

WITNESS STATEMENT

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

Statement of: DAVIES, DAVID

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

Occupation: FIRE OFFICER

This statement (consisting of 16 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: D DAVIES

Date: 20/12/2017

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

This statement refers to my attendance at the Grenfell Tower Fire on the 14th June 2017.

On Friday 3rd November 2017 at 10:51 am, I was interviewed by DC AKINKUNLE and DC ARAUJO in relation to this incident. The interview took place at Hammersmith Fire Station and also present was Steve WHITE from the Fire Brigade union.

The interview was audio recorded and this full statement has been produced from the recording. I have been allowed to review my statement and make any necessary changes prior to signing it.

I am David DAVIES, pay No. [REDACTED] 1B, I am based at Hammersmith fire station on the Red watch, we were G362, that was Hammersmith pump and I was the officer in charge of that machine and we were the 3rd machine in attendance.

I have been a fire fighter for 17 years and joined in 2000, I started off in Lancashire fire and rescue service, did 5 years there and transferred down to London as a firefighter, I did 5 years on the White Watch at Hammersmith, then I became a Crew Manager and did 16 months at Chiswick on the White Watch and then came back here as a Crew Manager on the Red Watch where I have been ever since. There are 4 watches at a station, Red, White, Blue and Green and you work with that watch all the time, you can swap duties for the odd day or odd night with other watches but that is who you would work with, so you work closely with the other Red watches at Fulham, Kensington and other nearby stations, so it's almost like 4 separate brigades.

In this statement I will mention several of my LFB colleagues that I worked with or saw during the incident at Grenfell Tower, this includes Wayne ARCHER, firefighter / driver, Red Watch Hammersmith,

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John O'HANLON and Nick BARTON both firefighters from Hammersmith also on the Red Watch, Mike DOWDEN, Watch Manager North Kensington, Christopher SECRETT, Crew Manager North Kensington, Brien O'KEEFFE Watch Manager Kensington Red Watch, Alan MOORE Watch Manager Chiswick, Stuart BEALE Watch Manager Soho, Firefighter Ben BRODERICK from Kensington, Paul WATSON, Watch Manager, Red watch Hammersmith,

I have been to incidents at the Grenfell Tower before, like fire alarms, I have been to a little fire there before, I have been to incidents in Lancaster Walk which is next to Grenfell Tower, I have been in the building before and I knew where it was and what it was like inside, because Hammersmith is next to North Kensington, we would go there together a lot, this was when I was on the White and Red Watch, I can't remember the year, but I have definitely been there before when there was a little fire on one of the lower floors in one of the flats.

I have also been to the building next door, Lancaster Walk, where someone had set some of the bins alight which filled the whole block with smoke, that was a few years ago. With regards to the Grenfell Tower it was the 6th or 7th floor, it was a fairly sort of straight forward job, if it had been a decent job I would have remembered, I think it was like a table alight with very little damage and had no effect on the rest of the building just smoke and we took out the few items that had caught fire and I have never been posted to the fire safety department before Grenfell.

On the 13th June 2017, I was the officer in charge of the pump and we 4 people riding it and it is the 2nd machine based at Hammersmith.

On the 13th June 2017, we came on duty at 8pm and it was our 1st night shift following a 2 day shift so we had been on duty getting on for 5 hours when the call came in, I was in my room reading a fictional book which I could not remember the name.

I think the call came out at 0:56 hours, just before 1 O'clock, the call came in via the mobilising system so that notifies what machine is required, you then go down to the watch room to get the call slip which gives you the details of the incident of where / what you are attending. When the call came in, I went to the machine whilst the driver Wayne ARCHER went to the watch room to get the call slip, the call slip also comes on our computer screens in the cab, the MDT is like a copy of what is on the call slip, but the call slip has more details and it would show me what I need to take along and work with whilst around the incident ground and there is an acknowledgement button to let control know you have acknowledged the call and that you are going to be on your way and it said "FIRE IN FLAT, GRENFELL TOWER" it gave the flat and floor number.

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We and North Kensington pair were initially on it and Kensington ladder were also sent as an initial 4 pump commitment of resources to the job. There is a printed copy in the Watch room where you get the call slip from and that's where the maps are, the driver would either get the call slip, look at the address and there is also a grid reference, he would look at the map if he is not sure where he is going. The other 3 members of the crew would then go to the machine and get rigged into our fire gear because we don't go out of the door until we have our fire gear on, it is only the driver who would drive in work wear gear. I was riding a pump and there were 4 people on our machine, I am not sure about North Kensington but you would have to ask them, but the minimum would have been 8 people, 4 on ours and 4 on their machine and because it was summer I can imagine they were at minimum, Kensington would have 5 on as they only have one appliance at their station so they would have had 5 people, so that would have been 12 plus 5, 17 people.

The other riders on the Hammersmith machine were firefighter Wayne ARCHER who was driving, firefighters John O'HANLON and Nick BARTON who both sat at the back of the machine whilst I sat in the front. I can't remember what time we left but it must be on the mobilising system, it must have been a couple of minutes after the call came in.

