

**WITNESS STATEMENT**

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

Statement of: HILL, JORDAN

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

Occupation: FIRE OFFICER

---

This statement (consisting of 10 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: J HILL

Date: 15/02/2018

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

---

This statement has been prepared from the information I gave during an audio-recorded interview with DC Jenny THORP and PC Jo STONE on the 21st January 2018 between 10:28 and 12:38 hours at Wembley Fire Station. For the details, I rely on the information I provided in that interview.

During this interview, I referred to my contemporaneous notes that I made on the 14<sup>th</sup> June 2017 at Paddington Fire Station at the end of my shift. I also referred to one (1) map and one (1) plan in relation to Grenfell Tower on which I made notes to help explain and indicate where I remembered things being on the night. I exhibit these documents as follows:

JVH/1 - One (1) set of contemporaneous notes, seal MPSZ13114917

JVH/2 - One (1) map of Grenfell Tower area, seal MPSZ13114918

JVH/3 - One (1) floor plan for Grenfell Tower, seal MPSZ13114919

This statement is my account of my involvement as a Firefighter attending the Grenfell Tower Fire on the 14<sup>th</sup> June 2017.

I am a firefighter (FF) for the London Fire Brigade (LFB), beginning my service with them in 2009. Prior to that, I was a FF in the North Wales fire service for 6 years. On joining the LFB, I had to complete 17 weeks of basic training where we complete modules with written and practical testing on things like

Signature: J HILL  
2018

Signature witnessed by:

pumps, machinery, breathing apparatus (BA) training, road traffic collisions (RTC). I did this at Southwark training centre. The last 2 weeks are at Moreton college where you complete live fire practice covering high-rise, house, trains, RTC's. You are assessed throughout and then complete a final exam. If you fail any module, they back squad you to redo it. Once you pass out of training, you then go to a station and you spend up to the first 3 years of your career on probation gaining evidence and experience as a development FF. After completing my training, I was posted to Southall in October 2009 onto Red watch and have remained on this posting throughout.

As a FF I am a trained driver on the pump appliances and have also completed training on specialist appliances. I am hose layered trained, which is a machine with a couple of miles of hose on it, and a high volume pump operator. Both of the specialist appliances we use for this are based at Harrow fire station. I am Standard Duration Breathing Apparatus (SDBA) trained. This is the standard requirement of a FF to be trained on. It has 1 cylinder and an automatic alarm system. It provides approximately 30 minutes' airtime, which is (300) bar. The standard pump machines we use carry 5 sets of SDBA. There is also Extended Duration Breathing Apparatus (EDBA), which requires extra training, which I have not completed. This tends to be FF's at fire rescue stations.

EDBA gives you about double the duration under air and has two 2 cylinders. We do 1 day BA refresher training every year and 2 day training every other year. The first aid training we do has changed and I have completed the Immediate Emergency Care (IEC) first aid pack for this which is a 3-day course refreshed every 3 years.

We complete day-to-day training; this is generally planned out by the Station Manager (SM) who prepares a quarterly training plan, which is run by the Watch Manger (WM). We drill between 11:30 - 1pm on a day shift. If there are any home fire safety checks to be completed these will take precedence over training. These are generally organised through the Hillingdon fire safety department whether we have identified a need or they have called to make an appointment. Home fire safety checks are to complete things such as fitting smoke alarms.

Within the quarterly training plan there will be drills for high rise buildings. This could be a drill involving 3 or 4 stations where during our shift the pump is taken off the run, and we complete an exercise at a drill tower in one of the stations, or it could be a localised visit which is a familiarisation visit to a high rise on your fire ground. On a familiarisation it is the aim to get a feel for the floor layout,

Signature: J HILL  
2018

Signature witnessed by:

how many floors there are, location of the dry riser, plant room, and access points. All boroughs will have a list of high rises and complex buildings which have been identified or where other risks have been identified. They are done so that if you get a call to that building you already have some knowledge of it, which can be especially useful if visibility is poor, you can pull on your knowledge to know roughly where things are. Prior to the fire at Grenfell Tower I had no knowledge of that building or any plans in relation to it. It is not on my station ground and I had not been to an incident or training there previously.

