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Statement of: EDWARDS, DAVE

Form MG11(T)

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WITNESS STATEMENT

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

Statement of: EDWARDS, DAVE

Age if under 18: Over 8 (if over 18 insert 'over 18')

Occupation:

This statement (consisting of 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: DAVE EDWARDS

Date: 06/11/2017

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

Witness Statement

(Criminal Justice Act 1967, s.9; Magistrates' Court Act 1980, s.5B; Criminal Procedure Rules Rule 16.2)

Statement of: David Patrick EDWARDS

Occupation: Network Engineer

This statement 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.

Signed

Dated 6/11/2017

I, David Patrick Edwards, make this statement in relation to the Grenfell Tower Fire which took place on 14 June 2017. Prior to this incident, I had no knowledge of Grenfell Tower and had never attended the

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site.

Background

1. I am a Network Engineer employed by Cadent Gas Ltd (“Cadent”). I was on call on the morning of the Grenfell Tower incident on 14 June 2017 and attended on site as part of the Emergency Response and Repair team.

2. I started working for Cadent in 2005 and was employed as an Emergency FCO apprentice. In 2007, I qualified as an engineer through undertaking 18 months of Gas Supply Operations training. This was an advanced modern apprenticeship NVQ Level 3 City and Guilds accredited and gave an appreciation of all trades, plastering, bricklaying, carpentry and full Accredited Certification Scheme (“ACS”) gas qualification for Emergency Service Provider working. The ACS is the industry recognised and accepted route for experienced gas operatives to gain the certificate of competence needed to become a member of the Gas Safe Register. All gas engineers must be on the Gas Safe Register.

3. In April 2012, I was appointed as an Emergency Network Supervisor covering the area of Slough. In March 2016, I was appointed as a Level 7 Emergency Network Engineer for the area of Essex and in March 2017, I was appointed as a Level 7 Emergency Network Engineer for the area of Central London. I have maintained my Gas Safe registration as an engineer. Cadent operates four gas networks in the UK. One of those networks, the London network, includes the area where Grenfell Tower is situated. Cadent also operates the Gas Emergency Call Centre and receives gas emergency calls for all the gas distribution networks.

4. The operation of the gas distribution networks is managed from a control centre in Hinckley with local teams of specialist engineers operating and maintaining the gas control apparatus. In addition, each network has an Emergency Response and Repair capability.

5. The “Emergency” team operates a team of First Call Operatives (“FCOs”). The FCOs report to gas emergencies reported through the Gas Emergency Call Centre and are usually the first on site to any incident. The FCOs are responsible for investigating the situation and, if possible, make it safe. If they assess the situation or engineering activity as being beyond their scope, they will request the support of a

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“Repair” team who will attend the site. For gas escapes and incidents involving the gas network, rather than incidents which involve the internal pipework in a property, a Repair team will need to make the situation safe and effect a repair. This usually involves excavating the ground to uncover the gas mains and then employing a suitable repair technique.

6. Employees in Cadent are organised into three groups - Field Force (including the FCOs and Repair Teams), Staff (including office based support staff and operational supervisors and engineers) and Managers/Directors. Within each group there are a number of grades depending on the activities and responsibilities of the role. The Staff roles are from Level 1 — Level 7 (highest) and Managers from Band D — Band A (highest).

7. The London network Emergency Response and Repair capability is managed by the Head of Operations, James Harrison, who is a Band B Manager. James Harrison reports to the Director of Operations, Ed Syson. In London, James Harrison has one Emergency Network Manager, Nicola Wilkinson, and two Repair Network managers, Tony Day, who covers the West where Grenfell Tower is situated and Tony Smith who covers the East. All three are Band C Managers. I am a Level 7 Emergency Network Engineer working on the London network and I report to Nicola Wilkinson.

8. The Emergency FCOs are managed by Level 6 Network Supervisors who report to me. The Repair teams usually consists of a team leader and a “mate”. They are managed by Level 6 Network Supervisors, who report to the Level 7 Network Engineers.

The morning of 14 June 2017

9. On the morning of 14 June 2017, I was at home on standby. The Emergency and Repair managers operate a standby rota and managers who are on standby are expected to be available to provide advice or attend an incident if required. I was asleep when I received a call on my mobile at around 04:00am from Peter Baynard who was the Level 6 Emergency Network Manager on standby.

