

WITNESS STATEMENT

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

Statement of: SWADDLING, BRYAN

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

Occupation: FIRE INVESTIGATOR

This statement (consisting of 4 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: B SWADDLING

Date: 18/07/2018

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

This statement is in further to the statement that I wrote on 9th February 2018 and provided to Police today. I met with DC Nav JOHAL and PC Lewis SMITH on 18th July 2018 and they asked me to clarify certain parts of my original statement. They also asked some further questions that were wanted by the Public Inquiry into the fire.

I answered these questions and now provide this second statement to Police clarifying these points and answering some of these questions.

The contemporaneous notes that I completed which I mention in my original statement were completed at Grenfell Tower. I believe my notes and the photographs that I took have already been provided to the Police. I do have a copy of these. My notes were completed in a log, which is usual practice as part of the Fire Investigation Team process.

In regards to my call sign for the incident. I normally use the call sign OK13 but this van was currently out at the time so I had to take another. The van I took to go to the fire had the call sign OK16. This van is a Volkswagen and is marked with LFB insignia. This contains various equipment that we use in investigating fires.

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I have been a Fire Investigator for the past three years and in this time I have visited over 250 fire investigation scenes. Before I took up this role I was a Watch Manager at various Fire Stations in London.

I can confirm that prior to this incident I had never visited Grenfell Tower nor had I any knowledge of it or its fire plans.

In my role as a Fire Investigator I do not complete Section 7(2)D visits on any buildings or high rise buildings as this is not part of my current role.

I can confirm that my role as a Fire Investigator comes under the Fire Safety Department. I mentioned in my original statement that I was on an "Day" shift. This shift starts at 9:30am.

I found out about the fire at Grenfell Tower at work. I saw that there was a TV on which was showing media coverage of the fire. Also we have LFB radios on that were monitoring updates from the scene.

When I made my way to Grenfell Tower there was some difficulties on route. I remember there being quite a lot of traffic, and part of the A40 was closed, a number of the side roads nearby had also been coned off. I remember seeing a man closing off a road with cones so we (myself and WM KENT) mentioned we were here for the fire and he allowed us to pass. We made this journey using blues and two tones.

We parked the vehicle at a Stoneleigh Place. I believe this was the location I was informed to attend on my call slip.

I went to Flat 16 with my colleagues Watch Manager KENT and Watch Manager WILKINSON. We didn't want to get in each others way so we had our own separate jobs for the task. Mine was to complete the photography of the flat. I can remember the layout of the flat well. I remember that the kitchen was at the other end of the hallway from the front door.

I started my photography at the front door and progressed through the flat. Usually we start at the furthest part from where we believe the fire has originated and then finish at this location. Because of the situation with timing we had to work slightly differently. There was still fire potentially ongoing both on the interior and exterior of the building which I believe was being tackled by fire fighters. I was not wearing (BA) Breathing Apparatus. My training for this had expired as we do not use this in our day to day role. We do have respirators and dust masks available to us but in this situation I did not use them. The

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windows in the flat were either open or completely gone so there was clear air coming into the flat. I was also wearing my full fire kit.

When I was inside the flat I did not notice any smoke nor did I see any in the stairwells. I entered the tower via the main door but due to possible falling debris I had to use a Police riot shield to protect me as I crossed over. I carried this myself and no Police Officer assisted me. As I was outside there was still Police and London Ambulance Service crews present. When I made my way up the stairway there was a tremendous amount of water and hose which made the ascent difficult.

The door to Flat 16 was open and still intact. The only other flat I entered was the one next door and this was in order to put some equipment in, I am unsure what number this was.

I did not have in my possession any body worn camera or thermal imaging camera. In my role we are equipped with either a small compact camera or a digital SLR camera that we use for major incidents or fires where there has been a fatality.

When I left Grenfell Tower I did not see too much of the external cladding. This was mostly because of the cordons that were put in place for the safety of people. I took one photograph of the exterior. This was after we were removed from the tower because a decision was made that the tower was unstable.

On the outside I could still see that the tower still had smoke and flames emitting from it.

On our way up to Flat 16 I used the stairway which I believe was the only way up or down the tower. I did not use the lift at any point. I did not see any sprinklers. Alarms were sounding but I was not able to specify where from.

I also did not see anything to do with the gas supply nor do I have any knowledge of the gas supply being cut from Grenfell Tower.

I cannot remember exactly when I left the Tower and returned to Dowgate Fire Station. I would say this was at dusk, so around 8pm to 9pm. After being at Grenfell Tower I returned to Dowgate Fire Station and continued working until around 3am the following morning.

In regards to the dry risers being charged with water at Grenfell Tower, I cannot answer this but I would assume they were as this is standard practice.

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In regards to whether there was any residents still inside of the tower when I was present I am unsure. I was only inside of Flat 16 documenting it as part of my investigation.

I am unaware of any potential risks from cladding panels.

I was unaware of where the Incident Commander was at the time but I would assume that they were at the Command Unit.

My understanding of the "Stay Put Policy" is that when there is a fire in a high rise block the safest thing to do for the residents is to stay inside of their flat. I am unsure of who made the decision to implement the stay put policy and I am also unaware of who decided to withdraw this.

I cannot say anything further in regards to the construction of the windows. I just remember them either being open or completely gone.

There were fire fighters outside tackling exterior fires when I was present.

The fire was ongoing when I was inside the tower but this was higher up from where I had gone into the tower. I went up as far as the 4th floor only. In regards to how this made me feel. I felt safe as our management wouldn't let us go in if there was a risk to us. I was there to do a job.

During the incident I did not receive any injuries nor did I witness any other fire fighters sustain any injuries. Also on this day or since I have not received any medical treatment.

I did not speak to any residents or make any phone calls to any of them. Some members of the public did ask me some questions when I first arrived but I could not answer these as I had only just arrived. These questions were not about people inside of the tower. They were also offering us food and water.

When leaving the tower I went straight back to Dowgate Fire Station and did not go to Paddington Fire Station like some of the fire fighters who had been on scene.

In my original statement I mentioned the gas and electricity supply inside of Flat 16. I knew about this because I saw the boiler in the kitchen.

When I became a Fire Investigator I had to pass a two week course with "Bureau Veritas" who are our scientific advisors. I then had a week long residential training course with "Gardiners". Following this I

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have completed various other courses which I explained in my original statement. This training is an ongoing process and I am constantly taking new courses to this day.

In my van I had various pieces of equipment that I needed to use in my role. We put these on a trolley and this was stored at the base of the tower when we attended flat 16. We could then collect the items as we needed them. This equipment included Clingfilm type wrap, cameras, ID markers, evidence bags and various other hand tools.

Inside of flat 16 was a fridge freezer which we believed to be the origin of the fire. We removed this from the building by carrying this down the stairs. This was not easy due to the size and weight of the object. Also the water and hose on the stairway made this a difficult task.

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