

**WITNESS STATEMENT**

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

Statement of: HOLMES-LEWIS, KYLEI

Age if under 18: OVER 18 (if over 18 insert 'over 18') Occupation: FIRE FIGHTER

This statement (consisting of 20 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: KYLEI HOLMES-LEWIS

Date: 27/04/2018

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

This statement has been compiled from a recorded interview on 13/12/2017 taken by DC ROBERTS and DC BEACH. Also present was Fire Brigade Union Rep Gareth BEETON, and from a further interview to complete this statement on 27/04/2018 with DC BEACH and Fire Brigade Union Rep Simon Kenton

My name is Kylei HOLMES-LEWIS, I am a firefighter based at H24, call sign for Brixton fire station, Red Watch.

I give this statement voluntarily and it is an account of my involvement as a fire fighter at the Grenfell Tower fire on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> June 2017.

The people I shall mention within my statement are my crewmembers, fire fighter Nick KALIRAI, now transferred out, fire fighter Nick WHITING, fire fighter Methusael SONSON and Watch Manager John STEVENS. Station manager Pat GOULBOURNE (bridgehead) and Station manager Alie who gave the briefing at that 8<sup>th</sup> Floor.

On Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> June 2017, I started my shift at 20.00 hours at Brixton Fire Station. At the start of the shift, we had our roll call and carried out normal station routines, which includes, detailing the riders for the pump or ladder to make sure that everyone knows their riding position. We also completed checks on our fire equipment inventory. The watch room attendant completed checks on the bells and the lights and

Signature: Kylei HOLMES-LEWIS  
2018

Signature witnessed by:

all the health and safety checks and personnel checks to make sure we're ready for duty and equipment is in good working order. At the start of the shift, the driver would check the pump and operation of the fire engine.

On this shift, I was on the pump ladder H241. There were five people on the ladder including myself. Our position on the ladder was as follows:- I was BA comms, I had communications on my BA set as number one communicator with Alpha control which is our entry control point. The BARIE, BA set connected to your BA set woven into your facemask. It is a bone conductor and it transmits vibrations from your skull and transfers it as radio communications. Before going into a building or before you're committed into a job, it is my job to relay messages back to Alpha control and vice versa as BA COMMS.

Nick WHITING was the driver and pump operator, who would normally establish the water supply and pump to the main jets and hose reels. Nick KALIRAI was spare, in the middle. A BA crew is normally a crew of two or depending on the job maybe three, if we are not going as crew of three, which depends on what job we attend, the spare officer is free to help out, the incident commander would designate a specific job or task for them to do.

Meth SONSON was in the Watch room. He was the watch room attendant ( we say "in the box"), managing the messages from the tele printer, answering the door, and relay any messages to the officer in charge, the governor John STEVENS on that shift.

Whoever is in the mess does the cooking. I think Nick was in the mess and he did Lamb Bhuna curry as I remember having the curry. After that we watched a bit of TV. Our normal down time is from midnight to 06:40, policy states we have to stay up until midnight. I went to bed, I remember lying down, fell asleep and then being woken up I think about half twelve or one by the bells and the lights and then looked at my phone to know what time it was, I hadn't had much sleep at all.

I got up put my shoes on ran out of the room to the pole house, I dropped down the pole straight to the appliance bay room to find out what we had. Everyone congregated to find out what we had.

Though I was not the driver, I had a quick glance of the slip the governor had once Nick had seen it. I cannot remember exactly what the slip said but there was something relating to a 40 pump fire and lots

Signature: Kylei HOLMES-LEWIS  
2018

Signature witnessed by:

and lots of call signs and I thought this is something big and serious.

The slip was given to the driver. I remember everyone was sort of like putting their gear on and getting on the appliances. We made sure that we had our gear and stuff ready and just general checks we do before we got on the truck and we made our way. I had my fire gear, which consist of boots, leggings, and tunic and flash hood/fire hood and my helmet, gloves, radio and torch.

I cannot remember the exact briefing we got from the watch manager but he said something about 40 pump fire guys. He just reiterated what was on the slip to say make sure everyone knew what it was because some people haven't looked at the slip. He is like yeah a 40-pump fire you know loads of call signs and then we just went on our way.

At that time, my thoughts and feelings were just that this was something very big, let's do it. As a BA team, I was thinking it was going to be Meth and I.

We do not rig with BA until we arrive at the scene.

We went left out of station down towards Stockwell Vauxhall that way and then getting over the river as quickly as possible, then after that I don't remember the twists and turns. Nick is very good at driving he's good at his topography as well so he had a very good idea where he was going and obviously, the MDT is got a map on it as well, the computer on the appliance. I cannot remember the time we left the station; this can be checked on the call slip. On the way I saw one other fire engine crossing us on our path.