10. Peter Baynard has recently been promoted from a Level 6 Supervisor for West London to a Level 7 Network Engineer for East London. However, he was still on the West London standby rota for Network

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Supervisors. Peter informed me that he had been called out to an incident which involved a large block of flats which was on fire. He had been called by our Dispatch Centre and was on his way to the site.

11. The Dispatch Centre receive jobs from the Call Centre after an incident has been reported and then co-ordinate the appropriate response. The Dispatch Centre maintain an incident log and record all communications during the course of an incident, they also record any changes of personnel within the team and maintain contact with the engineers on site during the incident to keep a log of the incident. There was limited information available at this point. However, I woke up and saw the news alerts on my phone and could see that Grenfell Tower was on fire.

12. I went downstairs and telephoned the Dispatch Centre myself to obtain further information about the incident and our involvement in it. I asked the Dispatch Centre agent how Cadent had been informed of the incident and what the instruction was. I wanted to establish whether we had been asked to assist in any way, or to disconnect the gas, or to simply have a presence on site. I was informed that the London Fire Brigade ('LFB') had reported the incident to the Gas Emergency Call Centre via the emergency priority line at approximately 03:20am and that we had been asked to attend. I asked who the Repair team on site was and whether the Repair supervisors had been made aware. I recommended that Neale Milam, Robert Benn and Tony Day (the Level 6, 7 and Band C managers on standby for Repair) be informed of the incident. I had already seen that there was a level of media interest in the incident and I therefore recommended that the PR team be informed. The agent confirmed that an incident log had been started and it was agreed that a report to the National Gas Incident Site ("NGIS") report would be sent as soon as I had more information about the incident and Cadent's involvement. The NGIS is a website maintained by Energy Networks Association for reporting gas distribution incident within the United Kingdom. I told the agent at the Dispatch Centre that I would get ready to attend the site.

13. Before I drove to the site, I called the Band C Manager on standby that morning, Tony Day. I remember standing in my front garden to make the call, it was around 04:30am. I wanted to ensure that Tony was aware of the situation. I provided him with as much information as I could, which at that time was limited, but told him that I would keep him updated.

14. I got into my car and drove to Grenfell Tower. This was at approximately 04:30am. The roads

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leading up to the tower were chaotic. The A40 was closed and the journey took much longer than usual. As I approached the site, I could see the fire burning and the smoke rising. I realised that this was a very serious incident.

15. I approached the tower from the Darfield Way direction which was just to the West of the tower. I arrived at the site at approximately 04:45am. The scenes when I arrived were frantic. It felt as if I had arrived at a war zone. People were running around in a state of panic. There were tens of emergency officers on site. There was a sterile area near Bramley House, casualties with oxygen masks were being treated on the ground and members of the public were trying to assist the emergency services. There was a police cordon near Darfield Way to restrict access to the site and this cordon appeared to be manned by members of the public. I was immediately struck by the magnitude of the incident. From where I was situated, I could not see the bottom half of the building but could see that the top half of the building was on fire.

16. I attach as my Exhibit DPE1 a map of the local area. The police cordon which I first faced is identified at point 1 on the map. I explained to the person manning the cordon that I was from Cadent and was allowed to drive past the cordon. I parked my car near Dixon House (which is identified as point 2 on the map).

17. A number of police cordons had been erected to restrict people's access to the site. There were two cordons on Silchester Road, one near Bramley Road and the other near Lancaster Road (points 3 and 4 on the map). Another cordon was erected on Grenfell Road, near Treadgold Street (point 5 on the map) and a cordon ran all along Bramley Road (point 6 on the map). There was also a cordon near Station Walk (point 7 on the map).

18. I am aware that the Repair team had been carrying out a medium pressure repair job in one of the neighbouring streets. I could see the barriers around the excavation and part of Bramley Road had been closed as a result of this planned job. The job was completely unrelated to Grenfell Tower. As far as I am aware, this road closure did not have any impact on the emergency services' work that day. There was certainly no information relayed to me or any of the team on site from the emergency services that the road closure was making it harder for them to obtain access to the site. I understand that the Highway Agency had been informed of the road closure as is standard practice and the emergency services would

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therefore have been aware of it before the incident. I have identified where this work was being carried out as point 8 on the map in Exhibit DPE1.