We came out of the station, did a left along Shepherds Bush Road to Shepherds Bush Green, round the Green, over Holland Park Roundabout, took the first left into Royal Crescent which took us onto St. Anns Road, went up St. Anns Road to Stoneleigh Place, did a right onto Stoneleigh Place and took the 2nd left which took us into Grenfell Road and drove down Grenfell Road and we parked in a parking sort of space about 30m from the building, that was down to the end towards Lancaster Walk which bared to the left like a 30 degrees turn to the left and it stops and the tower block is on the right hand side, the road sort of ends by the South East corner where the main entrance was, that was where the road stopped.

We parked by a loading bay area, so we kept the road clear when we parked up. The loading area is like a fixed wheel big truck, like a 7 ½ tonne would park up, unload and still keep the road clear, it was recessed away from the road like any sort of loading bay. You could get a truck in there with no problem and still keep the road clear. There was no problem with parked cars being in the way as well as blockage in the road from the way we went.

North Kensington's machines were both parked nearer to the building and they were already working. We were the only fire truck in that bay, the other 2 Kensington's machines were parked further, so they were really close to the building, so you would have to get 2 hose from one of their trucks into the building and plug into the dry riser, they were purposely very close to the buildings.

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It didn't take us that long to get there because I knew where I was going as I had been there a few times before, the roads were dry and clear at that time of the night, it took us about 3 - 4 minutes, but not that long as it was a straight run, we arrived on scene after 1, just after 1 o'clock.

I turned on my personal radio whilst I was still on St. Anns Road and I could hear the radio traffic between the Crews who were already at the tower and they were issuing command asking for things, so I knew that it was a bit of a job, when I arrived I could see a window with a flickering orange glow on the 4th or 5th floor, I think it was the 4th floor, it was like an orange light bulb in a room and someone waffling a fan in front of it, it was still contained to a flat, so we knew it was going to be a working job.

When we got there, I told John and Nick in the back that they would be the nominated BA wearers (Breathing Apparatus) and I told them to stay there and I got off the machine and went to find the North Kensington's Watch Manager Mike DOWDEN who was the officer in charge, when I found him, I asked him what he wanted from us, he said he wanted the BA team, so I turned round and nodded to Nick and John as they were already putting their BA sets on and came off, they went up to the Bridgehead to assist the team fighting the fire, Mike asked me to have a look around the other side of the building to make sure it was not spreading, so I had a walked round to the North Side of the building as the fire was on the East face, there was no fire on the North face so I went back and said to Mike, "NO, IT'S JUST HERE", he then asked me to compose an informative message that is when you go to any incident, control needs to know what is going on, so the first informative message would tell you what you have got, you are painting a picture of what is going on, an informative message would consist of the size of the building, what it is used for, what is going on and what we are doing, equipment being used to fight the fire, if there are any casualties missing, anything that we think they need to know because control are listening to it, because it is a 4 pump fire, there would be a Station Manager there who would be monitoring the radio traffic, if he is informed that the fire is out, he would either stay where he is or stop off on his way as he could be anywhere in Western London, if he is told the fire is out, no casualties involved, he would turn around, if he is told that it is a go in job, he would continue to proceed, so it is being monitored and people are listening, a picture is also being painted of what is going on at the scene and other machines on their way would have an idea of what is happening.

I composed and wrote the message out, showed it to Mike and read it to him which he said was fine and I then went to find the driver of North Kensington Ladder who was going to send the message but couldn't find them as they were running around working, so I sent the message over the radio myself and came back, found Mike and said "THAT MESSAGE IS GONE, WHAT DO YOU WANT ME TO DO NOW?"

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and was told to have a look round the building again to make sure that there was nothing going on, I then came back and found Mike again, we then laid out a covering jet to cover the outside of the building, we got it charged with water in it and then put a firefighter on the end of the branch, I can't remember who it was, said "SHOULD WE PUT WATER ON IT?" so we put a little bit of water on the outside of the building and I told them to stop because the BA crews had gone in and we don't put water on a building from the outside when we have crew inside, so we turned the water off, can't really remember what I did next, think I went to find Mike, at this point the fire had begun to come out of the building so we put the covering Jet back on then the officer in charge of the Bridgehead, Watch Manager Brien O'KEEFFE, started asking for more BA wearers.

The Bridgehead is below the fire floor, the Bridgehead is where we stage people, collect resources and people there go up to the fire floors, you could tell from his voice that we urgently needed people there at that point, I can't really remember the time scales but the fire had started to come out of the building and we were putting the jet on it and it was having no effect at all, I was broadcasting on Radio Channel 1, Brian was on Channel 1 and the BA team would have been on Channel 6, that's the fire ground Channel, from Brian it became apparent that we needed more resources at the Bridgehead urgently, Mike had asked for more machines, I don't know the sequence of make-up's went, it went up quite quickly and he told me to get resources to the Bridgehead right now and to concentrate on that.

The Bridgehead was located on the 2nd floor, the fire was on the 4th floor. Brian was essentially saying that we needed more people as the fire was spreading and he needed more people to go up into the building with BA to fight the fire.