We knew it was a big thing because the radio was going crazy. We had hand held radios as well as the radio in the appliance. We were on the Southern channels [REDACTED], when we crossed the river we changed to [REDACTED] and we could hear more radio traffic, it was very busy. I cannot really remember in detail but I remember hearing call signs that were obviously across the river and confirming they are status 2, which means they were on their way to the incident. That is all I remember hearing, It is a quite blur but we were talking amongst ourselves about what it could be, making sure that we knew our plans, what we will do and that is it really.

Signature: Kylei HOLMES-LEWIS  
2018

Signature witnessed by:

The journey to the scene was fast, it was early the morning and it was quiet, hardly any traffic, we wanted to get there as soon as possible. We could hear updates and stuff that was going on and we realised that it was even more serious than we first thought. We drove on bells, as we travelled we talked about what it could be, I don't know the area. No one else knew the area so we're just thinking okay well there's loads of call signs on it must be massive. I'm thinking in the past we've been to like sort of Warehouses which involved loads of machines and loads of loads of appliances and I was wondering and thinking oh it could be like a massive Warehouse.

The RVP point was on the call slip so we knew where to park our vehicle, but also there were loads of people around, so when we turned up we knew we were in close proximity of Grenfell.

I cannot remember the exact location we parked, we turned into the RVP point and we saw loads of people in the road pointing at the building and screaming, shouting. When we parked, there were about 100 people on the street, looking on, pointing and waving, we were in shock.

We pulled into a clearing I believed it was Lancaster Road. There was a building and trees blocking the view so we couldn't see it properly until we came into a clearing then we saw the building in between like two buildings. It was busy, we had to make sure that we parked correctly so that if any appliances came after us they could get through. There were ambulances ahead of us, loads of fire engines already parked up so we just put it in a good space so that it was out of the way but close enough as possible to the building because you couldn't drive closer, so we had to walk through.

What I remember seeing to the right hand side of me was just pandemonium it was crazy there were loads of people out and the building was on fire and I said "oh my God, its residential, it's on fire, all of it."

I remember thinking okay it's a tower block and it's 2 in the morning and there are people inside so it's residential that's what I remember thinking. I could see smoke and flames, the building was alight and it looked like a match. That's the best I can describe it looked like a match someone had lit a match and they're holding it vertically, the building was like a match, the yellow flame was visible, the whole building was alight and there were smoke and flames. The tower was alight from the third floor almost

Signature: Kylei HOLMES-LEWIS  
2018

Signature witnessed by:

from the base to the top. Once off the engine, we all put on our sets straight away because we knew that we were gonna go in so we just made sure we had our fire hoods on and stuff on - all the BA.

We had our NRB (nominal roll board) and stuff like that handed it to our governor. He would have been liaising with the other officers. I cannot remember the sequence but he would have made sure that his crew were all accounted for so. He told us to wait and then he went to hand in our roll board.

When we jumped off the truck, I remembered one white male, probably like 40 or something came up to me. He said "you need to help these people because I got out and I live there and I made it out but you need to help all these people and you need to go there quickly," he was really flustered, asking for help and saying people are dying.

We reassured him that we were on our way to provide help whilst strapping up our BA sets and walking along and he continued to plead with us to help these people. I just remember thinking we need to get there quickly. There were members of the public obviously trying to talk to us, and just telling us what to do, so it was very very frantic but I remember focusing on the building and the governor just sort of rounded us all up and said let's go.

I remember the building was on to the right hand side of me as we pulled up in the appliance after turning left into a road. I remember looking to my right and seeing the building but I can't remember what road it was. The governor said to us stick together and just follow him to go round to the main bit of the building, which from memory I think was the sports hall. We were to wait for further instructions. As we walked around to the sports hall bit I saw all the ambulance paramedics had laid out their salvage sheets and their equipment in triage sections.

There were other firefighters and we waited for a little bit before we went to the actual base of the tower. Firefighters grouped together in an orderly fashion so we could walk to the base of the tower.

Walking towards the tower, we turned; I believed to the left and went down towards the tower. There were just lots of people we just made sure that we were sticking together.

Signature: Kylei HOLMES-LEWIS  
2018

Signature witnessed by:

I don't know the time nor can I remember how long it took us to walk from where we parked the appliance to the base of the tower.

There was a short wait for about 2 or 3 minutes but it might have seemed a bit longer as a lot was happening at the same time, trying to list the officers in charge, looking at the building and thinking what was ahead of us.

I thought to myself this is crazy. As we walked to the base of the tower, you could see all the debris falling. There was like big chunks of concrete and window frames falling down, it looked like a war zone it was crazy. There was like a long slope/ramp bit and the sports hall is behind us now and the tower is somewhat now more to our right hand side. Loads and loads of people, firefighters, ambulance, police were there so we walked from the sports hall to the right hand side of us. We walked to the base of the tower and there was a long queue easily 50 to a 100 firefighters waiting at the base of tower.