The last time I completed realistic training for a high rise before the Grenfell Tower fire would have been in March 2017. It was a back to basics training which is borough led. Any station in that borough is taken off the run and you go to a station with a drill tower and get given an input and complete a practical drill. I think we completed the last one at Acton. We use the drill tower at the station and run it as if it is a live incident. The Station Officer (SO) gives a briefing as to what the fire is and you treat it as realistic as you can. The officer in charge (OIC) is on the ground and designates jobs like BA wearers, hose, BA board, Bridgehead (BH) and at the end of the drill you do a de-brief as you would after a live incident. A BH is a point generally 2 floors below the fire floor. The BA board sits with the entry control officer at the BH. Every BA wearer reports to it, checks they have enough air to be deployed in to their task, their tally is logged, you set into the wet or dry riser from here and take what firefighting media you need i.e. hose. The tally comes out of the Automatic Distress Unit (ADU) on your BA set and goes into the BA board. It monitors you and your air level, it is also a motion sensor and if you don't move for 30 seconds an alarm will sound. The risers are generally located in the centre of the building or on an outside wall. A wet riser is for buildings up to 4 stories high and is operated by a pump in the plant room of the building. A dry riser is for buildings of 4 or more floors, there is an outlet on every other floor and is in effect a metal tube that runs up the building and is fed by our pump appliances. This is needed due to the pressure required to send water up so many floors which we can achieve with our pumps. During training you do go through compartment failure and the stay put policy. Everyone is told to stay where they are if not being affected or expected to be affected by the fire, the control room staff on the phones or the FF's on scene will give this advice to people, tell them to stay put. This is because we are meant to be able to keep a fire to a compartment. It allows us as FF's to get access and tackle the fire and get control. In a worst-case scenario, you could maybe see a fire go up a floor or you might have every flat on that floor caught on fire but that would be it. There are occasions when people will not even know there is a fire in their block, as it has no impact on them at all. Its only advice we give we cannot actually make someone stay put, it is their own personal choice.

Signature: J HILL  
2018

Signature witnessed by:

At Southall we have 2 pumping appliances, a pump ladder and a pump. At single machine stations, these pumping appliances are run with a crew of 5, but as a 2 appliance station we generally run each with a crew of 4. A pump ladder appliance has a 135 metre ladder, breaking in gear along with the BA sets and spare cylinders. A Watch Manager (WM) or a Crew Manager \*(CM\*) will ride on these in charge.

Generally, they carry more equipment than a standard pumping appliance.

On the 13th June 2017 we were on our first night duty shift as red watch riding pump appliance G242. FF Ricky CHEEMA was the driver, FF Neil GLANVILLE was acting up as the temporary Crew Manager (CM) and was in the front passenger seat, FF Dave REED was sat in the back with me.

We had received a shout (call out) to Ealing ground for a manhole emitting smoke, this was about 1.20am, on arrival I got off the truck with FF GLANVILLE and FF REED, FF CHEEMA stayed on as the driver. There was nothing found and I think we were only off the truck for 10 minutes. When we got back on FF CHEEMA told us there was a 14 pump fire, we all asked him if he was sure as this is an unusual number to be used by the LFB. We then heard the control room on the radio saying 40 pump fire. I think we initially laughed at FF CHEEMA as he had obviously misheard the number but at the same time we all realised that this was something huge. We made our way back to Southall fire station knowing that we would likely be called up to it as we were so close, the whole time there were constant messages from the control room with information such as fire survival guidance (FSG) calls, one of them really struck home with me where the control room said there were 11 people and a child in one flat. It sounded crazy, I'd never heard anything like it before. On route back we filled up the appliance with fuel to make sure that we were ready to go as soon as we got the shout. When we got back to Southall we all went and read through the call and put on the news. It was unreal what was going on, I don't think there was any live footage on the news at that time just one photo of the tower on fire, it was dark and all you could see were the flames going 100 metres up in the air, all I could think was 'shit! '. I knew we would be called up to it and I expected it to be sooner rather than later, we stayed up waiting for about an hour surprised when the call didn't come through in that time. Eventually we decided to try to get some rest so we would be ready and went to bed.

At about 04.20am the bells at the station went off. We were being called up as part of a 40 pump relief. I have never heard of anything of this scale. The tele printer print out gave us a rendezvous point (RVP) which seemed like it was miles away from the tower. I cannot remember what the road name was now. On a tip sheet/mobilising sheet it gives the time of the initial call, address, what appliances are there or

Signature: J HILL  
2018

Signature witnessed by:

going, what you're going to i.e. for Grenfell it would be High rise fire. When you are called up as a relief it will come through as 'Multiple appliance order' and you read through the tip sheet to see which pumps are going. As a relief, you normally get told what location, i.e. street name, you are going to and which appliance you are meeting with to take over from, that appliance will then leave. However, when we arrived at Grenfell Tower it was different, it seemed like no one was leaving just more crews turning up and they did not want the appliance at the incident location, just us with BA sets and spare cylinders.