Initial action on site

19. During a normal gas emergency incident, the Emergency team is responsible for investigating the incident, evacuating people from any buildings if necessary and for identifying the source of any gas escapes or supply issues. If a Repair activity is required, the Emergency Operatives will request the attendance of a Repair team on site. Grenfell Tower was an incident like no other. It was a major fire incident and the emergency and rescue operation was being co-ordinated by the LFB, who were the Category 1 Responders. The LFB were in charge of the incident and Cadent had been called to the incident as a Category 2 Responder to assist and support the work of the LFB. I knew from the incident management training that I had received that it was important that we took direction from the LFB.

20. As soon as I arrived on site, I put on my Personal Protective Equipment: hard hat, hi-viz jacket, and glasses, I made sure I had my ID card and then established contact with the FCO, Jason Knightley, who was already on site. Jason had arrived at the site at approximately 03:50am. I was aware that Jason had requested a Repair team immediately after he arrived on site and that they were on their way.

21. Peter Baynard called me at around 04:50am to inform me that he had also arrived on site but had been stopped at a cordon by the police and could not get anywhere near the site. I told Peter where I was situated and then went to meet him under the Westway Flyover (at the top of Darfield Way), we then called Jason Knightley and walked down to meet him on Bramley Road.

22. I had recently attended an incident management training course which is designed to provide operational personnel with the knowledge required to deal with an emergency situation on site. It covered a number of scenarios and assessed how we responded to an incident and dealt with on-site priorities and actions and supported the work of emergency services.

23. I had learnt from that incident management course, and also knew from experience, how important it is to have one muster point for all personnel on site. I established the Cadent muster point near Darfield

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Way and it is identified as point 9 on the map at my Exhibit DPE1. this was communicated to staff via telephone and recorded on the log. The muster point was situated in a comparatively calm area, away from where the emergency services carried out their work. This proved to be helpful as the day evolved as we were able to brief our teams away from the chaos. It also gave the men some respite from the difficult conditions.

24. Peter Baynard and I walked to meet Jason Knightley on Bramley Road, I asked him to clarify what his knowledge of our involvement with the incident was, and what instructions he had received from the LFB. I asked Jason whether he had registered with the LFB and whether he had received any specific instructions from them. Jason confirmed that he had been to the LFB command unit and had told them that he was from Cadent and that we had been asked to attend the incident. The command unit was situated at point 10 of the map at Exhibit DPE1. The fire officer had taken Jason's number and had asked him to standby. The order was to wait for the LFB's instructions.

25. Peter Hyatt was the first Repair team leader to arrive on site and he was accompanied by his 'mate', Terry Harris. Jason Knightley had requested their presence as soon as he arrived on site and they arrived at approximately 05:00am.

26. It is not unusual for Cadent to be asked attend large fires to assist the emergency services. If there is a fire, we will often be asked to disconnect the supply of gas to the building, whether or not gas is involved. When we first arrived on site, we did not know what the cause of the fire was. However, I knew, almost as soon as I saw the fire in the tower that our teams would have to disconnect the gas supply to the tower.

27. The supply of gas to a building can be isolated by operating a service isolation valve (SIV) which is a valve which controls the supply of gas to a building and is situated outside the building. The Repair teams are equipped to operate the SIVs. If this option is not available, the Repair team would have to isolate the gas mains in the network by carrying out excavations to locate the gas mains before isolating the mains using a suitable repair technique.

28. As soon as I arrived on site, it was evident that the intensity of the fire would make it impossible for our Repair team to approach the building to operate the SIVs. The whole building was ablaze, debris that

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was on fire was falling from the building. The emergency services' operation was ongoing with fire officers trying to extinguish the fire and evacuating people from the building. Paramedics were treating some of the casualties on site.

