

WITNESS STATEMENT

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

Statement of: ASHMAN, GREGORY

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

Occupation: FIRE OFFICER

This statement (consisting of 14 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: G ASHMAN

Date: 26/09/2017

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

On TUESDAY 26TH SEPTEMBER 2017 between 1307 and 1603 hours I was interviewed by DC BENNETT and PC ANIDI as a significant witness in relation to my role at the scene of the Grenfell Tower Fire on 14/06/2017. This interview took place at the London Fire Brigade headquarters, 169 Union Street, SE1. It was audio recorded and this full statement has been produced from that recording. I have been allowed to review my statement and make any necessary changes prior to signing it.

In the interview I referred to my Appendix A form, which are the only notes I have. This is a three page summary and questions answered. According to my sent emails, I sent this to the London Fire Brigade investigation team on 13/07/2017 however I believe I may have made typed notes that I included in this form prior to that date due to the exact figures I have stated in my account. I have exhibited this document, as well as a map I drew locations of command units on, and a diagram I drew of hoses on the stairs in Grenfell Tower, in my earlier statement made at the end of the interview on 26/09/2017.

My name is Greg Ashman. I am a Group Manager in the London Fire Brigade (LFB). I joined the London Fire Brigade on the 1st March 1993 and after my twenty- four weeks (24) training I was posted to red watch at Southwark I was next posted to the red watch at West Norwood and then to Soho red watch where I worked for nine (9) years before I was promoted to Crew Commander and went to Brixton red watch. I then joined the targeted developed group and was posted to Addington in South Croydon on the Red Watch as a Watch Manager I then worked at LFB headquarters special operations group as a Watch Manager before working on the 7/7 bombing inquests for a year. I then did temporary work as a Station

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Manager at Wandsworth fire station for 3 years before being promoted formally to a Station Manager position. I was most recently promoted as a Group Manager and posted to Hounslow, where I worked as the Borough Commander for 2 years and I was responsible for 3 stations and 12 watches. I was still working in this role at the time that the Grenfell Tower fire happened. My day to day role as Borough Commander consisted of managerial work however I was available to respond to incidents.

About 6 weeks after the Grenfell Tower fire happened I was posted to the Grenfell Tower investigation and review team which is based at LFB headquarters. I'm the lead investigator for the operational response to the incident between 00.59 to 20.00 hours and again from 20.00 hours until we finished on scene. My role is to gather all the data on when vehicles arrived, when people arrived, their actions and try to make some form of sense of it. My role is also to identify operational learning and development and to make improvements where necessary.

As a fire fighter I've been to many fires, whether that be house fires or fires in blocks of flats. I've been involved in numerous rescues and I've been to a wide variety of incidents. I've also been to fires as a manager as well, both as a Station Manager and Borough Commander. Interestingly we had a fire in Trellick Towers about 8 weeks before Grenfell Tower which I was in charge of, which is poignant due its proximity to Grenfell Tower. I have seen some significant fires in my time but I've never seen anything like the fire at Grenfell Tower. Even though I arrived seven hours after the initial call, the fire was still incredible to see and I think I commented that it looked like something from a war torn country. I couldn't believe it.

On WEDNESDAY 14TH JUNE 2017 I first became aware of the fire at Grenfell Tower when I woke up around quarter to six or six o'clock in the morning and saw it on the news on my mobile phone. I immediately thought that it didn't look good. I got up, had a shower, got dressed and then I called the control room at around half six in the morning to see if they needed other officers to come in early to assist because I wasn't due to start work until 08.00 that day but I imagined that officers were going to be quite emotionally attached to this. I spoke to the officer of the watch, I cannot remember their name but it was a female, and they put me through to the Deputy Assistant Commissioner (DAC) Adrian Fenton. I had a quick chat with him and asked if he needed me. He said yes and that control would mobilise me via my pager.

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I have a national pager because as part of my role also I respond to marauding terrorist incidents. If you work in the London Fire Brigade as a Group Manager or Station Manager you are trained in additional skills, also known as tags, such as being a press officer or a water officer who specialises in how we get water to an incident (TABS). For example, Chris Paignton was a water officer on the night of the fire. Another of these tags is mass casualty rescue (MCR) where if there is a marauding terrorist incident or a terrorist attack we go along to assist LAS to withdraw the people. That is my tag as well as being a senior incident investigator.

Although I hadn't been mobilized yet, I got into my car, which is an [REDACTED] car with blue lights and two tones, and began to drive to the incident setting off at around 06.45 hours. I didn't put my blues lights on as I hadn't been attached to the incident yet and wouldn't be insured, but started driving into work. I live near [REDACTED] and drove on the M23 at normal road speed and when I got on the M25 my pager went off mobilizing me to attend. We were asked to proceed on blue lights as I think they needed to put a 10 Group Manager relief in, to relieve other officers who had been there for a long time.