Recounting our journey, we had made our way out of Southall fire station and headed towards Kensington. Any relief call is done at normal road speeds unless the control room tells you any different, which they didn't in this case so we weren't travelling on blue lights. It was a normal summer morning, a dry and clear day which was already starting to get a bit light with sunrise. We had only gone about half a mile when I could already see the smoke rising up, I couldn't see the Grenfell Tower yet or the flames but the smoke was filling the sky above it. We made our way down Uxbridge Road through Ealing and Acton towards Kensington until we got to the RVP, I don't remember the name of the road but it was a good mile away from the tower. The mobile data terminal (MDT) is in the front of the appliance and the CM or whoever is in the front seat will read it and update us with anything we need to know on route. If you are the initial crew to an incident, it will pinpoint the exact location of the incident and show hydrants etc. in the area, as a relief crew I don't think it shows all this specific information as the main point is to get there and receive your briefing there. The MDT has a satellite navigation system on it, which shows your appliance location and location you're going to, but I think FF CHEEMA also had his phone sat on to direct him. The first glimpse we got of the Grenfell Tower was as we neared Westfield's shopping centre, I could just see the top of it and it was clear just how huge this fire was, I thought 'Christ!' on seeing it.

We got to the RVP with no issues, no obstructions like other vehicles abandoned or blocking our path. As we pulled in we were met by the station officer (SO) in charge of the RVP, he was there meeting and greeting the relief crews arriving. He told us that they didn't need our appliance just us, so we were to park up on the left and lock up and that we needed only to take our BA kit, spare cylinders and any other gear we wanted, i.e. breaking in equipment, that we could carry; then go to the holding point. This is different to any relief situation I have been in. There was no issue parking up where we had been told to so we could leave the vehicle where it was and lock it. We got off as a crew of 4 and took our BA kit, I also took our thermal imaging camera (TIC) I later found there was plenty already at the incident that could be used. The SO gave us directions as to how to get to the holding point from the RVP as you

Signature: J HILL  
2018

Signature witnessed by:

couldn't see the Tower from where we were, and told us there was a holding point by the leisure centre opposite Grenfell Tower which we were to report to. It was a good 15-20 minute walk through the residential streets and there were people stood about, more so as we got closer. It was all quite surreal, people were applauding us as we walked and saying to be safe; a female member of public came up to us in tears telling us to be safe and not to do anything stupid it was like she didn't want us to go. We were almost laughing amongst ourselves saying it didn't feel real.

We walked into the incident from the South-East getting to the leisure centre where there was a green in front of it. This was the first time we could see the whole of the Tower and really fully take in the enormous scale of this incident, there looked like there was fire in every window that I could see with smoke billowing out and bits falling down crashing to the ground. There were FF's everywhere, some like us who were fresh faced who had only just gotten there, not understanding what was going on and confusion as to how it had happened; and others who looked spent who had clearly been in. At the green by the leisure centre we met up with the SO in charge of that holding area, SO Dan KIPLING. I recognised him as I had started at LFB at a similar time to him, I knew he was on the graduate scheme but this was the first time I knew he was now an SO. He was briefing everyone as they arrived crew by crew. He briefed us as a crew of 4, telling us that this was like nothing we would have ever seen before, it was all a bit of a mess and that policy had gone out of the window. He told us to do what we had to do when we go in, be safe and stick to what we know and to do our best. After briefing us he told us to go and sit and wait until we were called up, that there was food available and we were to stay hydrated whilst we waited. As I said, there were FF's everywhere, ones who had been into the Tower who looked exhausted and others like us who were fresh and waiting to be called up. Everyone was sat around at the leisure centre holding area talking amongst each other and staring up at the Tower in disbelief hoping that it wouldn't come down. We were talking to some of the crews that had been in and they were saying that they had been telling people to stay put in their flats and the next thing they knew the whole building was alight and they were getting people out. One of the crews said they had been up to the 18<sup>th</sup> floor and had told people up there to stay where they were in their flats as per the stay put policy but now those flats were on fire. I wasn't really aware that night of who was command, I think it was an Assistant Commissioner in charge and I knew Commissioner Danny COTTON was overseeing but not in charge as such. I couldn't say who was making the decisions as to whether to tell people to stay put or get out and when there were any changes in these decisions. Crews were being called up constantly, it was staggered between SDBA and EDBA crews but with a greater need for the EDBA's so it felt like we were waiting