29. The area surrounding the tower had been cordoned off and although we could pass through some of the cordons once we explained that we were from Cadent and had been called to the site, we were prohibited from approaching the tower. I believed that the building was at risk of collapse because of the debris falling from the building and the intensity of the fire. Given the circumstances on site, I knew that it was likely that our Repair teams would have to carry out work on the gas networks.

30. Before I went to speak with the LFB, I wanted to understand the geography of the area and have an understanding of where the gas mains were located in case it would be necessary for our Repair teams to carry out excavations in the neighbouring streets to isolate the gas mains as I anticipated would be the case. I wanted to be armed with this information when I spoke with the LFB so that I could have a constructive conversation with the fire officers and be in a position to respond to any queries they had.

31. Soon after I arrived on site, I went to speak with the LFB to confirm our attendance and ask if there was any immediate action that they required from us. Jason Knightley had already been to the LFB command unit and had been asked to standby, but as the most senior manager on site at the time, I decided to speak with the LFB myself.

32. FCOs are equipped with Go Books which they use to accept jobs, liaise with the Dispatch Centre, request further resources and to view maps of where the gas mains are located in the local area. I used Jason knightley's GoBook to review a map of the local area to gain an understanding of where the mains that were supplying gas to the building were situated.

33. I understand that during major fire incidents, the fire services hold command meetings to manage the operation and that other emergency responders can be a party to those meetings. Cadent was not part of the LFB's command meetings. However, I approached the LFB command unit and asked to speak with the officer in charge of the incident. I spoke with a lady who I understand to be the LFB's Commissioner, Dany Cotton. I introduced myself and explained that I was from Cadent Gas. I asked her whether we needed to sign any register to confirm our attendance and I also asked her whether there was anything the

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LFB needed from Cadent at that point in time. She informed me that the LFB had our contact details and were aware of our presence on site should they need us. This conversation took place between approximately 05:30 and 06:00am.

34. At approximately 05:30am, I took a call from the Level 6 Repair Manager, Neale Milam. Neale Milam had been speaking to the Repair team leader, Peter Hyatt who was already on site and Peter passed the phone over to me. Neale was on his way to the site. I explained to Neale that I had been to the LFB command unit to ask whether there was anything they wanted us to do and that we were on site awaiting their instructions. I told Neale that we could not get anywhere near the building, but that we were reviewing plans of the network in anticipation of isolation.

35. My impression when I first arrived on site was that Cadent was not an immediate priority for the LFB. They, understandably, had other concerns and priorities and were coordinating their own rescue effort. They understood that we were present on site, but did not request any immediate action from us. Their instruction to us was clear; they wanted us to standby in the local area and await their instruction. I understood the importance of working with the LFB to ensure that our work did not compromise their rescue operation. We remained in the vicinity of the tower ready to accept any instructions, but in the meantime we started to put the operational plans in place in preparation for isolating the gas to the tower once we received the go ahead from the LFB. With this in mind, we obtained copies of the gas mains maps to give to the engineers, located any gas valves on the maps which could potentially be turned off and developed an understanding of where we could and could not get access to onsite.

36. I also co-ordinated Cadent's immediate response to the incident by, for example, establishing a muster point, logging our activities with the dispatch team, ensuring that the incident had been escalated to the managers and that they were aware of it and that a NGIS report (see paragraph 12 above) had been raised. It was important that I knew which personnel was on site and I started to keep a register logging people on and off site. We were working in a dangerous environment and if the building did collapse I wanted to know exactly who we needed to account for. Our customer liaison officer, Jaymini Patel, arrived on site at around 11:00am and I delegated the responsibility of keeping a log of all personnel to her.

Isolating the supply of gas

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37. At approximately 07:20am, Jason Allday and Tony Day the Repair team managers arrived on site. They were plagued by traffic on their way to the site but both had kept in touch with me during their journeys to site and knew what the position was when they arrived on site. I also updated my manager Nicola Wilkinson who did not attend the site on 14 June 2017 but supported the Emergency team throughout the day. By around 9am, three further Repair teams and support vehicles had been requested in readiness to carry out the necessary work to isolate the gas.

38. When Jason and Tony arrived on site, we still could not get anywhere near the building. It would have been impossible to approach the tower to operate the SIVs. The whole building was still on fire and we could not see the grounds surrounding the building because of all the debris covering it.