I pulled onto the hard shoulder to read the pager message, which I received from control. I'm not sure what time I got mobilized - I thought it was about 07.15 to 07.30 but the pager message says 07.12. There were originally two messages, one I which I still have on my pager, but the other I have since deleted. The first pager message stated: 076029; Al; flat 16 Grenfell Tower, Lancaster West Estate, London, Wil 1TG; 40 pump fire; persons reported; aerals 4; FRUs 10; command units 6, high-rise procedure; fire survival guidance. Although I've deleted the second part to the message it would also have said that it was a major incident. To explain this message - 076029 refers to the incident number, and Al is the code we use to refer to a fire. Al HR means fire in a high-rise but in the initial call they didn't indicate that it was a high rise building. It wasn't until later on that control realised this but I can only say this as I've investigated it myself. Flat 16 Grenfell Tower is the location of the incident. "40 pump fire" refers to the number of fire engines (pumps) requested. A 40 pump fire activation is only used for serious incidents. To put this in perspective I think this only one of two 40 pump fires we've had in the last 50 years. The first was a fire during the closing ceremony of the Olympics where a site caught fire. I think we only requested this number of pumps so it didn't disturb the closing ceremony, not that it was actually needed due to the seriousness of the fire.

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“FRUs 10” refers to the number of fire and rescue units attending. FRUs are a fire engine but they don’t carry any water. They’re specialist machines for other specific purposes and we have several different types of FRUs— some are for decontaminations for HAZ-MATs; others are technical rescue stations, there are five of those in London, and some have technical rescue equipment such as inflatable boats and they also do line rescues. All fire and rescue units have heavy cutting requirement for car and vehicle crashes and they are also the only machines that carry the extended duration breathing apparatus.

In relation to “Command units 6”, we only have 7 command units in the brigade and I think one wasn’t working that night, so we had all units in attendance. The command units are lorries which are all the same, with a computer system in them to log things, a printer and radios to talk to control and a radio to talk to the fire ground. The command units can be utilized as conference suites if you want to and the night of the fire we had one set up for the fire survival guidance calls, one was the command and control unit, one was for resources, personnel and son. They had all been given different titles on the night. When you arrive on scene you always go the command and control unit which will have its antennae up and the red flashing light. It should also be the only machine on the ground with its blue flashing light on.

High rise procedure is a policy relating to high rise buildings and to send the message “high rise procedure implemented” means several different things. It means that you’ve got your bridgehead set up, which they did have; you’ve got two lengths of hose with two branches in that area working and ready to go; they’re in breathing apparatus and you’ve secured the fire lift, although the fire lift wasn’t working at the time. It means they have conformed with the high rise policy in that they’ve risk assessment and they’ve implemented the things that they need to do.

“Fire survival guidance” basically means that control are talking to people on the phone and advising them on the phone about what to do or they are getting a lot of calls coming in from people who are concerned that they are trapped due to smoke or flames. Before this point, we would give them advice. For example if there was a fire on 4th floor of a building but you’re the 20th floor and you can smell a bit of smoke, 9 times out 10 they are going to say you can stay there unless you feel you need to get out. However when it gets to a point where people are saying that the smoke is that thick that they can’t get out their front door or they can see flames but they can’t get out because they are trapped - that’s when it changes to a fire survival guidance.

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After reading the message and putting on my blue lights, I made my way along the M25 onto the M4 and then onto the A4. My appendix A says the A40 but it was actually then A4. I then headed in through Hammersmith to Shepherds Bush. I then got to the roundabout at Westfield, turned right down there and parked up somewhere down on the left there. I think parked in the Stoneleigh Street. I couldn't see Grenfell Tower from where I was parked and I don't know where it was other than it was near a school about 400 or 500 metres away. My SATNAV was taking me to the RVP but I could see it was really busy. I thought I would park a way off so I could get my stuff on without people running up to me. I got out of the car and donned on my PPE, which consist of boots, leggings, tunic, gloves, my helmet, torch, local fire ground radio and airwave radio.

The airwave radio is digital so allows you to get in contact any brigade whereas the fire ground radio works on megahertz and is therefore more localised and used for us to communicate on the fire ground where the incident is. There are 10 channels - channel 1 is normally the fire ground channel and then channel 10 is the command unit's channel for command unit staff to communicate with each other. We also have several other different channels used for different purposes: - channel 2, channel 3 is BA, channel 5 if there's a leaky feeder and so on. I was on the main fire ground channel, channel 1.

