

WITNESS STATEMENT

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

Statement of: GOULBOURNE, PATRICK

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

Occupation: FIRE OFFICER

This statement (consisting of 2 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: PATRICK GOULBOURNE

Date: 22/02/2018

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

Further to the statement I provided in July 2017 whilst I was posted to North Kensington back in 1997 I recall attending Grenfell Tower for various reasons. We would attend the usual types of calls there such as smell of burning in the lifts, rubbish chutes alight that type of thing. I also recall carrying out dry riser there visits as well.

I went up into the stairwell inside the tower on numerous occasions during the course of my time on the Bridgehead. This fire was like nothing I have ever dealt with before. I knew we were up against it and I wanted to reassure the crews that I wasn't putting them into something I wouldn't go into myself. Not only that I wanted a continued awareness of what was happening.

So when I had as much BA committed as I could and I knew that I was not going to be putting more in I would take the opportunity to check what was going on.

I would say the 4th floor was about 50% alight, the 5th about 75% and as you went on up the floors were 100% alight. I put together a plan. EDBA would push on up the higher floors and deliver rescues and they would be protected by SDBA crews who would finish off searching the lower floors and fighting the fire where they could. FSG calls were coming in and our usual process is to deal with them as they come in however this meant that crews might be being sent up to, for example the 16th floor but would pass people

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that needed rescuing on the 11th floor and so I implemented systematic floor by floor clearance.

The staircase was the only access and egress point. Because we had not been able to get hose to the dry risers on most of the floors it meant we had to run hose up the stairs. So not only did we have firefighters on the stairs, we had to deal with hose, and casualties coming down. It was therefore important to try and keep the stairwell as free from smoke as we could. I was utilising crews not in BA to manage hose on the stairs and again it was important to keep them protected.

The only way to make sure we didn't completely comprise the stairs was to co-ordinate access. Firefighters would enter the lobbies and would then have to shut the door behind them to allow minimal escape onto the stairs. We would drop down on our bellies whilst crews entered the lobbies to allow for the smoke release and to allow it to clear due to the pressurised stairwell. I was acutely aware of the effect the escaping smoke would have on the stairwell and the people on it.

I recall at one point, crews were trying to fix a burst length of hose, I believe it was on the 11th floor, and I picked up the hose and continued to try and knock the fire back.

When crews were deployed with Thermal Imaging Cameras this would have been noted on the BA board. I can't say that every crew had one with them but they were certainly used.

There was a firefighters lift in the building but it was not useable. There was no floor above the 5th floor that wasn't alight. A person could not have come out of the lift into anything other than smoke or fire and therefore death. I am aware that we using aerial monitors and ground monitors on the outside of the building expect they were being used for exterior facade firefighting as we were delivering internal firefighting.

Firefighters are aware of that sandwich panels can affect rapid fire spread but unless you are a fire engineer it cladding is not something that firefighters discuss.

With regards to the Stay Put policy it is safer if the fire is not in your flat, but is elsewhere in the building, to stay put and raise the alarm. The building design should, and normally will, protect you, for 30-60

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minutes by which time a tactical plan will be in place and you will either be given instruction to leave or you will be rescued. It has worked for a number of years over 1000's of fires until that night. If the fire is in your flat, get out, stay out and shut the door behind you, which will then help protect everyone else around you.

On the night I was fully aware that Andy ROE had changed the Stay Put policy and the rationale behind it. The conditions within the building forced that change and at that point I had already begun systematic searching due to the sheer volume of people.

As a rule we train for high rise quite a lot on station, that is what we have the towers for. More fire fighters are lost to high-rise than any other fire as they are inherently difficult and dangerous to deal with. They are our bread and butter in London. Most Inner London fire stations have high-rise on their ground now and it is essential that crews train. This training can be power point or practical training. I cannot say off the top of my head when my last training was but it is logged on our personal training record.

I took part in the back to basics training and again the dates for that will be on my training record.

In terms of pre-prepared fire-fighting plans for a high rise, our high rise procedures are exactly for that purpose. Certain blocks have anomalies, Trellick Towers being one such block, but in general our high rise procedures are fit for purpose. I have attended a number of fires in high rise buildings during my service and they are the building blocks to our tackling fires in high rise.

In terms of what was required at Grenfell if nothing else it needed to have a second stair case so that there was one for evacuation and one for fire fighters and the outlets to the dry riser were inaccessible and therefore useless for us.

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