North Kensington's pair set up the dry riser procedure, they plugged into the dry riser, their Crew Manager and firefighters were the initial BA team into the flat, my BA team were the 2nd team into the flat, then I think combinations of North Kensington and Hammersmith and Hammersmith and Kensington. An amalgamation of BA teams were put together to go into further flats and fight the fire, I couldn't tell what happened afterwards in regards of firefighting.

We had been there about 20 minutes when it became apparent that the fire was coming out of the flat that was when Mike decided that we needed a TL. Mike told me that a TL — Turntable ladder, a big ladder was on the way, so we needed to make room for that, so I asked Kensington's driver Ben BRODERICK, to back his machine and our machine pump out to the end of Grenfell Road, so we backed them out and I waited there as the machines came on, the ladder from here and Paddington's also came as well. I don't

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know how long it took the TL to arrive but that could be checked on the MOBIS which would say when it turned up, but it wasn't straight away.

I stopped them going down Grenfell Road and told the crews we needed BA, Hose, Breaking in gear, Branches at the Bridgehead double quick time, because sometimes you turn up to a job, have a look around and wait, but they had to know it was an urgent situation, so I stood at the end of Grenfell Road basically waiting for the TL to turn up.

Also in attendance was a Station manager who arrived, quite earlier on because I remember him turned up in his car and I said to him "YOU BETTER HURRY UP BECAUSE YOU ARE 1ST SENIOR OFFICER HERE", there was also another WatchManager in charge, he put his gear on and went to the fire, I don't know what he did, but he was the first to arrive in a senior officer role and that was fairly earlier on, when he arrived, I didn't recognise him, because I was sorting out the TL, it appeared like all of a sudden everyone was there. When he arrived, I was stood at the end of Grenfell road keeping it clear and waiting for the TL, so that's probably 200m from the tower, so I don't know what he did, I would assume that he would have found the officer in charge Mike DOWDEN and liaise with him, that's what I assume he would have done, I can't think he would have done anything else other than that.

When the TL turned up I told them that they were needed down the front of the building and can you get down there, so the OIC — Officer In Charge jumped out and sort of ran down in front of the machine and the driver drove it down there to make sure he could get underneath it and then we used, can't remember whose machine we used, but we used another fire engine to pump into the TL, there was a Hydrant outside the building that was being used to feed the firefighting Jet inside the building and there was another Hydrant on the corner of Grenfell Road opposite the Church so that was probably about 4 lengths away, so we needed about 8 lengths rolled out, I started doing that so that the TL had water, by the time it got up to work, I don't know how long that took and again more and more resources turned up, I helped to get the Hydrant to work, got it turned on so that the TL had got water at this point more and more Machines were turning up, by now the fire was shooting up the building and I went to find Mike Dowden again who was still the officer in charge and said WHAT DO YOU WANT ME TO DO NOW? "and as he was under loads of pressure, I took his radio off him for a short period of time to talked for him so that he didn't have to talk on the radio I did that for a short period of time about a couple of minutes and has the cladding was coming off the building the safety zone had to come out more and more, I looked round the North side of the building but the fire was confined to the East face of the building and there was nothing coming round the North side.

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Then SOHO's, I think they had an ALP — (Aerial Ladder Platform capable of reaching 32 meters high, Approx. 10 floors, it has a cage at the head which can hold 4 people. Can be operated from ground level or from the cage) arrived on the grass bank and I said "WHAT DO YOU NEED TO GET IT TO WORK?" I said "YOU NEED A MACHINE THERE BECAUSE THERE BECAUSE THERE IS A HYDRANT NEAR THE COLLEGE OR SPORTS CENTRE, SO WE NEED A MACHINE HERE", but as the machines were parking further and further away, I ran to the far end of the sports centre and saw about 300 members of the public, a couple of your colleagues and a fire engine behind them, so I asked your colleagues if they could get those people back as we needed the machine in here, I then ran off to find a driver and someone else because we would have to go through the street furniture, it must have been quite a while into the incident because there was a van set up such as triage and causality handling in place by the sports centre so I asked them if they could move for a minute in order to bring the machine through, it was a real slow process trying to get it through all the benches and all the places, we eventually got it onto the grass bank next to SOHO's ALP, got it plugged into the hydrant, but they were having problem with their ALP, the ALP would still work but they would move very slowly, I don't know maybe because they were on the grass but you would have to ask them, it took a while before it had any effect, I don't know how long this was into the incident the fire had started to come round to the North side of the building which had started from the East.

I was talking to the SOHO's officer in charge called Stuart BEALE, and said "THERE WAS NO ONE WATCHING THIS SIDE OF THE BUILDING" and he said "YOU BETTER STAY ON AND KEEP AN EYE ON THINGS AS IT STANDS HERE BECAUSE IF ITS GOING TO COLLAPSE OR LIKELY TO BE SPREADING", as there was no one there, as focus was on the foyer, this was the entire focus of the job at the time.