We saw people being carried out. I remember seeing a guy, not sure of his age but he was an adult male being carried out by two officers with white helmets so I know they were senior officers. They were carrying him under his head and his knees and trying their best to make sure he was taken away from the falling debris. They were literally dodging debris such as bricks and concrete. He looked unconscious, lifeless, and floppy. I was thinking this is crazy, he looked ashen grey and that was right at the base by the atrium bit the glass door.

There was lots of debris falling, the riot police were using their shields to cover and shield I don't remember seeing anyone hanging out of the window or anything like that people coming out. It was crazy, I've never seen anything like that kind of pandemonium. I was just talking to myself and saying just focus and stick with your team. I made sure I was still with Brixton team for obvious reasons. We waited for a bit and they broke us into groups of 10 to shift us into the base like the foyer bit of the building. We were covered by riot shields. I did not want to split off from my team, but I was separated for a short time as they were taking in groups of 10 and I was the 11<sup>th</sup> person but I made sure I reconnected to my group once inside the base of the tower in the foyer.

I didn't know anything about the building so I was just thinking this is crazy it was tall it was on fire it

Signature: Kylei HOLMES-LEWIS  
2018

Signature witnessed by:

was hot things were raining down, people were just running in and running out dragging people out it was ridiculous.

When closer to the tower, the fire was bigger, in your face, it was warmer and noisier and there was more commotion. It's in your face now and then you realise how tall it is when you look up and you see the whole thing basically so it's more intense. You could smell the smoke, hear the pumping of the appliances, firefighters talking and shouting as casualties were being brought out. I was thinking, this is a serious incident, this is a big job, and we just need to get in there.

I am a very calm person because in situations like this you need to be focussed; you need to know what you are doing. I was shouting or panicking, I was composed thinking of what I need to do and what is needed to be done.

This is the biggest job that I have ever attended. I talked to myself reassuringly, 'you need to make sure you are on point Kylei. Make sure that you obviously stick with your team and just focus' that's exactly what I was feeling that's how I talk to myself in those situations. I wasn't going crazy, not overly talking just making sure I was present, aware and focused and that is exactly how I felt.

The rest of my crew were by my side, we all made sure that we were together which is what the governor insisted we just make sure we stuck together. There was not much talking as everyone was in awe of what was going on.

At the base of the tower there were firefighters everywhere, it was packed, there were so many of us waiting to go in. I thought that by the time we got in there maybe the foyer would be a bit empty but it was the opposite because we were packed like sardines waiting to go to entry control.

While we were there, it was quite surreal, we saw people being dragged out. I saw many kids, some of which looked really grey, maybe unconscious or dead. Parents were crying, a woman was screaming for her children saying that she didn't know where her son was. I distinctively remember a boy who was with his mum who was crying, her face was all like ashy and so was his, he said "my brother is dead." I was with Nick, Joe and the Brixton lot and we just looked at each other. We were like man, it was serious

Signature: Kylei HOLMES-LEWIS  
2018

Signature witnessed by:

hearing something like that and the way he said it and his facial expression when reliving the fact that his brother was dead and I was like man this is crazy.

I did not want to get upset and emotional we had to help these people because there were loads of people being brought out and people firefighters were putting their helmets on them just so they could get people out.

We kept on getting updates from the officers in charge about the situation at the Bridge Head. We were advised to make sure that there was a walkway for moving casualties in and out of the tower.

When we got into the foyer by squeezing through some windows that they had made like an entry door, the window was smashed. It was very tight and we had to be pushed through especially with our BA sets on because it was very narrow.

I remember Danny COTTON the Commissioner came in with another officer and she actually spoke to us and gave us some updates and said she was there with us and for us to just do our best. I remember her coming in again with another guy as we waited. She said that this was nothing like we had seen before and that we should stick together and do the best we can in this situation We were told to wait for more instructions and just be patient, because they were trying to organise things.

I cannot quite remember but we were told we had to move because the bridge head was compromised. We were advised to hydrate ourselves. We all had to come back out that's when people had to be pushed out of the little skinny sort of door/window thing.

We had to go under riot shields, one person in front and the other holding the shoulder of the riot officer as we were shielded onto the kids' playground a small area right outside the tower in front of the foyer. This was a safer area, which was right in front of us when we came out and there's a little sort of walkway down the side where most of the riot police were lined up. We went into the grass area, which was a waiting area for BA wearers. People on the ramp were shouting, there was the ambulance section and there was a covering jet.

From the view of the kids play area where we were at that time, that part of the building was not on fire as

Signature: Kylei HOLMES-LEWIS  
2018

Signature witnessed by:

the rest of the other side. The top towards the 5<sup>th</sup>6<sup>th</sup> it was starting to look like smoky on the side, with little pockets of fire, there was more debris raining down as further up there were flames

There was a fire engine to the right, so when you go down the walkway to the left hand side you go round to the right of the grass area, the fire engine was pumping water. There were loads of lines of hose coming out wrapped around the children's playground. There were other firefighters and ambulances as well.

