

**WITNESS STATEMENT**

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

Statement of: DENNY, MICHAEL ANTHONY

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

Occupation: FIRE OFFICER

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This statement (consisting of 9 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: M.A.DENNY

Date: 02/03/2018

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

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I am the above named person and my address is known to Police.

This statement is an account of an audio recorded interview I gave to PC Beverly GAVIN (lead Interviewer) and PC Ken OMADOYE Saturday the 5<sup>th</sup> of January 2018 at Purley Fire Station. It is Related to the Grenfell Residential Tower fire incident that occurred on Grenfell Road. London W11 1TQ in the early hours of the morning on Wednesday the 14<sup>th</sup> June 2017. Also present was Fire Brigade Union Representative John LAMBE.

I have been a fire fighter since 2006 and was [REDACTED] when I joined the job. I went of training school and went to Lewisham on the Red Watch. I done my driving and Fire Rescue Unit (FRU) qualifications. I done boat and swift water rescue technician, line operations and Animal general rescue. From there I done Temporary promotion at Woodside for a Year and that was after I had done nine years at Lewisham. Then I went to Woodside Temporary and then I got promoted from where I went to Addington. Addington was where I was stationed when we went to Grenfell. My rank is crew a manager and I was this rank on the night of the Grenfell Tower incident.

I was the Crew manager on the back of a Pump ladder (Call Sign H261) I wasn't in charge of my own truck. We had three officers in that night. As crew manager I'd normally ride in charge of a Pump or Pump Ladder, but he Watch Manager was in so he was in charge of the Pump Ladder and the other crew manager was in charge of the Pump. so I was just riding the back of the Pump ladder. I have still got the

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2018

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FRU qualifications although I am not FRU stationed anymore, but I do out of duty FRU stations where I am in charge of an FRU. I have had all the other qualifications suspended where I am not at that station that does it any more. So when I go to these other station I don't have the line and large animal rescue and water rescue qualifications. I just go there be in charge of the FRU's if I got to them. The FIU is specialist rescue unit they tools/equipment for deal road traffic accidents and they have EDBA (Extended Duration Breathing Apparatus) Set equipment also.

On Tuesday the 13<sup>th</sup> of June 201 I started shift duty at Addington fire station at 20:00 hours. I then conducted my required duties, such as logging on the STARS system in the office making sure everyone was in confirmed and sending the figures back to command so they know everyone was in. do the role board for the next day, making sure all the crew are checking over the truck and have got all the equipment. The main thing is that you come in and you do your BA (Breathing Apparatus) i.e. test to your BA set. I cannot remember what training we did the night before. Also at the start of the shift we carried out a Roll Call and in which the Guvnor was present. In which everyone present at the Roll call are delegated with specific roles to perform in the event of a fire. So everyone knows what they are doing at the start of a shift all the time.

Those present at the Roll call including me were Watch Manager (Guvnor) Garry BROOKS, Fire Fighter Daniel MOORE (Driver), fire fighter Robert EVANS, and fire fighter Michael YIANNI. The Pump crew present were fighter Craig MARTIN, Fire fighter Bradley STOCKHOM, Crew Manager Emanon SLEVIN, and a stand by fire fighter as well I think. The Pump crew stayed and did not go to the incident. I also had some food and went to bed at about eleven o'clock i.e. 23:00 hours.

I was then in my room and awoken by a call, through the Tannoy telling you what trucks goes on the shout and the Bells were going off. I got dressed went to the Watch room looked at the tele printer which said it was a "40 Pump fire" and it was something I'd had never seen. I knew it was something significant. We got on the Pump Ladder and left and were called to "20 Pump relief" which 20 Pump going there to let another 20 Pumps leave. The 20 Pumps had been there for three hours already, so we didn't go on the bell (Siren) as you don't go on the Bell for relief. I don't think we relieved because they were that stretched. Anyway, everyone was dressed to go and we then made our way there, I think on Wimbledon way was where we first saw the Tower.

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2018

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We was on the Top of Hill and we could see it from there. A couple of the boys had the news about the tower on their phones and what we were going to was quite significant. Fire Fighter EVANS knew the area and directed the driver all the way there, it took about forty minutes to get there. We parked on the all clear Ladbroke Gove Road located East of the tower and we were then put into this Holding Area next to where we was parked pretty much.

This Holding Area was the main Holding Area for the reliefs Pumps and so all the 20 relief Pumps the Command Unit (A command and control of incidents) going to this Holding Area. The Command Unit had also bene set up at this particular Holding Area. We waited at this Holding Area standing and could see the Top half Tower in full view about a mile or three quarters of mile away maybe. The Top half was blackened, you could still see flames, there was a lot of smoke coming out of it and it was a clear summer's morning. I could not smell anything from where I was. At this time I was with crew that comprised of Watch Manager BROOKS, Fire fighters MOOR, EVANS, and YIANNI. We also joined my other crews from other station and one them was fire fighters Ed HAYNES from Bromley fire Station whom I knew.