After putting on my kit I started to walk towards what I thought was command unit in order to find the incident commander. While I did this I used my airwave radio to book in, showing that I was there at the incident, by pressing 7. This sends a message to control who then radio you back and you tell them what status you are. I told them I was status 3, which means I'm in attendance. I think it was recorded on our system that I booked on at 08.17 hours but I think I was there a little before that.

It took me some time to find the incident commander as there were a lot of command units on scene. First I walked from where I had parked on Stoneleigh Street along Whitechurch Road round the outside of the estate to Bramley Road where I located two command units there to the South West of the tower.

There I spoke to Deputy Assistant Commissioner (DAC) Lee Drawbridge, who I think was on the command unit nearest the bridge. I asked him where the incident commander was and he told me that he was on the other side of the Tower so I walked back down onto Whitechurch Road and then onto Grenfell Road where I found two command units, one on Grenfell Road and one on Bomore Road. I reached there about 20 minutes after I had first parked up.

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When I first saw Grenfell Tower on fire I was horrified by what I saw. It looked like it had been bombed to me — majority of windows missing, cladding gone, burning away. I think I compared it seeing some of footage of Aleppo in Syria when it has been bombed a few months before. There has been a massive fire and the whole building had fallen down and killed lots of fire fighters so I had looked at the footage. The only other comparison would be 9/11 and I thought that looks like own twin towers. It made me worried about people's safety.

At this point I could see that there was still a lot of flames and thick black smoke coming out of the tower. However from where I was stood I could only see the top 12 floors of the Grenfell tower, not the lower ones, the majority of the top was still burning. I would have been looking at the East elevation and the South elevation of Grenfell Tower. Certain flats were on fire and there was still a lot of smoke coming out of all different places. You could see them trying to put stuff out and then you could see it flaring up in different places all the time.

I had never been into Grenfell tower before so I had no knowledge of the building but isn't what I'd normally expect to see in a block of flats 7 hours after an incident has begun. Perhaps in a warehouse where it's very open and there are lots of combustibles but not where you are called to a flat alight in a block. When the fire happened at Trellick Tower a few weeks before on the 27th floor it didn't spread other than from the balcony of the flat where it began to the inside of that flat. It was contained in this area throughout despite it being 35 minutes before we got water on it due to issues with the water pump and supply.

When I got onto the command unit for command and control, inside was the incident commander, Assistant Commissioner (AC) Andy Roe. I asked him what he wanted me to do and he said he had a job for me. He explained that he wanted me to become the fire survival guidance (FSG) coordinator working with control and the FSG command unit team. My role would be to manage the fire survival guidance calls that were coming to control and then being relayed to me and my team.

The information from 999 calls that were being handled by control throughout the night and deemed to be fire survival guidance calls, such as a certain amount of people stuck in a certain flat, would be relayed to the fire survival guidance command unit at the incident at the scene, which I believe on the night was command unit 7. This information is then recorded on a document, in triplicate, with the FSG information written down such as - fire survival guidance received at a certain time, flat number 125 has 1 person

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trapped, smoke, fire, can't get out. Once this information is received at the FSG command unit at scene, you then send that message with a runner, who has one of the three pieces of paper with that information written on it, and they give it to the entry control officer or the officer in charge of the breathing apparatus inside that tower to make sure this information is passed on. The officers then try to prioritize and deal with these calls as they can. The role therefore involves helping to manage flow of information received in command unit, making sure it gets to the fire fighters at the scene and in a perfect world it would also be managing the flow of information back to control, such as yes we've rescued them or no we haven't.

I was asked to take over this role from Group Manager Tom Goodall, who had been doing this job for some hours, but told to be mindful that Tom was probably very emotionally attached to this role. I went and met with Tom at the next command unit that was doing the fire survival guidance, command unit 7, which I believe was Wembley's command unit. This command unit was positioned on GRENFELL ROAD junction of BOMORE ROAD, outside a block of flats, about 30 seconds walk from the other command unit. This was the main route in to the base of the tower.

Tom quickly explained to me what his role had been. He said they had around 174 fire survival guidance calls that they had dealt with and were dealing with. They had all of the documents on which they had written each FSG call inside the command unit. Tom then showed me a board in the command unit on which they had mapped out all of the flats and the floors they were on, with the number people in each flat that they thought were still either missing or still involved.

I asked Tom when they last received a fire survival guidance call and he said it was a couple of hours ago. This probably would have been around 07.00 hours as it was about 08.45-09.00 when I started talking to Tom according to my notes. I didn't know how long he had been doing this role for at the time but when I saw him he looked physically drained. The majority of people that I saw looked pretty shocked. All the time they'd been there the incident has been really dynamic and you take the responsibility for it all. The command unit staff looked exhausted and Tom looked similar.