Behind us, there was a ramp or walkway where members of the public were shouting. To the right of us on the kid's playground, there is a low-rise building to the right and the riot police were there (see sketch) KHL/1

It was weird when we first went into the building it was dark and when we came out because the bridge head was compromised it was daylight and I was disorientated with time so I didn't know what time it was, I knew that the sun was rising it was like dawning or whatever and I was thinking wow.

I met up with the rest of the Brixton lot and obviously bit of Lambeth and other crews that we recognised. I can't remember how long we were out there but it felt very short time

We were then paired up into BA Team, but I don't know the names of the senior officers as there were several of them around. I was with Richard KNIGHT. We were told we had to go undercover of the riot shield so we can go back into the area we were before we came out.

We walked straight through, past the foyer bit where we were standing initially through the little corridor. There is a toilet on the right hand side, also there is like a set of glass doors that leads to the glass atrium kind of foyer bit. A smaller narrow opening like a hallway connecting where we were waiting leading into the glass atrium area where the entry control bit was.

This was the first time we actually came through into the main area where the entry control point, was

The entry control are the people who are in control of deploying BA wearers. On this occasion, the name

Signature: Kylei HOLMES-LEWIS  
2018

Signature witnessed by:

I remember was Pat GOULBOURNE who was station manager at the time.

The atrium had a high ceiling with all glass sides, the lights were on and visibility was perfect. There were lots of firefighters been given their briefing by entry control .The brief was to go the 4th 5th and 6th floor, for fire search and rescue. I went with Richard KNIGHT.

We do not have to take anything but we decided to take a sledgehammer and a small axe. I am not sure what KNIGHTY took but we both had something with us. Having received the brief, I repeated it to reconfirm the instructions so we understood what we were doing.

We handed over our tally, went under air by putting the facemask on and ensuring everything is covered and we made our way up the stairs

From Entry Control Point (ECP) up the stairs it's weird the layout was weird because you get to the mezzanine stairs to go into the main stairwell. We made our way up the staircase and the first staircases were open, not covered, meaning you can see through to the atrium, which is the glass area up to the mezzanine floor. We could still see people downstairs, waiting to be committed as we walked up. We had to walk along a platform like a walkway and you can still see over.

So we went up the stairs then we went along the corridor and we turned right into the main sort of stairwell and then that's when it was like hot it was humid it was like a rain forest. It was raining inside because all the stairs were just wet. Water was dripping and we got wet within seconds, I could hear the water, just like a waterfall, hoses were winding along the stairs and it was very congested. Turning right takes you into the main stairwell, I think there was doorway cannot remember much about the description of the door or whether it was opened or closed I think there was hose running through. What I am certain about was turning right and found myself in the stairwell.

There were hose everywhere. Loads of firefighters on the stairs. Walking up the stairs and I remember looking at KNIGHTY and thinking this is crazy. I asked if he was cool and he said yes because it was weird. We walked silently to our floor, made sure we were conserving our air just checking our gauges all the time, taking in all information just in case because I know I will have to give our brief on return to

Signature: Kylei HOLMES-LEWIS  
2018

Signature witnessed by:

ECO.

We thought that the stairs carried on but the stairwell was a new layout, it was all closed in and it was just one set of stairs.

We continued walking up making sure we didn't fall over, there was clothing, shoes and lots of stuff along the stairs.

In describing the staircase, it was darker than the first flights of stairs leading from the atrium. I had my BA set on so I could not smell anything. I can still see but it was less visible than first flights. I cannot give precise width of the staircase but it was narrow not a lot of room to move with people and hoses along the route so we walked in single file. I can't remember how many firefighters or how many were going up and down but there was constant movement on the stairs.

At this point, I could see the floor numbers as it was written on the wall, I could still see KNIGHTY in front of me, we carried on walking until we got to the 4<sup>th</sup> floor.

The floor layout in the building was weird because you have the atrium, mezzanine floor so it was not natural to know what floor we were on and we can only tell by the writing on the wall.

Up to the fourth floor stairwell, you can still see, it was rainy and warm and you can still see each other. My thoughts at that time was to get to our assignment, I was wet, hot and carrying a sledge hammer and I had to be careful of my footing. On my way up, I saw a dead dog. I cannot remember exactly what floor but it was between the first and the fourth floor.

I was just sticking to my brief to get to the 4<sup>th</sup> floor and though I can see the doors as I was making my way up I cannot recall any details of doors as my attention and focus was to get to the 4<sup>th</sup> floor.

