

WITNESS STATEMENT

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

Statement of: DAVIS, IAN

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

Occupation: FIRE OFFICER

This statement (consisting of 6 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: IAN DAVIS

Date: 16/01/2018

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

This statement relates to the incident at Grenfell Tower on 14th June 2017 and covers the actions I took and instructions given on the night. This is a written account from an interview conducted by DC Michelle HART and PC Richard GREENGRASS at Wandsworth Fire Station.

I am fire fighter Ian DAVIS attached to Red Watch based at Tooting Fire Station. I have been an active firefighter for 26 1/2 years. I started in 1991 and had 13 years with Surrey Fire Brigade having completed 16 weeks initial training including 2 weeks on breathing apparatus sets (BA) and 2 weeks on how to deal with road traffic accidents (RTA). I was posted to Walton-on-Thames Green Watch. I then moved to London Fire Brigade (LFB) initially posted at Richmond Red Watch for 2 1/2 years then transferred to Tooting Red Watch. The training for LFB isn't that different, there are some policies and procedures that aren't exactly the same but we use the same BA sets. I had a 2 week conversion course in Southwark including BA familiarisation. I am an engine driver and qualified when with Surrey Fire Brigade around 1994 and have completed 2 blue light courses with Surrey and 1 with the LFB.

My current rank for the past 18 months is temporary Crew Manager at Tooting for Red Watch, this is an open role at the moment.

I've had regular training and lectures for high rise incidents to refresh our memory as we have a few on our ground. We do visit them to check the locations of dry risers and for any signs of vandalism, where

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the best place to park at the location is. We will do drills at the yard tower and the equipment we have to take up, there's no current set pattern to when we do the training. The equipment we use consists of 2 lengths of hose and we now include a special high rise bag that contains extra equipment for dealing with these types of incident. Inside there are extra hose branches, marking labels used for doors to make other crews aware of areas searched within the block and hose to show the water supply, tallies and a BA board that records breathing apparatus and shows who is where in the building at any time. We take breaking in gear too on the trucks, an enforcer, hooley bar or spreader for any issues we may face regarding entry to flats, large pencil like wax crayons that we call a chinagraph for writing on walls or doors too that mark areas already searched. Previously in my service I've attended high rise fires, these are usually contained to one flat and require only one fire appliance to attend. We do get sent as back up for other boroughs to fire calls or can be called to small bin fires or lift break downs on a regular basis. I estimate I've attended 12 fires which have been in flats during my career and these have always been contained to the flat involved and never spread.

Before this incident I had never been to Grenfell Tower during my career and have no prior knowledge of the layout inside or the surrounding areas.

In this statement I will refer to the firefighters I worked with during the incident that were on duty with me and travelled in my pump appliance. Watch Manager Tom FURNELL, Crew Manager Richard MORRIS, Firefighter David LEAN and Firefighter Loxley FORBES. I will also refer to the area around Grenfell Tower, the flat roof area that I was positioned at during my tour of duty and areas of the tower that were also visible to me from this position.

On Tuesday 13th JUNE 2017 I reported for night duty at 8pm, I did standard checks on our equipment until 8:45pm. I think we had a call out fairly early that evening but can't remember the details of it. We then settled down for the night finally going to bed at around 11:30pm. At 1:30am on WEDNESDAY 14th JUNE we were called to go on standby at Hammersmith station, this was a ladder call which seemed strange as usually a pump is required. I drove the ladder truck call sign H351 as part of a crew of 5 with WM FURNELL also in the front. On the way to Hammersmith we were wondering why the ladder was on standby and not the pump, our Mobile Data Terminal (MDT) just said standby with no other information coming through. The radio was busy, we could hear people saying it was a 20-30 pump fire initially, as we got to the forecourt at Hammersmith our deployment became clearer when we heard the

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radio and there was a 40 pump fire at Grenfell Tower and the MDT updated with the incident saying who was attending and alerted us that we were mobilised with an RVP listed.