Signature: J HILL  
2018

Signature witnessed by:

for ages, there wasn't enough trained EDBA to be able to give what was needed into the Tower. SO Kipling was shouting out what he needed and crews were putting themselves forward and he would then send them. Whilst waiting it was just a case of chatting amongst ourselves and watching the Tower in disbelief. There was an aerial ladder platform (ALP) outside the Tower, one from Wembley and one from Soho I think both firing water at the Tower from outside on the south east side. There was also a couple of jets from the walkway roof on the south side of the Tower doing the same. I think an ALP from Surrey also came but this was after we left I think. I think it must have been about 2 hours until we were eventually called forward to actually go, before that we had been called a couple of times only to be cancelled as an EDBA crew was available instead. As a crew of 4 SO Kipling told us we were to make our way to the second holding area near the entry/exit point to the Tower where we would again wait for further instruction. He pointed out the route through to it for us, telling us to go along the south side keeping the Tower to our right hand side, we would see the doorway to the Tower to our right and go under the tunnel where we would then see FF's and officers waiting in the second holding area. We walked together round under the covered car park in front of the south side of the building, and under the tunnel. As we came through the tunnel we were out onto the west side of the Tower. There was a playground area with the next holding area behind that where there seemed to be a bit of a queuing area. Again we were told to sit and wait until we were needed. I could see FF's who had just come out who looked exhausted and had just dumped their kits and were catching their breath, mixed with other fresh faced crews like us waiting to go in. It was all getting a bit confusing by the amount of FF's that were there and we got told to move back a bit, to the side there was a wall and we moved to here and sat and waited. With all our kit I had to keep standing up and moving around to stop my legs going dead whilst we were waiting. There were hundreds of paramedics lined up down this wall, which went down an alleyway. I could see that there was also a jet in the play area on this side (west side) again firing water up the outside of the tower. We were chatting to crews who had been in getting an idea from them of the layout of the building and what it was like inside as it was not one any of us had ever been to before. Whilst we were waiting there, we were watching that side of the building, which would have been the west side, and in particular a bloke on the 11<sup>th</sup> floor. He kept appearing at the window, waving what looked like a white handkerchief trying to get attention, and gasping for air, he would then disappear for a bit before returning. Every time he reappeared, people were pointing to him saying that he was back and desperately hoping someone would get to him. I think we were all wondering if he was going to make it, if anyone would get to him in time. During the time we were waiting, there was no real clean air around

Signature: J HILL  
2018

Signature witnessed by:

as the air was filled with debris and smoke, there were constant cracks and bangs as the debris constantly fell down.

After what must have been about an hour they asked for about 10 SDBA wearers to go to the BH in the lobby, we went forward as a crew of 4 to go in. We had been called up a few times during this time but each time we said we were ready to go they would change us for an EDBA crew. It was frustrating, as I just wanted to get in there and do everything I could, we all did. Just as we made our way down towards the building to go in I saw a crew of 2 come out of the tower carrying the bloke from the 11<sup>th</sup> floor, they looked totally exhausted and soaked through, with both screaming 'Casualty, casualty'. They had him held between them in an armchair type position. We were all gobsmacked that someone had managed to get to this bloke and get him out. I could see they were struggling so FF GLANVILLE and I legged it over to them and told them to leave him, to let us take him and to go and get themselves sorted. We took hold of the bloke, he was conscious, tired and distressed but he wasn't crying or screaming, and you could see soot build up on his face. We grabbed hold of him and helped carry him over to the paramedics who were just behind this second holding area, and we left him with them immediately making our way back to the others to then go into the tower. I was keen to get in but also apprehensive. I suddenly realised that it was daylight and looked at the time but didn't really register what the actual time was I only remember thinking that my wife and kids would be waking up soon and would see this on the news straight away whilst I was in the tower unable to answer my phone. I quickly sent my wife a text to say that I was there (at Grenfell Tower) and I was safe but that it was as bad as it looked.

We were told to go in and report to the BH to be given our briefing. We were told to go in single file, as you had to enter and exit with police who were using riot shields to hold above us to protect from the falling debris to make sure no one was injured, one in front and one behind; and in through a normal single door at the foot of the building in the south west corner. The police were constantly running backwards and forwards between the door and the holding area outside getting FFs in and out. As we entered the Tower, there was a mix of FF's waiting to be called forward to be briefed and committed in and FF's who had been in looking totally exhausted waiting for police to get them out of the Tower under riot shields. There was water and equipment everywhere. After about 20 minutes we were told to report to entry control, and directed through a doorway that led into a lobby area in what would have been the south east corner of the building. The BA boards were over to the right and all the walls were covered with fire survival guidance (FSG) calls and drawn maps of the floor plans, I didn't see any actual printed