On the fourth floor, from the main stairwell it takes you onto the landing. The door into the landing is like a fire door. I cannot remember who opened the door probably KNIGHT did open it, I just remember walking onto the landing.

Signature: Kylei HOLMES-LEWIS  
2018

Signature witnessed by:

The landing was dark, there were no lights at all, we used our torches and there was hose leading towards the direction of the dry riser. . There were two lifts in front of you as you open the lobby door, to the left and right there were are some flats.

We started on the left hand wall as it is an easier brief to follow and we know where each other is. There was no one on that floor. I was thinking, let us just go and do what needs to done and search as quickly as possible.

There were hoses and branches, firefighter's helmet, items of clothing; I was thinking this is crazy.

In the first flat there was no smoke damage, I think the flat door was opened because we did not have to force entry. There was no one in there. I cannot remember the layout; all I can remember is that we searched the whole flat. No lights were on. On entering the flat it has like a corridor, which bends to the left, I could not see the fire from outside

We continued to search the flats on that floor and the conditions were the same as the first flat, we did not find anybody, they were empty and dark. I cannot tell the flat numbers of these flats on the fourth floor. I think there were three flats on each side.

We then went to the other side on the same floor to continue with the search, we searched the other flats as well.

The conditions on this side were also fine, it was dark not smoky and we were the only persons on that floor at the time. We searched and cleared it and went to the next floor.

On the way up the stairs to the 5<sup>th</sup> floor the condition was still the same, firefighters going up and down, still busy.

On arriving on the fifth floor, the door into the landing was closed, the layouts are the same, with the lifts and flats to the left and to the right.

Signature: Kylei HOLMES-LEWIS  
2018

Signature witnessed by:

The fifth floor was smokier, on the left hand side there was not much damage but on the right hand side all the flats were on fire, all the doors were burning and the flats were on fire. The front door was burning, it was very hot, flames everywhere. There was hose lying on the ground so I took the branch, which was charged from the dry riser and carried out some firefighting.

The first flat we went to on the left, we cleared the flat ensuring there was no one who needed help, searched all the room so we could safely say that we cleared it.

We did a methodical search of every flat ensuring they were clear. We had our firefighting media with us but we did not use it on the flats on the left.

We have to make sure we were safe enough to search for casualties. I used the branch to clear the way into the flat pushing the doors down using the axe, putting water on the flames. We couldn't see any sign of glass in the windows as they had been blown out completely, there was nothing there.

We got into what looked like the big living room area and everything was either burnt away or on fire, orange flames, we could see the opening from where the window had been and we could see day light.

There was rubble, debris and ash everywhere, flames everywhere, the windows were all gone.

We made sure we did our search of every flat and ensured there was no one inside. Through this, I always ensured that KNIGHT was in my eyesight and we could see each other. Our comms were a bit funny so I made sure I could see him. BA COMMS was inaudible, just a noise and buzzing. At first, I could hear kind of muffled words and stuff and then towards the end it was going crazy there was so much traffic on the comms so it was somewhat hard for me to listen to my partner and also listen to comms simultaneously.

In the end, I couldn't hear anything on the comms so I was just making sure that I was focusing on what my partner was saying at the time.

Signature: Kylei HOLMES-LEWIS  
2018

Signature witnessed by:

All the flats on that side of the tower had orange flame, very hot and we did not find any people, the flats were empty.

I was thinking it was good there was no one in these flats. My normal training kicked in and my thought process at that time was to call on my knowledge and stick to the procedure, make sure we were always together and have each other's back, stick to our brief and do what we need to do, that was what I was thinking right throughout and to make sure we get out.

We then proceeded to the sixth floor; the staircase was busier going up, more crews working. The visibility was still dark, water dripping down like rain.

We knew that when we got to this floor the situation would be like the same situation on the fifth floor. Flames were strong on the fifth so sixth was expected to be the same on the right hand side

Let hand side was smokier, we had to use the torch more but it was on the right hand side that the fire was fully ablaze.

No one was on this floor until we met up with two of our boys (Nick WHITING and Nick KALIRAI) on our way out on the sixth floor. The flats were still on fire so we handed them our branch.

We briefed them on what we had done and asked what they had done so we knew and was aware of what had happened.

We checked our gauges to see how much air we had to make sure we had sufficient to get us back down the stairs because we were now on the sixth floor and had to get all the way back down.

I didn't see any casualties, I didn't find anyone on that first wear, it was just literally firefighting and search and rescue basically.

As far as I can remember when came down, we left some of our equipment in situ just for the next crew because we knew that they would need it, we came down the stairs all a bit of a blur it's so long ago now.

Signature: Kylei HOLMES-LEWIS  
2018

Signature witnessed by:

There were so many things going on but, we came out and it was day light, I remember when we were in the flat it was day light, I remember thinking oh my gosh like how long have we been in here, so we walked down the stairs and back out the way we came. The journey back down was same thing, very slippery, more crews passing us on the way, lots of shouting.