39. Shortly after Jason arrived on site, he went to the LFB command unit to ask if they wanted us to disconnect the supply of gas to the building. Jason came back and told me that the LFB confirmed that they did. Tony, Jason and I reviewed the maps of the gas mains to identify suitable points where our teams could work to disconnect the supply of gas to the building. Both Tony and Jason are skilled and experienced Repair engineers. They know the London network well and quickly identified how to cut the supply of gas.

40. The plan was to deploy the Repair teams to three separate locations where they would excavate the ground to locate the gas mains before stopping the flow of gas and cutting the main. To guarantee isolation, the gas mains would have to be isolated at the three separate locations. Until all three gas mains had been isolated, there would still be a supply of gas to the tower. We knew that we had to isolate the gas quickly. To achieve this, it was necessary to isolate the gas mains as near to the tower as possible. The further away from the tower the Repair teams carried out the isolations, the more excavations and isolations would have had to be carried out and this would have delayed the operation. Jason Allday was confident in his plan to isolate the supply of gas.

41. Once the proposed isolation sites had been identified on a map, Jason and Peter Baynard walked around the site to physically locate the three potential isolation points. I was aware that they had to have the LFB's permission to pass the cordons and that the LFB assisted them to locate and access the

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potential sites.

42. Although the isolation sites were within close proximity to the tower, Jason was comfortable that the locations were relatively safe for the Repair teams to work and also, importantly, did not restrict the emergency services' access to the building. He had discussed the proposed isolation sites with the LFB.

43. When you look at the local area on a map, the geography all looks relatively straightforward. However, the situation on the ground was far from straightforward. There were walkways and tunnels leading up to the tower which made it difficult to navigate your way around the site. The situation was made even harder when you take into account the hundreds of emergency officers, residents and casualties that surrounded the tower. There were tens of emergency vehicles lining the streets. The emergency services had set up a number of emergency tents on Lancaster Road and, at Lancaster Green, the LFB had mobilised a large fire engine with an aerial platform to assist the fire officers with their operation. It wasn't easy walking around the site.

44. I knew that the operation to isolate the supply of gas to the tower would have to be carried out as quickly as possible and that it was therefore important that all members of the team understood the geography of the area and the location of the mains and had copies of the maps to hand. With this in mind, I arranged for more maps of the gas mains to be produced and printed. One of our FCOs happened to be on site for an unconnected reason. He had a GoBook with him and we used this GoBook to produce more copies of the map of the gas mains to distribute amongst the Repair teams. I arranged for the map to be printed and a member of the team went to the local community centre, which was being used by the emergency services, and to a local printing shop to print the maps.

45. During the course of the morning, Jason Allday and Tony Day worked with the LFB to arrange access to the sites so that our plants and machinery could be moved to the excavation sites ready to start the excavations. This was difficult and the teams were at times prohibited from accessing the sites because of the ongoing emergency operation and because of safety concerns.

46. At around 12:30pm, Jason gathered all the team at the Cadent muster point and gave everyone an operational briefing. He went through the operational plan and explained how the supply of gas would be

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disconnected. He assigned the Repair engineers to each isolation point and talked through how the cut offs would be achieved. Tony Day also briefed the team on press communications and told everyone that any queries received from the media should be directed to the Cadent PR team. The Repair teams then all broke out to their assigned points.

The role of the Emergency team

47. The Repair team took the lead on isolating the gas. The Emergency team, which consisted of me, Peter Baynard and Jason Knightley, who was relieved by Chris Cuthbert supported the Repair teams throughout the day. Our role was to facilitate their work by ensuring that they had enough resources on site and by arranging for their equipment to be transferred to the necessary locations. The Emergency team continued to assist and support the Repair team's operation throughout the day. Jason Allday was the main point of contact with the LFB. However, all Cadent engineers worked with the emergency services throughout the day and we liaised with them to manoeuvre our machinery and tools to the excavation sites, being careful not to disturb their operation. I believe that we worked well with the emergency services.