Signature: J HILL  
2018

Signature witnessed by:

maps of the building. I saw FF's logged on the wall where they had run out of space on the BA boards. The FSG calls seemed to never end, there was writing as far as it could stretch along the wall to the left of us with flat numbers, floor number, number of people. We use chinograph to write on the BA boards and on walls, which is a waterproof crayon. The conditions in here were clear of smoke but there was about a foot of water and hose everywhere, we were already getting wet from the standing water. There was a light portable pump in the doorway to the right of us feeding up the first set of stairs, behind us was another entry point to the tower, there were also the building lifts but these weren't being used. We stood in two's looking at the walls, chatting to each other and waiting to get briefed. Before we could be briefed a hose length burst on either the 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, initially they thought they could get away with leaving it but then realised it had to be fixed and everything had to be shut down whilst this was done. As this was being done the SO in charge of the BH, I can't remember his name, reassessed the BH and decided to use this as a chance to move the BH up to the 4<sup>th</sup> floor and get the dry riser set up before we were committed in. This needed the BA boards and the equipment to be moved up to the 4<sup>th</sup> floor but we were told just to wait and rest. They didn't want us exhausted or breathing heavily before going under air as you will go through your air much quicker. Once the BH was set up again on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor they asked for four SDBA and we stepped forward as 2 sets of pairs and made our way up to the BH. To get to the 4<sup>th</sup> floor you first entered the staircase to our right in the south east corner that went up to floor 2 I think, then from the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor upwards in the centre of the building was the enclosed single stairwell. Other than the lifts this single stairwell was the only access point up and down the tower. At the BH we reported to the SO, I was with FF Ricky CHEEMA, and FF Neil GLANVILLE and FF Dave REED were together as a second pair. We were tasked to go and search the 7<sup>th</sup> floor whilst FF GLANVILLE AND FF REED were given the 6<sup>th</sup> floor. The SO told us to search every flat on those floors, search the entire floor, any bodies we found we were to leave in situ. We asked what FF media we had and we were told there was none. The equipment was still in the process of being moved such as hose, breaking in gear, first aid packs etc. We were told that if we came across any fires then we were to report back to the BH. It didn't feel good knowing that we were going in with nothing to fight fire with us and this isn't normal procedure but we had already been told from the start that policies had gone out the window so you stick with that mind-set and just do everything you can. Once you are given a briefing you have to repeat it back to ensure that you have understood it. You hand your tally in from your BA set and these go into the BA board to monitor you and you carry out an air check and go under air. You also carry out a radio check, I only had my handheld radio and these are personal issue. FF CHEEMA was wearing the 'Barry set' which is the BA set with the

Signature: J HILL  
2018

Signature witnessed by:

comms in it. FF CHEEMA had his handheld on channel 1 which was the incident ground channel; and his BA set and my handheld were on channel 3 which was the BA control channel.

Once under air we made our way up from the 4<sup>th</sup> floor to our tasked floors, I believe FF GLANVILLE and REED were behind me and FF CHEEMA. The conditions seemed fine in the stairwell in terms of smoke and heat, just residual but nothing beyond that so visibility seemed fine. There was no lighting in the stairwell from what I remember other than natural light and there was water gushing everywhere running off the stairs like a waterfall, you were soaked before you even started. This isn't ideal as when you're going into a fire you don't want to be wet as this can lead to steam burn injuries in hot conditions. There was some heat and a bit of smoke in the stairwell but nothing really too noticeable. Mixed in with this was hose everywhere, this and the amount of water did make it hazardous walking on the stairwell. Ordinarily you would have the BH 2 floors below the fire floor and it would be from there that you would be attached into the water source, i.e. the riser, but here there was hosing running up all the floors as we went up which would have been from the dynamic way the fire had spread and changed. I remember noticing the comms on FF CHEEMA's BA set, they were awful. The Barry set' is a microphone on a headset with an earpiece and it doesn't matter where you are or what you are doing it seems to fail every time you use it, it's a waste of time. Our handhelds are fine and always work, I've never experienced any real problems with them, but the BA set is rubbish. This was beyond its normal failure though, ordinarily you wouldn't be able to hear what is coming through on someone's BA set if you aren't wearing one but there was a constant piercing high frequency noise emitting from FF CHEEMA's helmet and he kept saying that the 'Barry' wasn't working. I told him he should just take it off or it would deafen him, we had heard from some of the other FF's outside who'd already been in that the 'Barry sets' weren't working, so it was pointless him keeping it on with that piercing noise when we had our handhelds that worked.