We have two radio channels in use at incidents and whilst on the way to the area there were constant calls for fire safety guides (FSG) coming out over the radio on channel 2. These are when a person calls the fire brigade to say they are trapped in a building and are advised to stay inside the flat as the fire door will contain the flames. A fire door should protect for 1 or 2 hours until firefighters are able to extinguish the fire and will then get the people trapped. This is a good policy as it keeps people out of the way of firefighters as they tend to panic in these situations and we can tackle the fire.

There was a declared rendezvous point (RVP) and the address shown said LATIMER ROAD, It took roughly 5-8 minutes to get there from the mobilisation. I remember that as I got closer to the RVP, the road was blocked by roadworks and I had to do a 3 point turn to divert and find another route in back down the main road in LADBROKE GROVE, I was now being followed by another pump and had to do a big loop of the area to get close to the fire.

to get any closer so this was the best location for us. The road was built up with shops and a pub also, the street was very congested with hundreds of people in the road and on the pavement plus parked cars making it difficult to get the truck there. I drove to the tower in normal kit and changed once at the parked up. During this time there were members of the public shouting abuse at me, I can't remember all that was said but some people were asking what we were doing there and one person mentioned that they had an uncle and cousins up in tower. The mood was very irate and abusive towards us. These people were clearly in distress, one even asked why we didn't have a chopper to help get people out.

Our WM FURNELL was in charge of the truck, he went to find the command unit and book us in, and none of us had an idea where this was on arrival. We were told to head to the tower by a firefighter from the initial base pump and on way our station manager came back to us and said to get any IEC bags which are large first aid kits from the truck and get to the tower quickly. I grabbed our bag from the back of the appliance and we ran towards Grenfell Tower down a passageway passing the base pump that was providing water to the fire via a relay from pump to pump. As we got closer I could see that the tower more clearly, it was a fully developed fire on 2 sides, loads of smoke and members of the public around the outside. There were lots of residents coming out of the tower suffering with smoke inhalation, we

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didn't have enough oxygen to treat everyone yet as we only carry one cylinder per appliance. I had a 30 year old Asian woman approach me with these symptoms so I gave her some oxygen, there was an area with a polythene sheet on the ground for treatment set up by the LFB next to the base pump appliance, this had 3 IEC bags already there. I just grabbed her as she was on her own and took her back to the treatment area, she didn't have any injuries, just coughing from the smoke. I didn't learn this ladies name at the time and she was left with other firefighters in this area to continue receiving treatment.

We were now about 100 yards away from the tower and walked down a ramp to where the water relay was, the line was coming from a hydrant through to the pumps. I saw hoses going down the passageway and being used to fight the fire with some going inside the building and some on the outside to a nearby ground monitor. We use ground monitors as they are free standing and allow us to direct a hose without endangering a firefighter close to the actual flames, in this instance it wasn't being very effective so I spoke with another firefighter and we decided to move it to a better location. We moved the ground monitor to create a branch which extended the hose by 1 length. This would help us fight the fire better and would improve to water pressure. The location was the north side of the tower. There was visible debris falling from the tower. I saw windows and metal on the ground stopping us getting close to the tower with the hose and the water pressure was bad, very low so we had to do something to sort this.

I saw 9 metre ladder against a wall by the academy on the north side that led to a large flat roof area, this was free so we decided as a crew to move the hose up there for a better height advantage to fight the fire on the north side of the tower. The radio was very busy with operational orders instructing firefighters to floors inside the tower, as this wasn't affecting us we assessed the situation and decided it was safe to move the hose and ground monitor. A station manager said this was ok and to be careful so as a crew of 3 we took 2 lengths of hose up to the roof area and were now directly facing the north side of the tower. The difference was immediate, we had an extra 2 floors of height and could reach up to the 11th floor with the hose which was now at its limit and couldn't give any more water pressure. The water was managing to reach inside the flats that were alight. We used a spotter standing behind us to let us know where to direct the hose and which floors we should be attacking as the fires kept reigniting after we thought they were out. After about 10 -15 minutes a decision was made to bring up more hose and move to a corner of the roof that was closer facing the north side.