To give me an understanding of the incident, I asked if Tom could take me to the bridgehead inside the Tower so I could talk to the other people that were now taking over. Quite a few officers had arrived at the time and we were all taking over the roles.

Myself and Tom walked up Grenfell Road to the tower. Because it wasn't very windy I couldn't particularly smell anything as I approached it. As we came around the corner, at the base of the tower

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there was a turn table ladder, housed, i.e. the ladder wasn't up and it wasn't being used. It was on the corner of east elevation, underneath the walkway. The fire engines had driven in and parked there in the underground car park as everything's protected. There was also hose running into the building. As I walked into the underground bit there was a garage which I was told had a body of a jumper inside it. I think they had jumped off the south elevation and I think as they were in danger of being hit by other debris a decision had been made to put the body inside the garage. I couldn't see the actual body as it was covered up with tarpaulin but I could see blood on floor where it had been dragged or carried. I could also see an aerial ladder platform was being used to try and put the fire out on the EAST elevation of the tower. There still lots of debris falling off and lots of the insulation (Celotex) flapping around, particularly towards the top where there was still quite a lot flames.

There were fire engines all over the place but there weren't many around the actual tower. When I was there was one at the junction of Bomore Road and Grenfell Road as that's where the hydrant was. It was pumping water down towards the path at the end of Grenfell Road where there was another fire engine located. The hoses then ran in from there towards the tower. There wasn't really a lot of room to get a lot more down there. The turntable ladder was underneath the walkway where the underground car park was and there was an aerial ladder platform on the grass outside the East elevation being used to get water onto the tower. But to the North and West of the tower you couldn't get fire engines anywhere near the tower as there's a playground to the West and another building, Kensington and Aldridge Academy. This has a pathway that runs around the back but it's not wide enough to get a vehicle through and on that side there's also a ditch that runs in. Access to get into the building was fine, apart from the debris falling off but access to outside in my opinion was limited. When the teams arrived they parked up outside the south face, plugged into the dry rising main which was outside the front door and they went up which was fine. But it completely changes when it's an external fire, because we fight flat fires from the inside it's difficult for us to envisage it being on the outside like that. It didn't look like there was great access to vehicles around the outside of the building.

There were lots of members of public behind the cordons, lots of other emergency services - police LAS, HART and quite a lot of voluntary services such as RRT (rapid response team) who provide food and support and Salvation Army. I did speak to some members of public but this was later about half past 8 in the evening and purely in the fact that they came up to us, thanking us. I asked them where they were from and they said they had come all the way from Birmingham.

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Tom then gave me a quick look to west of the tower where all the fire fighters were sitting along by Station Walk. I saw lots of fire fighters that I recognised and my own crews. They were waiting to go in and a lot of them had already been in. Whoever is the resourcing officer or doing BA main control would ideally say, "I need ten extra duration or standard duration breathing apparatus in ten minutes". They would relay that to someone either over the radio or in person who would then get the fire fighters and bring them up. Those fire fighters had been there for majority of the evening. Most of them had worn breathing apparatus, some of them hadn't and they had all been doing different tasks. There were probably about 30 or 40 fire fighters outside at that time and I had a quick chat with a few of these people to make sure they were alright.

I spoke to Helen Christmas who is a Watch Manager at Heston on the Red watch. I asked her if she was alright, as I did with any of the fire fighters that I knew, and before this as I was walking up to tower I also spoke to Andy Harris from Paddington fire station. Later I spoke to Chris Reynolds, a fire fighter from Paddington Red Watch inside the tower, who I spoke to a couple of times on scene. He's been in the job for 30 years and he was absolutely shell shocked. Most of the fire fighters I saw waiting were very quiet as they had never seen anything like that. To be fair, I don't think there is anyone in the job that has seen anything like that fire before.

Myself and Tom then went inside the building with the help of some fire fighters who were using TSG riot shields to protect people from debris that was falling. They put these shields over us and we went through the main entrance on the South elevation, where the green bit above the top is. Inside the tower in the lobby there was a wall on your left, a wall in front of you and on the right was the mezzanine stairs up to the balcony areas. I didn't go anywhere else in the lobby. I wasn't aware at the time but have since seen in photographs that that if you went left there was a lobby where the lifts were.