We got up to the 7<sup>th</sup> floor and it was when we opened the door out from the stairwell that there was a sudden rush of smoke and heat, it was black/grey burning smoke, we instantly knew there was something going on. Normally when you get given your briefing at entry control they will tell you to complete something like a 'left hand search', this is standard training as it helps to keep you safe and work around systematically, but they had just said to go and search the 7<sup>th</sup> floor. FF CHEEMA and I looked at each other and agreed that because the smoke was so bad and not having any FF media it was best to go with our training and search round to the left following the wall. The floor layout was like a capital 'H' with 3

Signature: J HILL  
2018

Signature witnessed by:

flats on the left as you came out of the stairwell and 3 on the right. We got round to the first flat which was as if you were going back on yourself from exiting the stairwell, the door was unlocked so we could open it, inside it was full of water and the fire appeared to have gone through it but there were no active fires in there. It looked to be more smoke damaged than fire damage. I think it was a one bed flat and I remember the bedroom appearing to be a kid's room. There was a bunkbed and the duvet was all ravelled up giving the impression there might be someone under it, it was so eerie. We searched the flat checking in cupboards and under things, everything we could to make sure no one was missed. Once we were happy the flat was clear and no one was in it we made our way out of the flat to continue along the left wall to the next flat. The next flat door we came to was locked, together we made the decision to go through searching all the open flats first and then we would sort out getting breaking equipment to go back to the locked doors as we had nothing with us as nothing had been available for us to take when we were committed in from the BH. The next door again was locked and we then began to work our way around to the right side, as we did so we came across a door that opened into the bin chute room. It was clear as day in there, it hadn't been touched by the fire or smoke to the point it was like nothing had happened, it was confusing to see as everything else had been effected. It took us a second to realise it was the bin chute. The flats on the right we were able to access as the doors were unlocked. All of them were completely devastated by the fire, there was no layout left inside of them, they were filled with thick smoke and doorways were alight with small pockets of fire. There was a couple of inches of water on the floor and we were kicking the water at the fires and using pans we found to scoop and throw water on them to put the fires out as we worked our way through the flats searching them.

When we had done the flats we could get into we went back to the stairwell where FF CHEEMA said he would go down and get a ram to breakdown the locked doors. I initially began to go down with him but on the 6<sup>th</sup> floor he said for me to wait there. When he returned we went back to the 7<sup>th</sup> floor and again made our way round to each locked flat from the left again starting with the second door to the left. This flat was strange once we had gotten in, it was like nothing had happened it was completely untouched. I seem to remember the TV was on and I half expected to find someone sat in the flat like it was all normal, we opened windows to clear smoke out, as we did this I don't remember noticing anything unusual about the construction of the windows, just that they tilted in towards you from the top. Once we had cleared this flat we made our way back out and to the next flat up which was in the top left corner and also locked. We had to break the door into it and as soon as we did the heat took us to our knees, we instantly knew we had something big in that flat and initially didn't know what to do as we had absolutely nothing

Signature: J HILL  
2018

Signature witnessed by:

with us, no FF media like water. We were down on our knees to take us away from the heat and smoke whilst we worked out what we were going to do, as I looked in the hallway there was a door in front that was closed and the hallway doglegged around to the right. We made our way to where it doglegged around and we had a quick glance around, I could see what looked like a glass panel at the end to the right that was glowing orange, it was clear that there was a fire beyond it. I didn't understand how it was a glass panel as I would have expected it to have smashed due to the heat. FF CHEEMA and I contemplated opening the first door opposite the front door to see if we could search it, with FF CHEEMA saying 'shall we just knock that one door down?' but I said no. We knew this was too risky with nothing with us to fight any fire, if we opened the door we could get a back draught if there was fire in that room. So we backed out to the front door again where we said we would need to go down to the BH and get a 45mm hose to fight the fire we had in here. Just before we left I said to FF CHEEMA to wait and to keep the exit clear and visible, I told him I was going to just have a proper look up the right hand of the hallway in case there was anyone there that I could see. I got down onto my belly and crawled up to it, I was only about 1 ½ metres away from FF CHEEMA; and looked properly down the right turn in the hallway, I stretched my body down the hallway a bit and could see that there were 2 or 3 doors to the left that were all closed and this bright glowing orange panel to the right at the end. I couldn't see any sign of anyone and crawled my way backwards to the front door told FF CHEEMA what I had seen and we both went back to the stairwell where we agreed we needed to go and get a 45mm hose.