Went back down to the entry control point, relayed our findings, collected our tallies, shut down our BA sets and then came back out, under the cover of the riot shields to the BA waiting area, which was behind the children's playground.

We had to go and get another cylinder. There were loads of cylinders, loads of sets and stuff lined up.

My personal radio was working but my BARIE comms set was congested and messages were hard to pick up. The BA channel is always on channel 6 but they might have changed it to whatever they saw fit due to the traffic. The channel used would have been confirmed at entry control anyway before we went up the tower.

The whole experience was surreal, I was not scared or anxious, I was just glad that me and KNIGHTY came out and we were fine with no injuries. I have never dealt with anything like this so there is no incident to compare it against, this is worst/biggest fire I have attended. I cannot give a time estimate of how long we were in the tower because in situations like that, a minute can seem like 10 and I don't want to mislead. I can only say I went in at night-time and came back out when it was light for my first wear.

We went back to the grass area by the BA holding area(see my exhibit KHL/1), and then went to get some drink We walked past the kids' playground and the tower towards the leisure centre and went to do our fire ground 'A' test to complete our change of cylinder for our next commitment, and went to find out where everyone was from our watch. I changed my cylinder and wanted to get back in straight afterwards. My cylinder was SDBA. Those with a bigger lung capacity can use it up more quickly than others, it all depends on your work rate.

It can last for 34 minutes but we made the decision to come out when we had as much air as possible to

Signature: Kylei HOLMES-LEWIS  
2018

Signature witnessed by:

get us out safely, which is at our discretion. Generally, it depends who you are working with and we made the decision to get out when we did collectively as per training.

Now it was daylight, the condition of the building at this time was still ferocious the building was still burning and well alight. The night view was more of a glow, with the day light, you can see more of the orange flame. I felt it would have died down but the fire was still going, you could see pockets of blue flames and hear little explosions on the upper floors. The fire had spread, wrapping itself around the building. I could see people from the window standing in the BA holding area from the kids' playground area. It was very weird that night very odd.

There was a bit of time between when we came out the tower to when we went back in. There were so many firefighters waiting to get in so it took us sometime until we were deployed again.

Meth and I walked back down the walkway, the tower was to the right, we saw salvage sheets with apparently dead people in them, near the low rise building opposite the tower. I saw some feet and a blue sheet with a body under it and some blood near the feet and it was leaking from the sheet.

My second entry into the tower was through the same route as explained before. The ECP was still on the ground floor. This time I was more familiar with the setting in the atrium and less of a surprise, I walked in with more purpose having been in before and knew where we were going. We went straight to entry control to wait for our next brief. There was equipment still lying around, the foyer was quite wet. As it was daylight I could see things more clearly, about 20 to 30 fire fighters waiting, it was wet and there was hose everywhere.

They set up a pump to get the water out so it was noisy. It was very busy fire fighters waiting to be committed by entry control. Whilst waiting I cannot remember seeing any casualties coming down on my second wear. I only saw firefighters in the lobby. Water was ankle deep.

I believe Pat GOULBOURNE was in charge of entry control. It was still in the atrium area, as I remember seeing him and getting the briefing from him. He asked if we had been in before and we said yes, and he said we are going in to firefight and search and rescue as before. I can't remember his exact words but he

Signature: Kylei HOLMES-LEWIS  
2018

Signature witnessed by:

said we should search everything and do what we need to do to clear as many floors as possible, make sure we use our air properly. We confirmed our brief back to him.

Our brief was to go to the eighth floor, which was another waiting area, and await further instructions. As it turned out it was the same thing, firefight search and rescue. I think I remember that Station manager Alie was on the eighth floor as I remember his name on the board.

We had to walk up to the 8<sup>th</sup> floor, the conditions were still the same, very wet on the stairwell and it was more congested as there were more people going up and down the stairs, fire fighters and hose. It still felt like it was raining inside due to the water coming down from the upper floors.

The visibility on my way from the lower floors was ok but it got progressively less visible as I made my way upwards. I cannot remember what floor it got worse but I can say it was closer to the eighth floor. There was a long time between my first wear to this so the fire I believe had gotten worse and so had the condition on the stairwell, I cannot elaborate on the density of the smoke or type of smoke but I can say it was getting worse the further up we went.

The higher up the stairwell it became more smoke logged because more people had opened the doors letting the smoke into the stairwell and it was hot, not unbearable, but it was hot and dimly lit.

With my BA set on I could not smell the smoke but I could see it. There was lots of equipment laying around as well. I did my gauge check to see how much air I had used as we were walking up. I did not have any equipment with me this time.

Some of the floor numbers were still visible on the wall which let us know what level we were at. Some people had written the floor numbers on the wall as well which helped because the smoke had covered the original floor numbers.