As I walked into the lobby I noticed there was about a foot of water on the floor and there were two EDBA (extended duration breathing apparatus) sets, which have orange covers on, that had been dumped by the mezzanine stairs on the right and were submerged in the water. I think the water in the lobby was just from where it was running down the stairs as we were pumping so much water into the building but it was unusual to see kit dumped there like that, as you normally keep your breathing apparatus with you. Fire fighters don't have their own personal set of breathing apparatus but they are carried on from your fire engine and one is assigned to you for that shift. So when I saw the breathing apparatus dumped on the floor I thought - what's happened to the fire fighters these belonged to? Why is that sitting there?

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There were also a lot of fire fighters in the lobby, about 15-20 already in either fours or twos, ready and waiting to be called up the mezzanine stairs to the bridgehead from where they would then be sent up into the fire. It still seemed like a dynamic incident and we were still looking to save people.

One of the biggest things I noticed in the lobby was there was lots of writing on the green and white walls. Straight ahead on the wall as you went in and on the left wall, it looked as if they had so many fire survival guidance calls that they had transferred the FSG information onto the wall in order to manage it. As an example they've written flat 16 that needed to be searched, and the call sign of the fire engine assigned to this flat e.g. E381, which is New Cross. I took a lot of pictures of this as I know that from other things which I have investigated, such as the 7/7 bombings, that it can be really handy to capture this sort of information and it can be really useful at a later date. As a senior accident investigator I've been trained to look for these things. I also took some other photos of the boards in the command unit.

I was amazed about the sheer number of flat numbers and crews assigned. I've been to incidents where we've written on walls before and also done exercises where we've done this but I've never seen anything like that. I don't recall any specifics about what was written on the wall, I just went along them and took the photos sequentially making sure I'd got everything before going up to the bridgehead. I took these photographs on my iPhone and emailed these to myself at work. I later on the 13th of July I emailed these to Charlie Pugsley, who is the fire investigation team lead, and Terry Jones, who is our media, picture information officer. These have all been uploaded onto our LFB secure server and provided already to the Met police.

In the lobby I also saw a telemetry repeater strapped to the railings of the internal staircase in the on the floor where the nursery is. This is a device which helps the body guard on the breathing apparatus talk to the board better, basically a signal booster. When I saw this I thought they had either experienced problems with communications or they've laid it out as good practice. It can be normal practice in a big building like that.

As I made my way up to the bridgehead and I bumped into Group Manager Pat Goldbourne, another Borough Commander, on the mezzanine balcony area in the lobby before you go into the main stairwell and had a quick conflag with him. He described the terrible scene that they had presented to them and he seemed quite stressed. He talked about some of the rescues but I can't remember the specifics. He told me that he'd heard screaming coming down the stairs and that there was smoke in the stairs, which was

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obviously causing a load of problems. He also said that they hadn't had any fire survival guidance calls for ages and that they couldn't get above a certain floor due to the conditions in the building, such as fires on all the floors. I don't know as I didn't see it myself but there was talk of fires in some of the lobbies on the floors which in turn then meant they couldn't get into the flats. Which floor he said they could not get above I can't remember. From what Pat had told me and due to the fact that it was now after 9 o'clock in the morning, we hadn't had any fire survival guidance calls and due to the visual indicators I was getting as I walked into the tower that there was lots alight,

I suggested to Pat that it might be more recovery than rescue from now on and that if we find bodies we need to make sure we have a location for them. This was my only my opinion not a command decision. I was thinking in my own mind that if we come across people we need to make sure we landmark it so we know where they were found. My notes also said it appeared to me at this stage that we were already in the recovery phase as I had been informed of two bodies on the stairwell at some point. However at the same time we still had lots of people here, lots of fires to put out and we were still trying to get to all the floors you don't know and we may still find people.

After I finished talking to Pat I asked if he could take me upstairs to the bridgehead, which was on the fourth floor at that time. When we made our way up to the bridgehead I remember there was lots of water running down the stairs. It was like a waterfall and there was and very little room on the stairs when you walked as there were at least 2 or 3 lengths of hose going up the stairs and the space in the stairwell was very tight. In most stairwells you get a gap between the banisters and if you are at the top of the stairwell you can see all the way down so quite often when you have to run the hose through a stairwell it sits in between them and you put the hose down the middle. But in Grenfell there was no gap between the banisters, just a solid piece of concrete so they had to physically wind the hose down every mezzanine and it was bunched up making the stairwell even smaller and narrower. I have drawn a diagram showing this which I exhibited in my previous statement. I'm not saying it had to have a gap but it was problematic. It meant that when you walked up to the bridgehead you couldn't walk side by side, you had to walk one in front of the other and it would have been difficult to do even without the hose there. I couldn't believe how small the stairwell was. It just seemed very narrow. In Trellick tower the stairwell is outside in the clean air and a lot bigger. If people getting down the stairs could see what they were doing they would have been alright but if they couldn't it would have been difficult. There was sufficient lighting in part of the stairwell up the 4th floor where the bridgehead but I didn't go above this. From

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what I saw there was hose up wound up to the bridgehead and beyond it. I can't remember if any of the doors to the floors were open as the only floor I saw onto was the fourth floor. I also didn't hear any alarms going off in the building. I didn't notice a central alarm system in the building or any sprinklers and I didn't see the smoke extraction system.

