

WITNESS STATEMENT

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

Statement of: SIBTHORPE, IAN

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

Occupation: HART TEAM LEADER

This statement (consisting of 6 page(s) each signed by me) is true to the best of my knowledge and belief and I make it knowing that, if it is tendered in evidence, I shall be liable to prosecution if I have wilfully stated in it anything which I know to be false, or do not believe to be true.

Signature: I SIBTHORPE

Date: 20/04/2018

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

My name is Ian SIBTHORPE and I work for the London Ambulance Service as a HART Team Leader. This is my account of the events of the Grenfell Tower fire on WEDNESDAY 14th June 2017.

I have worked for the London Ambulance Service (LAS) for seventeen years, joining in January 2001. I am currently based at LAS Hart East, [REDACTED] and I have been at this site since 2006. My training and qualifications are as follows:

EDBA (Extended Duration Breathing Apparatus)

Swift Water rescue

Civil Responder 1

Safe Working at Height

PRPS Personal Respirator Protection Suit

Decontamination Unit

Bronze Commander

I started working with the LAS as a trainee technician at BROMLEY Training School in 2001. I completed my driving course as well as my technician course in the same year. Once completed I was then stationed at OVAL Ambulance Station. In 2005, I qualified as a paramedic having completed a course in FULHAM. This was a duration of eight weeks. As a paramedic, I am able to intubate, cannulate

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and give certain drugs which as a technician I wasn't able to do. At the end of 2006, I transferred to HART East as a Medic and have stayed here ever since. In 2012, I became a Team Leader in HART East.

As a team leader, I am in charge of six other Paramedics and technicians. I deal with the day-to-day running of my individual team. I will oversee jobs with my team as well joining them when they attend calls. I will also deal with any welfare issues relating to my team. I will attend category 1, 999 calls. Cat 1 999 calls are the most life threatening calls that come into the Ambulance Service.

Prior to attending the incident at Grenfell Tower, I had never been to the area nor did I have any knowledge of the area.

My shift on the night of the incident was 1830hrs to 0630hrs that was the second shift in a run of four. I arrived at [REDACTED] for the start of my shift and my team that night were:

Jenny DOIDGE

Mark HODSON

Kevin MANSFORD

John DELL

David HICKLING

Georgina SEAMAN (did not attend incident)

I have taken a call from my HART WEST colleague Clive DYETT who stated that there was a fire in a block of flats and HART East would need to attend. At that time the incident had not been declared as major.

I then activated my team, as West HART were already running to the incident. To activate my team I contacted my control room and read out the call signs of those who will attend the incident. I believe everyone on my team then left from [REDACTED]. That night I was on my own so I attended the incident solo in a vehicle call sign Y133. My call origin was at 0129hrs.

I then made my way from [REDACTED] base in a marked Land Rover Discovery on blue lights, despatched at 0145Hrs. The route I had taken to Grenfell Tower is along WHITECHAPEL ROAD, through to EUSTON ROAD and exited on A404/A4206 junction. This route was worked out through the

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Mobile Data Terminal (MDT). I then made my way through the side streets and approached via WALMER ROAD/ CLARENDON ROAD.

I noticed numerous fire engines parked in the road blocking the way through. I was then met by two police officers who stated that the road was blocked due to the amount of vehicles. It seemed as though most emergency services had arrived at the same place. I asked if I was able to get in through WALMER ROAD but they stated I was unable to do so. Due to the blocked road, I radioed my team to let them know it was not possible to gain entry the initial way and that it is best to park on SILCHESTER ROAD. I had a response from them confirming that they had received the message. I then turned around and drove into CAMELFORD COURT, then turned left onto SILCHESTER ROAD and parked by the Academy.

At 0205hrs, I arrived on scene at the tower. That night I was wearing my standard green (LAS) uniform. I then exited the vehicle and changed into my HART ground kit which consists of a green tunic and leggings.

My first sighting of the Tower was when I first parked up. I believe it was the East side of the building I could see and it did not appear to be fully alight. It looked as though the flames were going up in a 'V' like shape. I have marked this on the map that I exhibit as IPS/1 - the lower point of fire. The colour of the flames were orange and the fire was from the third or fourth floor. A few floors at the bottom of the Tower did not appear to be engulfed in flames. The fire looked to be spreading diagonally. There was also a lot of smoke, I could not state the colour of the smoke due to the fact it was night time and the street lighting affecting the perception of its colour at the time, I did notice that people were still in the Tower. Having now seen the Tower my initial thought was this would be quite a big job.