48. As a manager, I also had regard to the welfare of the teams on site. I have never experienced an incident like Grenfell Tower. One of the isolation points where the men were working was situated near Bramley Road. This is where the ambulances were located and where the paramedics had set up a 'sterile' area where they treated the casualties that were rescued from the tower, I saw some members of the public with oxygen masks and a member of the Fire Brigade with what looked like cling film on the back of his neck. The scenes were upsetting and distressing, but the repair teams had to be located at these sites to carry out the excavations to isolate the supply of gas. We tried to shield the men from some of the scenes as much as possible and erected a fence and a sheet to separate where the men were working from the 'sterile' area.

49. The men were working in an incredibly difficult environment, under real pressure and were carrying out physical excavations on one of the hottest days of the year. I ensured that the men had enough water and food and we gave the teams breaks whenever possible and pulled everyone back to the muster point to be de-briefed.

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50. I continued to liaise with dispatch team throughout the day to feed information back to them so that they could monitor and co-ordinate the necessary resources. I also liaised with my manager Nicola Wilkinson throughout the day. She was monitoring the impact the incident was having on our wider workload and I understand that all non-emergency work in the local area was cancelled and re-scheduled to ensure that we had enough resources available for this incident and to take account of the congestion in the local area. I kept Nicola updated and ensured that she was aware of all site activity.

51. At around 15:30, Colin Larkin and Ryan Hill arrived on site. Colin is a Level 7 Network Engineer for emergency and Ryan is a Level 6 Network Supervisor. They were there to relieve both Peter Baynard and I. I did not leave the site until around 22:30. There was a real sense of team work amongst everyone on site. Everyone was keen to assist in any way they could and wanted to see the job through to the end. By the time I left the site, the Repair teams had isolated two of the gas mains and the team were working on isolating the third and final main.

15 June 2017

52. I returned to the site the following morning and arrived at around 07:00am. My manager, Nicola Wilkinson was already on site and Jason Allday was still on site since the night before. The fire had been extinguished by the time I returned on the second day.

53. Once the supply of gas had been isolated, the Emergency team carried out work to establish the impact of the isolation. The isolation of gas supply to the tower resulted in a loss of gas to some of the neighbouring buildings and the Emergency team was responsible for ensuring that the other properties and customers who had lost their supply of gas were safe. Rob Griffin who is a Level 6 Network Supervisor was also on site and I asked him to draw a map of the area that had been affected by the isolation so that the Dispatch Centre could extract a list of all the affected properties in the local area who had lost their supply of gas.

54. The LFB were holding a command meeting that morning at 08:30am and Nicola and I made our way over to the command unit. We were stopped at one cordon but allowed to pass through after showing our IDs. When we approached another cordon, the LFB explained that only one of us could go into the command unit and Nicola attended that meeting with the LFB. Nicola Wilkinson had scheduled command

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meetings with the LFB throughout the day and she was Cadent's main point of contact on 15 June 2017 and responded to any queries from the LFB.

Reflections

55. I have gone over and over the events of 14 June 2017 in my mind and have questioned whether there is anything that I could have done differently. Whilst I hope to never have to experience another incident like Grenfell Tower, or to have to work under similar conditions, if I was called to a similar incident again, there isn't anything that I would do differently.

56. As a FCC, I have attended a number of emergency incidents and have learnt a lot from my superiors about how to respond during such incidents. Although nothing could ever have prepared me for an incident like Grenfell Tower, I felt confident co-ordinating the Emergency team's response to the incident and I believe that my actions in establishing a muster point, keeping a log of personnel on site and ensuring that all the engineers had all the necessary information and equipment to carry out the excavations and were supported throughout the day, helped us to co-ordinate an effective and efficient operation.

57. We saw things at Grenfell Tower that no one should ever have to see. However, we all pulled together and worked well as a team. We all did our best and the teams on site worked incredibly hard under what were very difficult circumstances. We worked well with the LFB and Jason Allday developed a good working relationship with the LFB officers. We had a strong team of experienced engineers on site and we were fortunate enough to have been lead by two highly skilled engineers in Tony Day and Jason Allday.

I understand that the material I have provided to the Police may be shared with the Public Inquiry investigating the Grenfell Tower Fire. I am willing for any material handed to the criminal investigation to be shared with the Public Inquiry.

Signed

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David Edwards

Dated 6/11/2017

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