We stayed with him for a little bit and then my Governor Paul WATSON arrived and he stayed in the Foyer and asked for some more branches, so I went to collect some more branches from some machines as he wanted them on the Bridgehead, as I went to the foyer the whole of the stairs was full of people wearing BA sets waiting to go in so I asked them to pass the branches up, they also wanted some Tripods, some BA Tripods because they had more BA Boards at the Bridgehead and again I went to find some, took them in and there were so many people in there, you have a BA board where you have a tally of all the BA wearers, they sit on the floor or if they sit on a tripod, they are at a useable height, because I had been doing so much running around I was very knackered and went to get a bottle of water and sat with Nick and some of the other people who had been there earlier on and we Just looked at the scene that was

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unfolding, by this stage the entire building was completely alight. Everyone had known that the fire had gone to the outside because everyone could see as they came out to change their BA sets.

The whole of the East was right to the top, the East and the North had all gone, I couldn't walk around the side of the building to have a look at the rest as the top of the South had begun to go as well, it could have been 4am or 5am as it had started to get light because at June it begins to get light really early, there were several hundred of people there trying to separate out people who wore BA.

The machines went up to 40 and there were fire rescue units because it took a few hours to get to the higher floors, you needed an EDBA — Extended Duration Breathing Apparatus which only the FRU — Fire Rescue Unit people can wear, they are two cylinders rather than one, they didn't want any more firefighters with BA as they were looking for people in EDBA.

A single cylinder gives you ½ an hour of air whilst the EDBA gives you more air, you need to be qualified and they are on the FRU machines, so they were looking for the EDBA wearers to go up to the higher floors. Nearly all the FRU machines were there, about 10 of them, there were 40 fire engines, 2 Aerials, all the FRU's and other ancillary machines like command units, loads of senior officers and they asked for another 20 machines in order to let the first 40 being relieved.

I have been to high rise fires and fires after the event where I have seen the whole flat completely destroyed and 100% alight and the top flat is fine, I have never seen anything like that, it was like a shock because everyone you asked had never seen anything like it. It came out the building and went up about 3 floors quite quickly then about another 30 seconds, it went up another 6 floors, it was like somebody had poured petrol down the side of the building, I have never seen anything like that, it was unreal. I couldn't tell you a rate at which the fire was travelling but it was like, if you get a piece of paper and you set light to the bottom it would just burn and go up, it was like that, but on a massive scale.

We had a fire in Shepherds Bush Court, another fire in the Tower Block, the year before on the 7th floor, intense fire in the flat, it caught fire to the flat above and the flat above that, but it did not fly up the building, it was like the building was burning from the outside inwards, rather than inwards to out and the travel it went up, it went up so quickly.

As a fire fighter it was unprecedented, nothing has ever happened like that before, never seen anything like that before because if that happens, people wouldn't live in tower blocks with that kind of cladding on the front because it was a death trap, it has never happened in the history of the Brigade, it's never happened.

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In regards to my rank within my watch, when I turn up to a fire, the officer in charge of the machine is the Watch Manager, that night he had 2 Crew manager to which I was one of them, one on the back of his ladder who was part of the initial BA crew, you had another Crew Manager who was initially at the Bridgehead inside the building, so I was command support, so I could go to the officer in charge and he could say to me, go to the Bridgehead, go and get your set on or he could give me any number of roles, I know this because being a Crew Manager I should competently carry them out.

On a watch, we have 12 people on a watch, we would have a Watch Manager, a Crew Manager, another Crew manager and then 9 firefighters, so on any day, you've got 8 people for 2 machines, there would be a Watch Manager in charge of our ladder that is the no 1 machine, the Crew Manager in charge of the pump which is a No. 2 machine, then the other Crew Manager will technically or should be on the back of the ladder as leading the BA team in, but invariably, I would be sent to another station to be a temporary Watch Manager to be in charge of that watch, so effectively most two appliance base is like a Watch Manager and a Crew Manager, so when you go to an incident, the Watch Manager is in charge, the Crew manager is there to assist the Watch Manager for command and control of the incident.

The fire came to the outside about 20 minutes after our arrival, because it went from being a normal job, the informative was that about 75% of fire in the flat was alight, at that point, when the informative went, it was still just like a regular fire in a flat and it went very quickly from being a regular fire in a flat to all hell breaking loose, that period of time seemed to be about 15 minutes if that, I have never seen anything like that before, ever. We've been to fires where they have gradually gone bigger and bigger we were actually fighting the fire going to what it did in a short period of time from being a normal job to one that we have never seen before.

I can't really remember how I felt upon the fire becoming worse as I was so busy doing things, it was only when I got the SOHO's TL to work and got the ladder there, which was quite a long way into the job, that I stopped all the things that had been keeping me busy and took it all in and looked and thought of the devastation and also thinking that there was little we could do for the people on the top floors, it was not resignation but there was nothing we could do even if we got to the top of that building, it was unlikely you can come down all those stairs in that environment with that smoke and still survive from the top floors, it was devastating it got to that.

In terms what I did, it took a long time, to get the TL out, get the hose, roll it out and plug it in, get the hydrant open, turn the water on, make sure the TL and pump is ready to receive all takes a lot longer to do than to say it.