As we came out of the stairs onto the fourth floor lobby, on the right there were a couple of fire fighters kneeling down filling out two FIBs, (forward information boards), which are long plastic Perspex boards about a metre high by probably 30-40cm wide. They are designed to be used for systematic searches of blocks of flats - where people had searched and hadn't searched. You use chinagraph to write on it and put the flat numbers and the floors on it, and when each team comes back from searching a flat they tick that one off so we know it's done and they can then go to search the next flat. There were also another 4 fire fighters, with four entry control boards (entry control officers) where the breathing apparatus tallies go in. The entry control board is used to control the fire fighters going in and out and manages your body guard and your breathing apparatus. The fire fighters in breathing apparatus would have been on channel 6 and there would have been a communications officer at the entry control boards monitoring this, or several, as you had four boards running. The lobby itself was a corridor to the right running around the lifts which was only a couple of metres wide so there wasn't much space. I think they had also opened out of one the flats and got the fire fighters in breathing apparatus to wait there so we didn't congest the lobby. There were probably about 10 fire fighters waiting to go up into the building while I was up there but I didn't see anyone come down. Obviously when they come down they would debrief and explain where they had gone to but I didn't see any of this. The Group Managers were managing that area and coordinating where to send people. There was a lot of activity going on it that bridgehead and it was obvious that there was still a systematic search going on at that point. You could smell the smoke and it was quite dark on the fourth floor where the bridgehead was, as it was where the fire had been originally. It was pretty mucky but you couldn't feel any heat, I don't recall seeing any smoke and you didn't need officer BA.

At the bridgehead I was met by Group Managers Richard Welch, John Graham and Tim Frost, and two other officers — Station Manager Gareth Cook and another officer whose name I cannot remember. At that point Richard Welch, Gareth Cook and Pat Goldbourne were being relieved by Tim Frost and John Graham who were taking over from them. I'm sure we spoke about which floor the fire fighters had reached but I can't remember which floor that was now. When you have a high rise building, fire policy is

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that we always set up the bridgehead two floors below the fire to make sure that you don't get smoke into the breathing apparatus. The original call was to the fourth floor so they would have set up the bridgehead initially on the 2nd floor and you wouldn't move the bridgehead up until you confirm that's out. As the bridgehead was now on the 4th floor I was thinking that they were concerned that there was fire was on the 6th floor and above.

I informed Tim Frost that I was doing the fire survival guidance coordination and I liaised with him about what we were going to do now. I confirmed with him about what rescues they'd done since he'd been there and what I believed was more likely to be the body locations and subsequent body removal. I said that this due to that the fact that we haven't done any rescues for a few hours, it's more likely you are going to be finding bodies now unless we were very lucky because it seemed to be such an intense fire from looking at it and the devastation it had caused. However we were obviously going to continue with trying to find people because that's what we do. I agreed with him that we would be the only two people that spoke about this over the radio. We made it clear with all the officers that I was the only allowed to ask about this and Tim was the only person allowed to tell me when they found someone as we were trying to cut down the radio channel traffic. I also did this to aid communication as I understand, due to my investigation role that I've done in the past, how important it was to identify where people are located to assist for the future. I did suggest that we move to a different channel but because he needed to monitor the fire ground he needed to stay on channel 1. After this I told him I was going back to the command unit but I would keep liaising with him throughout the day.

On my way out of the building as I went down into the lobby I spoke to Chris Reynolds again. He was waiting in the lobby on the ground floor to go up to the bridgehead. I can't remember if any officers went up in the time that I was in the building but there were still a similar amount of officers in the lobby waiting to go up as I was leaving. He explained to me that earlier he was on the turn table ladder in the cage outside the building and when they put it up he could hear lots of people screaming for help but they couldn't get anywhere near them due to the heat and the debris falling. He said he had never seen anything like it.

Myself and Tom Goodall left the building at about half 9 after we had been in there for about 20-25 minutes and returned to the fire survival guidance command unit. When I got back onto the command unit I introduced myself properly to the command unit operatives, I believe there were 3 of them. Before I left for the tower I had told them that we were going in and that we would sort out what we are going to

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do next when I got back. They all looked visibly shaken about what they had witnessed and I confirmed with them a relief unit was coming to relieve them. At that time that they had been dealing with calls from control but what I didn't realise until fairly recently was that some of them had also been given phones by members of the public at the scene and asked to give advice.