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The hose was measuring 70mil and became too much to handle as the water pressure had increased to 10 bar, normally we work with about 6 bar so it needed to be supported, we used our personal lines to attach the hose to railings to create a new branch. This worked well and lasted for the full 12 hours we were up on the roof.

We tried to fight the fire from above so went as high as we could with the hose which was the floor and moved down, the fire seemed to be coming from the 3rd floor and moving up. There was a lot of dark black smoke indicating a fully developed fire now but I had no idea how far the fire was inside the tower.

From our position on the roof I could physically see that the fire had spread from the north side around to the west face and then on to the south side of the tower due to the wind increasing. There were people visible at the windows in the southwest area of the tower. The fire was up to the 13th or 14th floor on the north side now and our hose wasn't able to reach that far up to fight it. I've never seen a fire behave like this before, it was going up and around the building in a 'V' shape. We call the way it was spreading the 'Cooinder effect', where a fire will come out of a window or gap, spread up and move in to another location through an opening. This would normally be caused by a break in the window and a sudden influx of oxygen feeding the fire. We rotated on the hose between the crew and were trying to get as much water into the rooms on fire we could reach, the water was being bounced off the ceilings and walls of the rooms so that it spread to reach the flames. This is a standard procedure we use when fighting fires like this.

Once daylight started we could only reach the 9th floor due to the wind pushing the water down so the reach from the hose wasn't as good. The building was mostly black smoke now as we were damping down the tower. I could see some of the building was still alight but we had no idea what was happening inside. On the north side I could still see debris falling directly down, there were complete windows, metal and some insulation. Lots of crashing and banging when it hit the ground. The roof above the foyer to the block had lots of debris on it, from where we were positioned I could see police using riot shields escorting fire crews in and out of the building. The falling debris was hitting the shields as the police and fire crews were under them. We didn't have any debris affecting us directly but there was an amount on the roof that had fallen before we went up, we were positioned about 40 feet away from the tower.

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On the east side of the tower I could see an Aerial Ladder Platform (ALP) which is a pump that has a hose attached to a 32 metre high ladder so it will be able to reach higher floors from the ground base area. I don't know how high this was reaching up the tower but it was working and spraying water towards the fire. Near this appliance I could see a holding area for firefighters in BA sets and extra equipment arriving and getting stored there.

Earlier in the incident at about 3:30am by the initial base pump appliance I remember mentioning to a fire investigator about a larger ALP from Surrey Fire Brigade that I knew about from former colleagues. This had a 45 metre high ladder so would be more effective than ours. He asked this information to be passed to the command unit and I believe it was done straight away.

There was an ambulance crew casualty handling area close to where the LFB had initially set up the treatment area at the bottom of the ramp. They also had a large sheet laid out, this had I think 3 or 4 deceased bodies in bags on it.

We were up on that flat roof until about 2pm, I came down a couple of times to get water and food for the crew. We did a handover for the next shift that came to relieve us at ground level telling them we had just been putting water on the building which was mostly smoke at this point as the fire was damping down now. I don't know which crew took over and have no idea if they went up to the roof to continue working that hose.

During the incident I have no idea how the command structure was or who was in control of the incident for the LFB. I never wore a BA set during my time at Grenfell Tower or entered the tower at any time.

We were then told to go back to our appliance, our watch manager went to collect the nominal role board from the command unit, this is a record of who is there and if someone is missing. The pump was still in LATIMER ROAD along with other pumps, there were also utility company vans from the gas and water boards. We left the site at about 3pm completely exhausted and arrived back at our station approximately 4pm.

During the interview I was shown two images and spoke about them on the recording. One is a view of the tower elevations, this relates to the description given regarding the fire moving in a 'V' shape up the

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tower. I exhibit this as IAD/1 and it has a met police label on it with the number MPSZ13114291. The second is a map of the area surrounding the tower including the flat roof that I was posted on and on it I wrote where the fire appliance was parked, showed the route we took to the tower, the location of an aerial ladder pump and the holding areas for fire crews around the tower. This is my exhibit of IAD/2 and has a met police label on it with the number MPSZ13114289.

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