With regards to the electricity, the lower floors were dimly lit but on the second wear the further up we went it was quite dark but that could be because of the smoke so I cannot comment if the electricity was working or not. I could not tell what lights were on but I could tell that the visibility changed the further

Signature: Kylei HOLMES-LEWIS  
2018

Signature witnessed by:

up we went. Through all this, I could see as far as my partner who was right in front of me.

We got to the eighth floor, I cannot tell if the door was open or shut as firefighters were moving in and out.

Upon getting onto the landing, there were lots of firefighters standing around and it looked like a mini holding area where firefighters were waiting to be briefed and committed.

In the waiting area and there were more firefighters, there was an officer in charge who was splitting people into groups. Whilst up there I picked up a branch and an enforcer to assist me.

We waited in hallway by the lobby area and I went into a flat with Meth on the left hand side to wait, as the landing was very crowded. There were other fire fighters inside this flat as well, waiting for further instructions

We waited for a long time to find out what to do; I sat down in the flat with a few other firefighters from other stations waiting until I decided to go and find out what was going on. I remember speaking to Dean LAWRENCE as he was leaving to go down the tower. People were doing different things some were trying to manage the comms because the BA comms was very busy so people were relying on hand held comms.

I think it was station manager Alie who gave our brief to go to the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> to firefight, search and rescue. The deployment to these floors were determined if you were SDBA or EDBA.

The floors mentioned on my notes were not specific flats to search but I took it upon myself to make a mental note of the flats I was entering to enable me to give a detailed debrief following the event.

On the ninth floor, it was darker, there was more traffic on the stairs and it was congested. I remember seeing EDBA crews as they have different cylinder covers, heading to or coming from the higher floors.

I cannot remember opening the door onto the landing or walking straight through, but again I saw many doors that day. It was very smoky in the lobby areas, the flats on the right hand side of the lifts were on

Signature: Kylei HOLMES-LEWIS  
2018

Signature witnessed by:

fire.

I remember picking up an enforcer on the 9<sup>th</sup> floor, we started on the left hand side, methodical searching starting from the left hand side, I used the enforcer to put the door in as they were all locked. We knocked but no one answered. We put the doors in anyway to make sure that no one was inside the flats. Meth and I took it in turn to put the doors through to conserve our air.

The first flat we got into was cleared, no one in there, it wasn't like smoke logged, but it was dark with no lights on and we used our torches.

The next flat was the same thing really, used the enforcer to put the door in. Some of the doors were harder to put through than others but because we took it in turns, it made it more manageable.

At this point, the adrenaline was going and I had to make sure that I got into each flat. At one point Meth was doing a door and I think he was getting tired so I took over and I put it through and then we took it in turns as we were trained to do.

On the left hand side it was fine, no smoke damage, but it was dark, no lights in the flats. Whilst inside these flats I cannot tell what location they were in relation to the sections that you could see was on fire from the outside. I just knew on that floor it was to the left of the lift.

On the right hand of lifts, again as it was on my first wear, all the flats were well alight. The temperature was really really hot. Since the doors into the flats were burning and damaged by fire we did not have to work hard to get into these flats.

We did firefighting in these flats, the branch was picked up (as it was left in situ in the lobby area) as soon as we got on to the floor as we needed firefighting media to be able to do our search and rescue. When relaying/receiving information to/from other crews, they told us where they had come from and what they had left behind, we got as much information as possible. The branches were charged because we tested it before using them.

Signature: Kylei HOLMES-LEWIS  
2018

Signature witnessed by:

The comms were very very busy, there were so many people on the radio, we had hand held radios, but I communicated verbally with my crews because there were lots of interference on the comms. We went from one flat to the next, firefighting, searching, ensuring we were thorough and communicating with each other as we went along. As we carried out our tasks we also made sure, we took note of conditions that were changing around us and communicated this back to each other accordingly.

Every job is different, we have our basic training, which we refer to when confronted with situations as we were at Grenfell Tower. As with every other job this was different but application of procedures and training were no different and we just adapted accordingly and stuck to our brief as instructed.

I wrote down door number 51, 52, 53, 54,55 and 56 because I made a mental note of these door numbers to assist my debrief but I cannot tell what floor the numbers relate to, it may either be the 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> floor but I cannot say for certain.

I know went from the 8<sup>th</sup> 9<sup>th</sup> 10<sup>th</sup> and part of 11<sup>th</sup> but cannot say what floor they relate to.

Between the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> floor there was a black female casualty close to the banister by the half-landing bit of the stairs, where the stairs turn to go up the next flight of stairs.

I cannot remember what she was wearing, but I remember she was very large. She was not moving and looked like she was deceased. I remember seeing her foot, which was bare; I did not look at her very much so I cannot give any detailed description of her. I put on my notes (made after the incident) that I believed she was female but on speaking to the guys they said it was a male casualty.