I then went into the whole handover process with Tom Goodall. He showed me the whiteboard with the plan on it and the individual flats marked on it. Some of the flats had numbers in showing the number of people they believed were in that flat and some didn't have any numbers in. They had a little key up showing those that were fire survival guidance calls, those that were priorities where the phone had gone dead and those that had been rescued. Tom Goodall explained again that they had dealt with 174 FSG calls from control and he explained the numbers he believed were rescued or located alive or those that were unaccounted for. I don't remember the exact numbers at that time but I did start to get that information later in the role.

The handover took an hour to an hour and a half. It took this long to get all of the information out of Tom because there was lots of information to know and because I had to be quite sympathetic towards him as he was taking the whole thing very personally. This was because his was a role where you are emotionally attached to what's going on and you are dealing directly with trying to rescue people. When the realisation hits that you haven't been able to rescue all of these people it can affect you. As well as doing the handover, if anything was coming in from control we would have dealt with it but no further fire survival guidance calls were received from control since when I first arrived on scene.

After the handover it was about 1100 hours. At this point I had confirmed that there were three bodies (deceased persons) external to the building that had jumped, and another 3 inside the building. I decided to get some Station Managers to assist with me with trying to coordinate this information for the rest of the day and to get a clear understand of how many people were still missing. There were all sorts of different strands that I had to try and coordinate on the day so I arranged for Station Managers Stuart Grout and Chris Lyne to be in my team to assist me.

The plan was to speak to the casualty bureau, review TMO list, look at the people who had been identified already and the people that we had in hospital. From this we tried work out how many people we had got in terms of survivors, casualties, deceased and missing persons. So part of my role was trying

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to proactively triangulate where all these people were as well also getting reports back when they'd found a body, logging this and where the person was found.

I spoke to a lady called Teresa Brown who was a representative from TMQ, the managing agent for Grenfell Tower; as well as a man with her who I think was another TMO officer. I don't remember the name of the man with Teresa Brown but he was white, middle aged, in his forties, slight build. They were stood round by the command unit that was doing the command and control. I told them I needed the most up to date and comprehensive list of all the residents. I've written down in my notes that by 1130 I had a copy of this list and there were 274 people registered to the building. I didn't have a lot of interaction with them other than getting the list from them. They were willing to help but had problems in how to get the list to us at first. Teresa Brown told me that they had rung everyone on their TMO residents list, as it had all the residents' phone numbers on it, to try and get in contact with them all. She never told me the results of the calls. This conversation didn't happen when we first got the list, it was sometime later. By all accounts the TMO had phoned them all and fed that information into the police before the meetings later. I may well have noted that down but it's something I can't remember.

Stuart Grout did the work on the TMO list and trying to triangulate that with the met casualty bureau, hospitals and missing persons. I think Teresa Brown sent a copy of the residents list to us via email and Stuart transposed it onto an Excel spreadsheet on the computer on the back of the machine. Stuart Grout was managing that and it has been provided to the police already as far as I'm aware. He also had two or three command unit Watch Managers who were helping him with this and other things that I asked Stuart to find out. I think they were Wembley's crew and an officer called Mark Templeman but I am not sure who did this after they swapped over.

I got Chris Line to act as a runner between the command unit and the tower. By this point we had met with a male called Alistair from the disaster verification and identification team (DVI), who I think used to be in the fire brigade, and we had a chat about us trying to landmark where we were finding bodies.

Another of my jobs was to inform the Incident Commander, Andy Roe, every time we found a body as well as our LFB Commissioner Danny Cotton who was there at that time. Every time another body was found, I would get someone in the command unit to write it all down and I'd then tell the Assistant Commissioner who at first was Andy Roe and later Dom Ellis took over from him. I walked over and

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passed this information to him face to face by walking over the command unit he was in on Bomore Road.

Over the next few hours Tim Frost would communicate with me every time they found a body telling me whether it was or when the bridgehead would move up. Sometimes they came thick and fast as we got further up the building. I can remember him saying that they found a body on the floor and another body or possibly two on the 11th or 12th floor. I also remember that in late afternoon, around 1600-1700 hours, they found a visibly pregnant deceased women and a deceased child on the 19th floor. Everyone they found was deceased as while I was there they didn't find any survivors.