The rest of my team then joined me by my parked vehicle. They knew to meet me there as I stated this on the radio to them prior to arrival. I know that HART West were positioned on GRENFELL ROAD under the cover of the raised walkway, I have marked this with "HART West undercover" on my exhibit IPS/1. I knew they were there due to having called them and spoken to someone prior to attending.

I have tasked the team to get themselves kitted up and to bring forward any triage and treatment equipment they would need. This means that if they were not in ground kit then they would need to put this on. I was wearing this same green kit. Whilst they were getting themselves ready, I made my way to HART West to liaise with them and find out what was taking place and where we were needed. I noticed that in the area there were two or three fire engines and people were being brought out of the Tower. They

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had also set up a survival reception centre at the leisure centre where I have also marked this on exhibit IPS/1 as “casualty reception centre”.

I have spoken with Clive DYETT this was around 0220Hrs, who was my equivalent on HART West. He stated that there was at least one person who was deceased at that point and the casualty had been placed on the grass. I have marked this on exhibit IPS/1 as “initial deceased holding area”. DYETT also stated that the incident had now been declared major. This was done before my arrival on scene. My team by this point has now met me where I am positioned.

A major incident is when this is likely number of casualties will impact on normal service delivery of operations.

I have noted on exhibit IPS/1 where the fire appliances under the walkway were just outside of the Tower. I believe people being brought out of the Tower were coming out of the main entrance on the SOUTH side and brought past us and into the Leisure Centre. I noticed that there were no LAS apart from HART members where I was standing so believe if they were on scene at that time they were at the casualty reception centre. Most of the people that I had seen coming out of the Tower had soot on them. There were a few I believe to have been suffering from burns.

Whilst I was there a Bronze LFB Officer came out to me and stated that they didn't want to bring any more casualties to our location and wanted to meet us on the west side of the building. There was no reason behind why they wanted to stop bringing people out from the main entrance. The reasoning wasn't relayed to me at that moment in time. I have then told the LFB firefighter that casualties would still need to be brought out to us, at the south east corner rather than change it because we were right by the leisure centre and that is where we had set up casualty reception centre. The same firefighter then left and went to speak with his Incident Officer. We have then been going back and forth with this about three times. I did ask the question as to where we would subsequently move the casualty reception centre to if they stopped bringing people to us. At which point I was not given answer.

At some point, the LFB stopped bringing casualties out to us and they then started bringing casualties out on the other side where they then stated that casualties were not being met by any paramedics. I have marked this as “sector 2 triage point” on exhibit IPS/1. Due to this sector 2 was open by around 0300hrs initially by Y132.

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I have then tasked at least two more of my team to attend this position on the hurry up due to the fact that LFB were now bringing patients out in that direction. A casualty clearing was then set up on in sector 2.

Once I noted that the LFB had stopped bringing casualties out to sector 1, I have then made my way to sector 2. I have also sent more medics to sector 2 in order to help with the casualties as sector 1 was effectively now closed, although staff were still in the Leisure Centre should further casualties have presented at this location.

As things are running efficiently it has been brought to my attention that there are deceased people that are yet to be ROLED. I have taken it upon myself to ROLE (recognition of life extinct) the deceased. A deceased person was positioned in the bin store, another in TESTERTON HOUSE, a leg which was initially thought to have been a deceased person was by the main entrance of Grenfell, and a deceased by sector 2. These are the deceased that I have personally ROLED.

I was given information that there was a deceased person at TESTERTON HOUSE. I have been with David HICKLING. I cant remember who gave me this information but I have made my way from sector 2 walking via the walkway. I have marked on exhibit IPS/1 "deceased re PRF 243825947" Where this body was. I was told that this male had been moved up to an hour prior to being told where the body was.

The deceased was male in his fifties and I believe he was of middle eastern decent. There was an injury to the back of his head and to the right upper arm. I am unable to be specific with what the injuries actually were as I am unable remember.