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Trying to get the machine through, trying to find the driver and getting the crowd to move back and getting that through with a lot of going backwards and forwards, making turns because there was a lot of street furniture took a long time. With regards to the street furniture, it is not designed for a vehicle to go in it as it is not a street, it's in front of the college where people walk, it is not designed for vehicle traffic and there were quite a lot of benches that we had to turn corners round, it's just the way it's designed, it is not a criticism of the street as it is not the street, it's the concourse, just the front of the building, where you've got the bank and the hard stand, it is not meant for traffic so that was the problem getting through, it is not designed for taking vehicles, I had to watch the Kensington driver back Kensington's machine out, I think he backed ours out as well and I had to watch him back ours out, that was again taking time to watch him do that, because the police were there quite early and doing the crowd control with cordons set up really quite quickly, members of the public were not getting in our way as the police had got people back to the top end of Grenfell Road.

I couldn't hear any alarms, I could hear screaming from the building, lots of screaming, the noise of the fire, the noise of debris hitting the floor, there was smoke, steam, general background noise of pumps going, radio traffic, there was a lot of noise.

The access to the tower did not prevented / obstructed the fire fighters ability to fight the fire or to rescue occupiers.

When we opened the lift and it was filled with smoke, so we did not use the lift. This is not normal with a high rise procedure as we would be expected to use the lift to ferry gear and personnel up to the bridgehead and use it to ferry casualties down again, the firefighters would take control of the lift and utilise it, because it is in a concrete encasing and the doors are shut on each floor, in theory, it should be useable. I didn't open it nor did I witness it, but I was told that they opened the lift and it was full of smoke and they had to shut the lift again, it meant that if you wanted to get to the higher floors you would have to walk.

We would only take the lift to the bridgehead, because it started on the lower floor, I am not sure we would have used it to be honest, because if you go up to the higher floors, you haven't got any water because you haven't plugged into the hydrant that is the outlet of the dry riser, so that once the door is opened the floor could be completely armed, so we would not risk going above the fire in a lift, so maybe in that case they might have used it, but I wouldn't have got in that lift to go, I would have walked, I think everyone would have walked because you couldn't risk stepping out onto a floor with it being like

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that, you may use it getting casualties down if you called it up, but again you wouldn't put them in the lift that was full of smoke, so maybe it did have an impact in getting people out.

The dry riser was fine but the trouble was the falling off of big chunks of the cladding coming down from the building. It was cutting, damaging the hose, so lengths were bursting and we had to keep trying to replace them, I think that would be the only effect on the dry riser.

With regards to the description of any features that may promoted the internal fire or smoke, I couldn't really comment to be honest, I think you would have to ask the fire fighters who were going to the higher floors, I never got beyond the Foyer so I can't really comment on that.

I think it took a couple of days to extinguish the fire, we ran out of steam and it ran out of things to burn, I don't think we put it out.

As people were coming out, I asked one bloke, how many bedrooms he had in his flat, with the purpose to put it on a message, so if he has got we assume a kitchen, a bathroom, like a dinning living room and another bedroom and a 2 bedroom flat, we assume that to be a 5 rooms, so if we send a message, it would be a 5 room flat on a 4th floor, if you have 3 bedrooms, I would assume a 6 room flat, so I asked him how many bedrooms he had in his flat and he told me 2 , so I sent a message that said "5 ROOM FLAT ON THE 4th FLOOR".

As it started to come out of the building, I remembered shouting at the residents to get back because people were coming out of the building, standing there and looking at it became evident that it was coming out of the flat and going up the wall, I just shouted at them to move back, but there were people on the East Side where the grassy bank was and they moved further away back up the grassy bank as the cladding was coming off with fist size bits of metal, it was pinging off because some trees there were being set alight by the cladding coming off.

I don't know when they stopped the firefighting activities. The initial teams all went up with thermal imaging cameras, I didn't use one. With regards to wearing body cameras, I don't think so, no, I don't know if some of the later team that went in wore them but the first crew didn't have body camera on.

In relation to receiving training for firefighting in a high rise block of flats and what it involved, we did a general training program what we call "BACK TO BASICS" where you would go with another couple of machines and you would do a high rise drill up, we did ours with Fulham with a tower out there and we have a tower in the yard. Everyone in the brigade has done that and I think it was early in the year or last year but we do a lot of high rise training.

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In relation to training, I would consider myself competent. We don't have real fire training in a block of flats because we don't have that facility, we do real fire training at various venues where you go into apartments and fight a real fire but they are not in a high rise.

In relation to any previous experience of fire fighting in a high rise block of flats, I went to shepherds bush court where a similar, more intense fire went another 4 floors up, but we managed to put that out because it didn't explode up the building as it went up. When a fire goes to the flat above and comes out of the window, you see flames bends and go into the flat above, then that flat would catch light, get hot that would send flames up and back inside, so it's always burning inside, goes out and back in. But as it went out, it began to burn the flats above it, that's what I mean that it began to burn from the outside to inside rather from inside to out. The one on Shepherds Bush Court was in to out so we had a chance to fight it.