Throughout the afternoon and all day the fire fighters worked their way up until they were at the top floor. From, the 10th floor upwards they only went into the lobbies and couldn't get into any of the flats as there as still fires raging or there was nothing left. Where you would expect to see flats you could see from one side of the floor to the other. The whole floor was gone with nothing in it. I think by the time that I left just after 8 o'clock in the evening we had 10 confirmed bodies inside as they had got all the way to the roof, not all of the fires were out but they had been able to get to the top floor to search.

Before I left the police and DVI had set up the temporary morgue on the grass outside the leisure centre and I got Chris Line to go over and confirm how many they had found and I'm sure he came back with a figure of 10 at some point. I walked round there to check on some people and see what was going on and in the first tent I could see a converse shoe sticking out of the body bag where it was fully zipped up. It's one of those things I will remember.

With the list I had got and all the information I had gathered throughout the day, I went to the Commissioner and the AC. I've got in my notes that when AC Dom Ellis took charge I started attending Tactical Coordination Group meetings and giving updates on numbers of bodies, casualties and missing. When I went to the first meeting and I explained form the information that we had I believed we still had 120 people missing or unaccounted for. We had one of these meetings everyone two hours and but the first one I went to was mid- afternoon. After this I was then told by the AC to go to every meeting. They were held in Kensington Leisure Centre in the big glass room looking straight onto Grenfell Tower. On the Friday when I went back to the Tower back these meetings were held downstairs.

By the end of the day, 1900 hours we had collated that there were 38 people registered missing with the casualty bureau, 17 bodies (deceased), 65 people in hospital, 65 people rescues and approximately 92

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people unaccounted for. This information was gathered through the Brigade Command Centre (BCC), the police and TMO and was in relation to the 274 figures on the TMO list. This is what makes me think I may have written this up my notes nearer to the incident than the 13th of July when I sent it as I'm not sure I would have remembered all those numbers later unless I referred to something which I don't think I did. However I may have made a note of these figures at the time.

We had another TCG meeting at around 1955 hours where it was decided there was no more saveable life and we were entering the recovery phase. This was agreed between the principle officers of the fire brigade and the police. In a major incident you go from a rescue phase to a recovery phase and then everything changes again as you need to look at health and safety, start monitoring the building which was then what starts to happen. I believe minutes were taken for this meeting.

We got a specialist, a world leader and professor in building stability. I didn't meet her but I think she had arrived either just after or just before the meeting on the command unit, as that was when I was told she was at the scene. I was told that she was very uncomfortable with where the command unit was located because if Grenfell Tower had fallen down it would have wiped us out. Whenever we get a building that's been heavily damaged by fire we ask for a dangerous structure engineer but this person came because she was an expert for such big buildings. The structure of the building has been compromised because the concrete had started to spool where it comes away from the metal and fire fighters has said some of the ceilings were going. I do recall Pat Goldbourne and Chris Reynolds saying earlier that when the fire was raging you could hear lots of cracking and banging.

Before I finished at about 2000 hours I secured the command unit and made sure that gathered up any of the fire survival guidance sheets and locked them away in the command unit. The command unit was then removed and then impounded. I didn't do a handover with anyone because the fire survival coordinator didn't need to continue as there weren't any further FSG calls to coordinate. Even though I stayed as fire survival guidance coordinate for most of the day I didn't actually do any fire survival guidance coordination. I did other tasks.

I was on duty that night so I stayed on. I went back to my call out base, Fulham Fire Station. I had a shower, spoke to some officers who were there at the incident with me and some who weren't. Luckily I didn't have to go back straight back there on the relief but I was on duty until 1700 hours on the Thursday. I went back to Grenfell Tower on Friday and spent another 12 hours there. When I arrived I

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was meant to be the Senior Safety Officer but Assistant Commissioner Richard Mills made me the Operational Commander. I was paged just after 0800 on Friday, got there at 1000 in morning I left the scene later that day between 2000-2100 hours.

It's a bit difficult to say how the incident has affected me since as now I've started investigating what happened you became a bit vicariously attached to the incident. It was a horrific job to go to and I suggest it was much more horrific for the people that were there to start with. I think I arrived by the point where we probably knew there want anyone saveable but there was still hope and until we got to the top of the building were weren't willing to say there wasn't anyone saveable and until we got to the top of the building we weren't willing to say no there isn't left that was saveable as you never know, if there's someone hidden somewhere or someone that got away with it. You never know. I felt a bit helpless that were are here to save people's lives and there's a lot of people's lives we didn't save. So it will have an negative affect on those who were there on the day having to make decisions about who to save and who you could save, I'm sure it's going to haunt them for a long time. At the time of the incident I didn't identify anything we should have done differently and I haven't on reflection since.

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