I did not check for signs of life, I just literally saw her and walked to my right. I cannot remember if we were briefed about casualties on the stairs but I heard from other fire fighters that there was a casualty on the stairs. When we came out, we found out more information from our crews.

When I first saw her, I remember thinking this does not look very good, my initial thoughts were that she was dead, not moving and I reminded myself of my brief and to get on with what I have been tasked to do.

Signature: Kylei HOLMES-LEWIS  
2018

Signature witnessed by:

After seeing her, we went to the last floor. There were lots of confusion regarding the floor but by judging from the 8<sup>th</sup> floor I knew we went two further floors upwards.

I can't remember but we may have put in some doors on the 10<sup>th</sup> floor as well on the left hand side as all the doors were closed.

I remember before we came back out the last flat we searched was on the right hand side, we had to push down partition walls to make sure the hose could get round to put the pockets of fire out. All the flats were searched. Fires have different colours depending on the intensity.

I checked with Meth as he seemed to be getting frustrated and was pushing down the partition walls and whilst searching with his gloved hands and I had the branch for back up and for cooling hot spots. I was concerned that he would get hot and over exert himself as we had been putting in doors and working quite hard. Heat exhaustion can cause one to get disorientated, confused and sometimes angry and I was looking out for him and his welfare. We were both getting tired. I checked my gauge to check the air left, my notes said 110 bar so I knew we had sufficient air to get down as low pressure whistle sounds at 90bar approximately. I asked Meth if he was ok and if he wanted to go now. He nodded and said that he was. I knew he was tired from his response, it wasn't like him in terms of his usual energy levels.

Came out of the 10<sup>th</sup> into the stairwell and went back down to the bridge head. It was still dark and required our torches to illuminate the way. The conditions were the same as on the way up. I grabbed the hand rail to steady myself as we were stepping on hose and had 10 floors to go down. The ECP was still on the ground floor where we collected our tally and relayed info back to the ECO, I believe it was Pat GOULBOURNE.

Meth and I went to the leisure centre and the Sally Army Van. We relaxed our fire gear and took of our sets and met up with the Brixton crew. We stayed there for a long time and waited till all of Brixton were back. We looked at the building which was still burning, very surreal, I could see how tall the building was and how many windows it had - it looked massive. I had time to reflect on what floors we had been on, such as "that's the 10<sup>th</sup> floor and it's on fire. "There was more smoke, black smoke but it was a big

Signature: Kylei HOLMES-LEWIS  
2018

Signature witnessed by:

contrast from the night, Surrey's TL (Turntable ladder) was still putting on water.

Our fire engine was still where we left it. We went back to Paddington Fire Station for a debrief and I wrote notes up of what had happened which I exhibit as KHL/2.

I was asked if there was anything that could have made my job easier but I cannot give a direct answer to that question. Many things could have made our job easier, like another fire exit for instance, not just one stairwell used as entrance and exit. That could have helped many people and many firefighters. Saying that we had to deal with what we were faced with.

I have been a firefighter for 8 years, starting at Brixton on the 27<sup>th</sup> February 2011 following my initial training, which started on the 18<sup>th</sup> October 2010. I am a driver and trained standard breathing apparatus wearer (SDBA).

Brixton is a very busy station with varieties of shouts and I was able to complete my book very quickly and completed my development book in 2012. I took my diamonds off as we say. I love this station and it's like a second home. We are very enthusiastic and competitive, I am very proud to be part of the watch and I always have to be on point but I enjoy it very much.

I attended the BA course but can't remember the date but it was at Park Royal and I am up to date with all my basic training and refresher courses.

I was asked about my training at tower blocks and the biggest one we attended apart from Grenfell was the 20 Com fire which was in Shepherd's Bush. I was driving we drove to Richmond which was so far and as soon as we got there within like 2 minutes we got a call to the 20 pump.

We drove to Shepherd's Bush one-way system, that big tower block on the left hand side it was in the news anyway so that was the sort of tower block very similar in terms of walking up the stairs and you know search and rescue work and stuff like that but we have a lot of tower blocks round here and our surrounding neighbouring stations round as well so we were quite alright with sort of like high rise stuff.

Signature: Kylei HOLMES-LEWIS  
2018

Signature witnessed by:

**OFFICIAL**

Statement of: HOLMES-LEWIS, KYLEI

Form MG11(T)

Page 23 of 23

I have no knowledge or any experience with the cladding at all in any of the building that I have been in the past. Cladding has never cropped up, it was never something that was mentioned and I did not remember hearing that word.

I have never been to Grenfell tower before. I never knew where it was before the fire.

The word cladding had never cropped up in any of the building I had dealt with in the past, so I am not aware of cladding.

Signature: Kylei HOLMES-LEWIS  
2018

Signature witnessed by:

**OFFICIAL**