In regards to a prepared firefighting plan for Grenfell Tower, it's just a generic high rise procedure of what we would do when we get a fire in a high rise tower block it's the procedure involved with that and would not be specific to Grenfell Tower.

In regards to pre prepared plan for firefighting and / or search and rescue when compartmentation failed in a high rise block of flats, it was only the experience we had at shepherds Bush Court where you just treat it as a just chase the fire up the building.

The lift was there but it was full of smoke so we couldn't use it, the main stairwell was the only one way out and there was no sprinklers in the building.

The radio communications was difficult because of the share volume of traffic and once you get a certain distance away the radio stops working through the concrete, the dry riser was charged with water when we arrived, I didn't hear any alarms, they did not have any difficulties in gaining access inside the building. I didn't go into the stairwell.

In relation to the awareness of the risk about cladding panels, we've being fully briefed and have done matches on cladding in industrial premises like B&Q and those type of buildings where we know they burn really hot and are prone to collapse, I don't think we have done any kind of training on the awareness of cladding on a high rise having that kind of effect.

In relation to the rising main, they were used the fight the fire in the initial flat and people were using it to fight the fires above and was used extensively throughout the building.

The incident commander was outside the building on the East face, Mike DOWDEN, Watch Manager, North Kensington Red Watch.

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The stay put policy is about when you ring up control and say, I'm in a building and there is a fire there, they would say, stay where you are, if it gets smokier they would say pass that information onto us at the fire ground, the stay put policy is designed to the idea that any apartment is like any concrete block which is like a two hour rated box and it should keep the fire within there for two hours, if you are in the flat above, maybe two or three flats above that, you might want to across to someone else's flat or come out, the idea is to keep the stairwells clear to help us if the stairwells is filling with smoke, we don't want people who have got a better chance of surviving to stay in their flats, it is about survivability, and the premise that we would put the fire out. It might take a couple of flats to burn above it, but we would eventually put the fire out, it was not meant to be with the whole building alight, but that's basically it, your survival ability increases by staying put, I don't know who made the decisions about the application of the stay put policy on the night. I think the incident commander can say to control, change your policy. With regards to the command and decision making, I don't know who made the decision to withdraw the stay put policy that would be recorded on the incident log. The commanders first became aware that the fire had started to spread as he could see it coming out of the building.

Mike DOWDEN made all the initial decisions regarding resources to be brought unto the scene, I don't know how long he was left in charge and how many he made them up to, but I think he asked for a run up to 20 pumps, he asked for 20 machines to be there and asked for the Turntable Ladder.

In terms of the operational tactics / approach, it was quite straight forward, it was go and put the fire out, so earlier on, it was quite a straight forward job, as of when it started to fly up the building, that was like a balancing act of means to get people out, because we don't have the means to fight a building fire from the outside at that kind of height and that kind of ferocity because the Turntable Ladder would only reach to the 7th floor with a couple more floors with a jet, you could probably get water to it from outside but above that there's nothing we could do.

The command and decision structure was established by initially being on an informal basis where Mike was in charge, his Crew Managers were all inside the building so I was assisting him with carrying out the decision he made as in sending messages, rallying or trying to organise Breathing Apparatus (BA) to the Bridgehead, so I was assisting Mike in this command and control structure, but he also had Watch Manager Brien O'KEEFFE who was at the Bridgehead, he was in charge of the Bridgehead with a Crew Manager, I think Chris SECRETT from North Kensington was assisting him, so as watch managers arrived they all took roles of assisting the overall command structure.

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The command unit is there to assist whoever is in charge, it can map the incident site, it's got all sort of information on there and it can link up with the police helicopter to get the television pictures. We can then get a bit of peace and quiet as well as make decisions and take all in the information. It's just like a focal point rather than being stood outside.

In relation to the chain of command, as more people came on, the officer in charge stayed put and put in place those who would stay in the office, someone in the Bridgehead, I think my governor went to the foyer to make it a smooth flow as BA people arrived. We needed BA wearers, EDBA wearers (Extended Duration Breathing Apparatus).

People who were needed in the building were fed through the building through the Station officer outside, then by the Station officer inside up to the Bridgehead. As the casualties were brought out, the ambulances were there in force and they set up a triage system. The command system sort of had the flow of people and resources to get into the building and to get the people out.

I did not notice anything specific regarding the construction of the windows.

In relation to the way the fire behaved prompting any decision making, would be the ordering of aerals, because with normal high rise, we don't have aerial machines there and I have never seen a fire behave like that before with such speed.

If the building hadn't been cladded like that and the resources were there and whether an aerial had been on the PDA for a high rise, I don't think it would have made a difference or not if it been there, I would be completely honest, if that fire started as soon as the heat got out of the window and started to heat up at the back of the cladding, it didn't matter how many people were there, it would still have gone down, whoever put that cladding on and agreed to have it on with that gap, there's nothing we could do, we did everything right. Because there was a gap and the heat went up through that gap and was heating behind, even if we had an aerial there, a recovery jet there, it would have done no good at all, I couldn't say we would do anything different, the only difference would be getting the people out quicker if we could.