Ordinarily you wouldn't leave your partner in a fire situation but we had already been told policy had gone out of the window and we desperately needed to get hose up to the 7<sup>th</sup> floor, I was frustrated that we had been sent in without anything as it was stopping us from completing our task. FF CHEEMA said he would go down and get hose, it felt like I was waiting for ages and I became concerned that maybe there still wasn't any kit up in the BH on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor where it had moved up, so I decided to go up to see if there was any equipment that had been left in the stairwell. I had got up to between the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> floor where I still hadn't found any spare kit and I knew I shouldn't go any further as FF CHEEMA and me were miles apart. I got back down to the 6<sup>th</sup> floor where I remembered that FF's GLANVILLE and REED were searching, I opened the door out of the stairwell and saw them both just about to head back out to the stairwell. I told them about the fire we had on the 7<sup>th</sup> and that FF CHEEMA was trying to find some hose downstairs. I asked them if they could help and as I was doing this FF CHEEMA came back up with 2 lengths of hose. FF's GLANVILLE and REED said that they were running low on air but that they had enough to run the hose out for us but that would be it, they would have to leave straight after doing that.

Signature: J HILL  
2018

Signature witnessed by:

They knew they had the dry riser outlet on their floor so they took a length of hose to connect to the dry riser and run it out up to the 7<sup>th</sup> floor, FF CHEEMA and I took the other length and ran back up to the 7<sup>th</sup> and ran it out up to the door of the flat with the fire, we went back down and FF's GLANVILLE and REED had a branch to connect the 2 lengths, they said they were too low on air and had to go. We connected up the hose and used our handheld radios to call up BA control and ask for the length to be charged with water as we were ready to go with the hose. As we asked for this to be done the entry control called us up and told us that we were low on air and to get back to the BH immediately. I didn't hear this message initially, it came through on my handheld and FF CHEEMA said to me 'They've called us'. I replied to them and they simply said 'get back you're running out of air'. I seem to remember looking and we were starting to run low but our alarms hadn't sounded yet. I felt like we had enough to at least begin the push in to the flat and get the fire fighting started. I didn't want to leave and felt pissed off and frustrated that we had wasted so much time and air getting the hose set up when we should have had it ready and available to us from the start. My adrenalin was pumping and we knew the layout of the flat and where the fire was so wanted to get on with it. We told this to control on the radio but they insisted we get ourselves back to BH. We both made our way back down to the BH to BA control and collected our tallies and removed our masks and reported to the SO to brief him on what we had done and where the fire was. He had chinograph all over the walls with floor plans of each floor with flat numbers drawn out on the walls. I explained to him that there was a fire still raging and well alight which needed putting out in one of the flats on the 7<sup>th</sup>. I explained where the fire was describing the internal layout of the flat, what exactly we had seen and what flat number it was. We had logged the flat numbers as we had seen them on the flat doors as we'd entered each one. It has been so long since the incident now that I can't remember all the flat numbers now but I remember it was either flat 43 or 46 that was alight. Initially there was confusion over the flat number as the map the SO had drawn on the wall showed a different flat number on the 7<sup>th</sup> floor. Where the BH had been moved up to the 4<sup>th</sup> floor and things had been re-drawn onto the walls the plans they had of the floors were not matching with the numbers we were finding on the actual floors. FF CHEEMA and I were certain it was the flat number we were giving him (flat 43 or 46) but the SO had it on his maps as 35. Both FF CHEEMA and I were drained and confused so we had to talk it through with the SO to make sure we were certain we were right and he had the numbering wrong, it was definitely flats in the 40's on floor 7. He called over an officer and told him of the error and that he needed the layout drawings corrected asap. I told the SO of the issues we'd had with wasting air time getting hose set up and said that the stairwell was relatively clear and you didn't need to be under air for

Signature: J HILL  
2018

Signature witnessed by:

it. I told him that FF CHEEMA and I were more than willing to act as runners, we could drop our sets and just run equipment up rather than the crews wasting air and using up time and energy doing this. He understood what I was saying but told me no and told us to report back to the holding area outside and get rested and cleaned up ready to go again if needed. At no point when I was in the Tower do I remember hearing any alarms sounding (fire alarms) or seeing any sprinkler systems.

We got ourselves back out to the second holding area near the entry/exit to the Tower. It was between being at the BA control board and waiting to be escorted out of the tower that we met back up with FF GLANVILLE and REED, we left the Tower back out to the holding area as a crew of 4 and still under riot shields held by police. Outside there were still FF's everywhere. We stayed here briefly chatting with others before we were told to go back to the main holding area by the leisure centre and get refreshed. We were all absolutely soaked through but it was daylight now and already becoming a warm sunny day. At the leisure centre we took off what fire gear we could and laid it out on the green in the hope it would dry out as much as possible before we went back in. There was drink and snacks available for us to get some energy back and get rehydrated. From this holding area you were a little further back from the tower so you could visually take more of it in. The building was still a complete mess with thick black smoke everywhere and live fires still burning all over it. I was aware that it was gone 9.30am as the next watch, Blue watch, were arriving. All of us on my crew were ready and keen to go back in and made sure we told the SO this, but with Blue watch now coming in they were all fresh and ready to go so they were being used to take over from us on red watch to get us out of there. I remember the Commissioner Danny COTTON coming over to ask how we were and we spoke briefly with her to say we were fine. We were also chatting to some of the Blue watch who we knew giving them an idea of what was going on and what it was like inside.