I have completed a ROLE. A ROLE is completed by checking on the ECG (Electric) the result was flat line, no breath or heart sounds. Thus showing the person deceased. I have then filled in a dead triage tag, a dead triage tag requires me to fill in the time, date, location, my name. This shows a definitive time of when a patient recognised as life extinct for the coroner. I have then attached the tag to the body and covered him over with a plastic sheet. I can not recall where the plastic sheet was taken from.

There is a Police officer also in the area with me and I have pointed out where the deceased is and not to let anybody move it. As where he was in situ was the best place for him at the time. It was my understanding that the whole of the building where the deceased was in situ had been evacuated so this was a secure area for him to be in situ. I have then made my way from there to sector 2.

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I made my way back to sector 2 and I have proceeded to treat FF by helping to cool them down by getting buckets of water for radial cooling. They will then put their hands into these buckets which will help cool them down. I would instruct LFB officers to get the water buckets in order for other LFB to get them cooled down.

The pub on BRAMLEY ROAD had been opened and inside were a number of casualties and their families. I have been asked by the Bronze loading to go into the pub and find out the number of casualties that needed an ambulance. I have done this and reported my findings back to Bronze loading. There were quite a few ambulances parked on BRAMLEY ROAD, again I have highlighted this on exhibit IPS/1 with "ambulance loading point".

Just before 0600Hrs I have had a talk through with HART Bronze Simon WOODMORE stating I had been given information from LFB that there was a jumper in the car park. I have then made my way back to sector 1 with Jenny DOIDGE. Having got to sector 1 I have then been directed to the bin store, I have marked this on exhibit IPS/1 as "deceased re PRF 234825948". This person had been moved to this point two hours prior to the ROLE. This person had an amputation of their left leg from the pelvis. The Dead triage tag number is LD004436. I have attached this to his body, placed him in a body bag with the help of Jenny DOIDGE and left in situ.

The deceased was a male in his thirties and race was black. I have also stated the leg of this person on this same PRF ref: 234825948. With regards to his leg it was initially stated that his leg was another body positioned at the main door of the Tower. Myself and a FF took a riot shield each, which was found against the wall of sector 2, in order to cover myself from falling debris whilst I make my way to the deceased at the main door of the Tower. I discussed with LFB the plan to retrieve this body which was underneath an aluminium sheet.

A FF would be a spotter for us and let us know if there at any point there would be big pieces of debris falling in order to warn us. We have then proceeded to walk to the main entrance under the riot shields. I have seen the aluminium sheeting, looked under it and it wasn't a body, it was a limb, I have then physically picked up the leg and proceeded to go the way we came and gone under Grenfell Walk towards the bin store where I placed leg. I have then placed a triage tag on the limb, ref LD0044438. I have placed this limb next to the male who had a limb amputation, as I was not able to prove at the time that this leg belonged to that deceased person.

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I have left the bin store and gone back to sector 2. I checked the welfare of my staff and made sure they were hydrated. If there were any casualties that came out of the Tower I would triage them and deal with FF's also coming out of the Tower.

At 0830Hrs I have completed a hand over outside the Leisure Centre to day turn. I have handed over to Ayoola ARIYIBI. I have informed him of what has happened, what was where, what facilities were being used, where the deceased were in situ, the location of sector 2 and what the pub was being used for etc.

I have completed the paperwork eg. PRF and ROLE's and handed this to the Inspector as these needed to be kept with the deceased. The vehicle I had arrived in was being kept on scene and was going to be used by day team. I have then carried on completing my paperwork whilst dismissing my team.

I have taken over a vehicle from day turn and along with John DELL driven back to Cody Road. I am not sure of the time of arrival back at base. I have finished at 1130Hrs on 15th June 2017.

On 21st June 2017 I attended Grenfell Tower again. This time I was there to be on Medical Standby for the DVI Team. I have left from Cody Road travelled.

I have gone up to the thirteenth floor as a team of two rotating 1 hour on 1 hour off with the following members of staff:

David PARNELL

Jenny DODIGE

Kevin MANSFORD

Sean ROERIG

0600 to 1600Hrs.

Individual teams names were recorded at the entry point prior to entry to the building.

We have done the early shift and the late shift consisted of:

Vicky SHORT

Hayley NEWMAN

Gerrad FARRELL

Richard WELLER

Pete SWAN

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Their working hours was 1300Hrs to 2300Hrs.

We were tasked to be on standby in case anybody became unwell/collapsed. During my time within the tower, I did not have to treat anyone.

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