARK ROAD. we put the cordon in place. other officers were assisting with different areas around the tower. on my cordon there were only around 8 officers. the cordon was hard to control due to the large crowd that had gathered. the crowd became aggressive and were accusing police of doing nothing. we tried to explain that the fire brigade were doing everything that they could and our job was to keep everyone safe.

the cordon was broken several times with angry family members storming officers and breaking through and running towards the tower.

it was understandable as some of these people had family members still trapped inside the building. many of them were on the phone to loved ones and were asking police for their advice, we were advised by the fire brigade that everyone should stay in their flats and wait for help.

those that broke cordons were returned back to a safe distance and even though angry were spoken to and reassured.

i noticed level 2 officers arrive with shields and seem to be protecting the fire brigade from falling debris. at one point all fire brigade officers left the tower and moved to a safe distance. the rumour was that the tower was going to collapse but this never happened.

i noticed ambulances leaving with injured people.

the whole place was lit with emergency lights.

the fire was still raging and showed no signs of stopping and continued to spread.

the fire brigades water hoses only appeared to reach half way up the tower.

there was chaos and confusion but it seemed emergency services knew what they were doing and worked well together and coordinated well during the mayhem.

more members of the public were arriving all the time. i was aware of other cordons in other parts of the area but due to the nature of the estate and the 'rat runs' and cut throughs' people were able to break away and get close to the tower.

due to the severity police were advised to push back the cordon further which we did to THRESHERS PLACE. i arranged for cars parked close by to be moved so that emergency vehicles could get closer.

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rumours started that people at the top or the tower would not be rescued and we were told to tell members of the public that had family members trapped to advise them to get out if they could do so safely.

those on the phone to loved ones were getting more and more distressed as they could hear them choking on the smoke. phone lines went dead and batteries died which made these people hysterical. many officers were confronted by these angry people and even pushed and abused. but in light of the circumstances officers reacted in a sympathetic and understanding manner.

the night appeared to never end. the fire still burned bright, as it grew a little lighter camera crews arrived at our cordon. they stood behind the lines filming the tragedy.

in all the anger and chaos on what became one of the hottest mornings of the summer local shop owners arrived handing out bottles of water to officers and the public.

now and again we would hear the cheer and relief from a member of public with the news that there love one had been rescued.

the news for others wasn't so great.

it seemed so quick that charity centres were set up. anyone with lost family in the tower were advised to head to these centres and give details.

clothing food and water began to arrive and were sent to these charity bases. as the night turned to day the fire still burned and emergency services were still working hard with no break. pieces of the building were constanly falling to the ground. the building was black and burnt out. windows were all smashed. the crackeling was loud and the smell was strong.

red cross arrived offering there help.

I noticed a news helicopter circling about and thought to myself how this was a big tragedy that would be talked about for a long time. it wasn't untill i left the scene that the scale of the tragedy hit me. it had already appeared across social media. other officers received phone calls from worried family memebbers as they had seen the event on the news.

eventually early turn officers arrived and my serial was relieved to have a debrief at kensington police station. my part in this tragedy was minimal but i hope i somehow made adifference to those i engaged with and those i reassured. to the people that still hadnt heard from there loved ones as i left the scene knowing i could do no more to help, and to those that sadly lost friends and family, i hope we acted professionally and with corn passion.

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Form MG11(T)

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