After about an hour of being here the SO came to speak to all of us and we again said we were happy to go back in but he said that it was Ok as there was enough fresh legs from Blue watch here now so we were to go back to Paddington fire station where we would need to make notes and that there were counsellors available for us to see. He also said there was spare kit there to be able to change out of our wet stuff, and feeding. All of us were reluctant to leave, I felt apprehensive, it was one of those incidents where you didn't care how you were feeling you just wanted to give it everything and keep going to do all you could. As a crew we made our way back on foot to our appliance. There were hundreds of members of public out on the streets applauding us as we walked past, thanking and congratulating us, it was

Signature: J HILL  
2018

Signature witnessed by:

incredibly emotional. As we got to the appliance I saw there was a park bench in a shaded area near it and I said we should just sit and take 10 minutes, we were all so tired and feeling emotional, confused and overwhelmed by it all. Whilst we were sat there a female member of public came up to us with pizza and chips to give to us and was saying thank you, all of us were too tired to talk other than to thank her. Then 2 older women came over to see us, they must have been 70 years or so old. They asked us how we were and what was going on and we told her about the Tower. This one lady had absolutely no idea, she was completely oblivious to it. Where we were knackered we were baffled that she didn't know something major was happening, I think we were a little thrown by her asking. She told us she had lived all her life in the area and didn't even know of Grenfell Tower. she told us she'd thought there was an exercise or something going on because there was so many of us (emergency services and people). It was a weird surreal moment that has stuck with me.

We got back to Paddington fire station about 2.30-3pm (14:30-15:00 hours) where there were lots of crews coming in and everyone was chatting amongst themselves. We had to wait to be called to go upstairs to a room to do our statements. There were a couple of SO's there who we also chatted with, SO Dan KIPLING and the SO who had been in charge of the BH who'd briefed us to do floor 7. Everyone was talking about what had happened and what would happen next. When we went up to do our notes I didn't speak to a counsellor there but I did speak to one a couple of weeks after when we all had to come back to fill out a form. Once we were all done with our statements we got on the appliance and made our way back to Southall fire station getting back about 5.30pm. We were due back on shift that night for our second night shift, the bosses gave us some extra hours to rest so we didn't need to be back in to start until midnight as Blue watch were staying on later to cover us.

When I got home all I could do was just sit there and think about what had happened. It was like that for the initial couple of weeks really, you keep going over things in your mind. What got to me the most was that we'd never searched that flat, we didn't complete our task. I kept thinking how it could have been different if we had gone up there from the start with hoses, we could have started fighting that fire straight away and searched that flat. That was the only thing that really restricted us that night was the lack of firefighting media going in, there just wasn't enough equipment but that was down to the scale of the incident more than anything else. You do chat about it with your colleagues and it helps as you talk it through and know you made the right decisions, like if we had tried to open the internal doors in that flat it could have caused a back draught and we wouldn't have stood a chance with no firefighting media. It

Signature: J HILL  
2018

Signature witnessed by:

**OFFICIAL**

Statement of: HILL, JORDAN

Form MG11(T)

Page 16 of 16

helps cement it in your head that we did everything we could that night, but that doesn't stop things from niggling at you. You see the kids' faces on the news and can't stop yourself from wondering about them. The Grenfell Tower Fire was beyond anything I have ever experienced. You could never imagine a tower like that to go up in flames like it did it was unreal, I still think how on earth did the fire go up the building and come back down. When I was at the Tower I wasn't aware of any issues with the gas supply and didn't even think about it really; but when we were back at the station that night to start our second shift, some of Blue watch told us that they didn't even get into the building as it had been deemed unsafe due to the gas and thinking it was going to collapse. I remember when we had first got to the Tower and were waiting in the holding area there were thoughts and concerns amongst us about hoping the Tower wouldn't collapse, but it wasn't something I thought about when it came to going in. Your training kicks in and desire to get in and do everything you can. We have never seen anything like the Grenfell Tower Fire before and hopefully we never will again.

Signature: J HILL  
2018

Signature witnessed by:

**OFFICIAL**

MET00010919\_0016