About the gap, someone told me and I'm not sure if I'm allowed to say what that would be, but when you look at the outside of the building, you could see the columns and you could see where the brackets are that held the cladding in place and from looking at that, you can work out how far away it was of from the face of the building and that proved fatal for all those people.

The cladding, it was all encompassing on that building, it was all over it, all 360 degrees, if you look at other buildings, you'd see a piece of cladding, maybe a 6 foot square piece shoved under a window, but it was all over the building, continuous, apart from the gaps where the windows were and the fire came out

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the building. We put the water on, from a 45mille jet, which was hitting the cladding with water with a firefighting jet.

The fire started to come out of building from the kitchen window on the East face of the 4th floor, firefighters were stood maybe 10 meters away with a 45mille jet, on the ground floor, on the East, the other branch were putting water from a jet, so the jet reached the 4th floor with no problem with quite a bit of ferocity, and quite a bit of ump behind it but had no effect whatsoever, the fire just went up the building, went up 3 floors quite quickly and just shot up another 6 floors taking about 45 seconds, it was like the heat behind the cladding was heating up and was burning behind but we couldn't see it, all the heat was going up there, the flames took hold of the front, the aluminium started to burn at the front and it was almost like a firework, there was absolutely nothing we could do, you couldn't get water on that, the intensity of the water had no impact.

The fire investigations were there quite quickly, I told them what I had seen and that the cladding destroyed that building, it was purely that, nothing else had an impact on that fire, if it had gone to the flat above, we would have put that out, but when it races up 9 floors, we had no chance, you couldn't run that quick up the stairs as it was going that quick. The building has now gone.

With regards to the way the cladding behaved throughout that night, when you look at the face of the building, there are 2 essential columns on either side, 2 columns on the edge and 2 in the middle with equal distance apart, it was the 3rd column over on the right half as you look at it on the East side of the face of the building which comes out like a 245 degree angle to make a buttress effect to the right hand side, it just shot up the side of the right hand buttress, the flame was bright and also incredibly hot and threw out lumps of aluminium, as the cladding burnt even more it kept falling off and coming away from the building and floating down.

As you looked at the debris field, it was getting bigger and bigger as pieces higher up floated down as the cladding burnt really intensively and it also started to catch light to the interior of the building, interior of the flats causing the flat catch light and then go up the building, it burnt to cinder.

The falling cladding was a concern as we had to move further and further back as you come out of the building. We had the use of the police riot shield and had someone to hold it. Alan MOORE, Watch Manager from Chiswick was outside saying "IT WAS SAFE TO GO, RIGHT SAFE TO GO" so you would run underneath the riot shield over your head, get in the building, do what you wanted to do, taking people out or just coming out yourself, the cladding was falling down amongst us, it hit the dry riser at least once causing a burst. As it was higher-up, it was floating more and more further away from the

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building, so the debris field was growing larger and larger, it was a concern throughout the whole operation, a couple of people might have been hit by falling debris, but no one was seriously hurt, it made it more harder.

The impact of the falling debris was an added concern because it was still burning, there was a school on the North side of the building, debris was falling over that wall, although the tower was the major concern, we didn't want the fire to start spreading in that part over there, a crew had gone there to keep any fire that started over on that side, I don't know about the West Side of the building because I didn't go round there, but I'm sure it would have an impact on what they were doing over, it was just an added risk we could have done without.

I didn't receive an injury or suffer a near miss to myself or witness one to another member of the Brigade. In relation to things that I witnessed or heard during this incident that went beyond my previous experience as a firefighter and/or that are worthy of particular note was when I saw someone jump out of the top floor, I have never seen that before, just the scale of it, no one has ever seen that scale of casualties before, the guy that had driven the machine to supply Soho aerial on the grass bank, stood beside me as I was having a drink for sort of 5 minutes, we were looking at the fire, thinking that we had never seen anything like this, I think it was a man that sort of dived from the top of the building, we just saw this body come away from the building, I looked at Ronnie BARKER and said "DID YOU SEE THAT?" I just carried on really, sort of got on with it, I have never seen that before, he just sort of came out with flames, it was definitely the top one or two floors on the South Side, I imagined he hit the floor, I did not see the impact because we were quite a way from the tower, so we just saw him jump, came down head first and lost sight of him as there was a tree in the way, I would have imagined he would have ended up in Lancaster Walk somewhere, there were quite a few jumpers that night, we stood in front of the college, I had been to the toilet, we were using the college on the East Side of the building, where you have the grassy bank.

They were using it as a temporary Morgue and we were using the toilets, I came out chatting to Ron when we saw this body come, I assumed it was a man, it looked like a man, he looked quite tall, he looked like a man from the South Side, he must have taken a run up because he seemed to have come a long way out of the building, so God knows what was going through that poor fellas mind as he was leaving there, I was about 50m away or maybe more.

I also saw the aftermath of a jumper who landed and hit the walkway of Lancaster Walk and they got split sort into halves, I saw one half of them, a leg and a bit of torso, I didn't see the jump, I didn't see him

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land, he was under a plastic savage sheet, I had a look to see what was really under it. I imagine the rest of him was on the top of Lancaster Walk and leg and bit of torso was down below, because Lancaster Walk is couple of storeys, 2 floors above the ground floor of South Grenfell. I don't know the people who jumped but there were a few, I saw that one and I saw the aftermath of the poor person who jumped.

As far as I'm concerned, it was the cladding, I have been a fireman not a long time, but enough and have always been operational and been to a lot of fires, I have been at fires at the early stages and have never ever, ever seen a fire spread that quickly over such a wide area, never, and I think the fire brigade that night did a really good job, I think the police did a really good job, the ambulance did a really good job and all the volunteers afterwards, because when we went back the next night on like a relief and there were loads of people there helping out and I knew a lot of people had a difficult time over it, I just don't think there was anything we could have done, really don't.

Around 4 when it began getting light, I couldn't do anything we did not do anything, we were told to go and get a cup of tea and just wait by our machine.

We were told about 6, that we were going and then it took another 3 hours to move the machines, because we were there so quickly, we were waiting around for ages, I don't know what time because 20 pumps came on to take over from the initial 40 pumps, I don't know what time they came but it was quite a slow process getting them involved and getting us out of there, we left about 10ish and then we went to Paddington I can't remember exactly what time but it had gone past early morning, it wasn't late morning, sort of mid-morning as we were waiting around for a long time, because both our machines were on the road that goes into Grenfell, we were parked up there, so all the roads out were blocked so it took ages to get them unblocked and eventually get out, they had to get the crews that were there first away and some were told to leave their machines behind and said "CREW, LEAVE THEM THERE AND GET MINIBUSSES TO PADDINGTON" but we managed to jiggle our way out after some other machines had been moved as there was grid lock everywhere in trying to get to Paddington, it took quite a long time to get to Paddington.

Harrow Road was gridlock, when we left, so on our way back we used the wrong side of the A40 as the A40 was shut, and were allowed on it to come back to Shepherds Bush, so we drove past it and stopped on the A40 and had a look, it's just surreal, anytime we see it now, it's a surreal sight.

Whilst we were waiting to go back to Paddington, to be honest, it sounds really awful, we were laughing and joking, we sat on the road, because we had been up all night we were knackered, the salvation army were there, so we had tea and coffee, some of the residents were setting up food stalls, so we were waiting

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to go and our backs were leaning on a set of block so we couldn't see the tower, we are quite a close bunch, we were laughing and joking, waiting to go, taking the mick out of each other and kept on walking, thinking we are still at a major traumatic incident, we are quite an experienced crew, we have been through a lot together.

We arrived at Paddington about 10 o'clock and they wanted us to do statements similar to what we have just done there and took a while to organise so we were just waiting around there also the traffic was chaos trying to get anywhere of that part of London that day. We wrote our notes at Paddington, everyone that was there went to Paddington to write their notes detailing what they did, I don't know why we went there but Paddington is quite big and has a big yard, so there were 15, 20, machines there at any one time, there were quite a number of offices up there, so we went in as crews and wrote what we did.

There was counselling available so you could go and see them, we didn't seem to want to go but we were ordered to go, I didn't mind writing the notes but I didn't want to do the counselling, I think what I wanted more was to get the notes done. This was not normal as I have never done that before.

Normally after a job like that, you would have a PRO, you would have a review of what you had done with all the engine machines there, you might get the officer in charge, the station managers, fire investigation people and you basically sit there and talk about what you did, any learning points, where you can improve, whether policies and procedures let us down, equipment let us down, what can we do differently, it's a big discussion of what we did and what can we learnt from it. If you would do for a job of that similar size, you would do it within 28 days at the station, so you would all talk about it together. There is like a formal duty of command which is just the officer in charge, who was in charge first, who took over, who took over from them, they would go through their decisions and why they did what they did, they would be analysed and again and any learning points that needed to be pulled up and put on the incident management log. Basically you try and learn what you did, if there was anything that we could have done better, any equipment that had any major failures would be highlighted, but we would never do that quite of thing, never make notes, never straight after as well.

After our statements at Paddington, we got back here about 2 o'clock, we all had a shower, went and sat in the TV room and just watched it and talked amongst ourselves what we had done and tried to comprehend what we had done and to make sure everyone was alright, we came back on duty 8 O'clock that night and we got sent back there again which was a bit irritating, we went and it was quite surreal, the days afterwards were surreal.

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When we went back there, the public were really generous. I had to go to Acton that night and we went back about 2 in the morning and Hammersmith crew went back at about half past 8 and they parked quite a way from the tower and they said as they walked through they got like a guard of honour from all the public. It is a two way streak, feel really guilty as I was there and it still happened, but you still get that public admirations and thanks and you still think, wow, how many people died and the devastation for all those families and friends and its impact with so many people.

We have all been okay since then, we have talked about it amongst ourselves, and other firemen who were there earlier on. We have done self-therapy and lot of talking together and have got it out in the open. We are all happy, we gave our best and did what we could and I don't think we have any personal demons or personal issues at the moment, we are all ok.

It was the cladding.

I exhibit my contemporaneous notes I wrote at Paddington fire station on the 14th June 2017 as DAD/1.

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