We was just sitting there looking at is say for about fifteen minutes, they then came over and asked if there were any extra EDBA wearers in this Holding Area? In response I and fighter fire Ed HAYNES from Bromley both said "We were EDBA trained" and so they asked us to go straight down to the fire ground because they needed EDBA wearers. At that point I left Addington's crew who I was riding with and went down there with Ed. Got down to the fire ground and met up with a lot of FRU's that I knew and my old crew from Lewisham who had just come out. I had a chat with them and could tell by talking to them it wasn't a normal. Incident you could tell it was quite bad. I then done a "B" ground test on an EDBA set which that I picked, this is as the machine appliance I was riding only had SDBA (Standard Duration Breathing Apparatus) Sets. I was then told to sit down on grass area next to the entrance of Kensington Leisure Centre along with a group of eight other EDBA wearers from other station all read to go. It was about a mile between the Holding Area where we were parked and second Holding Area at the entrance of Kensington Leisure Centre

This was a second Holding Area and is shown on Map of Grenfell Tower marked as my Exhibit MAD/1 Refers. We were all waiting at this second Holding Area for about an hour and half waiting till we got the next call to go to the next holding area. During this time I was taking to other people i.e. other fire fighters and looking at the tower. Watching the East side of the tower from distance of about two hundred

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2018

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or three hundred yards I clearly saw still quite a lot of dark smoke coming out. There was also out breaks of fire on floors still pockets coming out of the windows. I don't remember any debris falling from the East side at that point. I remember all the way to the Top was blackened I am pretty sure I did not smell anything.

Before that we got briefed by someone in a White Helmet fire Brigade who got everyone round he "Thanked everyone and said "that what we was doing was taking quite a lot of risks and there was a lot of "working out of Policy" and he thanked everyone for what they was doing. I then sat for an hour waiting to get round to the next bit and it was quite frustrating because you just went to around there. In the end they send the Ten of us round there to another Holding Area. It was like Holding Area, Holding Area, and then another Holding Area by the Park. There was another office at this Holding Area there and I think it was called the Grenfell Office and it a sign a above it. So we sat at this office and we were waiting to go the next in and think it must have been about eight o clock in the morning by now. I remember just before I went into the last Holding Area at the bottom of the Tower inside the Tower, four fighter fighters carried out an Elderly Chinese gentlemen that was standing at a window. I think it might have Wimbledon's Crew that brought him out, or found him and I remember seeing him come past me as we went in.

The park was on our left so we had went under the Police riot Shields to get into the building. We then sat in a room at the bottom of the stairs outside the lifts and where the water was ankle deep. I believe this water was coming from the floors above, they was so many branches up it and was all coming down the stairs and from the flats as well. Also, where the fire had gone so far you might have some water main in the flats burst and it was coming down as well. Where we sat next to the lifts that was basically a queue waiting to get in, and up to the Bridgehead. I think we waited there for about twenty minutes but I might be out of my timing.

The Bridgehead was on the fourth floor at the time. Seniors Officers came down and kept everyone updated us letting us know what was going on and reassured us, I think it was Pat GOLDBOURNE which was quite good. I and Ed from Bromley, a lady from Chelsea and a Bloke from Battersea then got sent up to the Bridgehead on the fourth floor. As we went up the about three stairs ways to the fourth floor there was water falls coming down, there were first aid and kits dotted about everywhere. There was a little bit of movement of the stairs with fire fighters coming, there was no smoke, it was clear and the visibility was fine. There might have been some hose might but I can't remember. At this time we were a crew of

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2018

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four that comprised me, Ed from Bromley, a block from Battersea and girl from Chelsea and I was in front as the crew manager.

At the Bridge Head we were briefed they had a crew of four on the eleventh floor and our brief by the Bridgehead Commander (Name not known) was to go up there to give them firefighting support and rescue. The visibility in the Bridgehead was fine there was no smoke, there were a few people in there and the atmosphere was busy which is expected. It seemed it was the right place to have the Bridge Head at the time.

The brief was also to "Get up there and to what you can Search and rescue and put the fire out "I remember asking "Have we got a hose to take up there?" in reply they said "Just take one that is up there" Before we went up we were told there is a deceased quite large lady on the ninth floor. We were also told not to move her because of her size. So we knew she was up there as up, it wasn't very nice and didn't count the floors until we got to her. It should be said we undertook all the correct procedure required before we would leave the Bridgehead to go up into the Tower. Such as the handing over of the Tally to the entry control officer for the monitoring of our movements and breathing.

As we made our way up the stairway to the eleventh floor, there was no signage on the walls indicating what number of the floor you were on and I didn't see any casualties. There was water coming down all the way, all the time, the visibility was okay, but it deteriorated as you went higher which you'd expect. The stairways to floors four, five six was okay until the seventh floor where the conditions had deteriorated. On the seventh floor the hose was becoming an issue to get up the stairs, it was also smokier and darker. We had our small torches on and I think the communal doors to the floors were closed.

We got to the ninth floor, and came across the deceased lady at the bottom of the stairs and her head was facing us as we walked up. My drawing shown as Exhibit MAD/2 Refers. I think her head was faced down, and facing the rails of the stairs. I cannot remember what she wearing and would describe her a large Black lady. There was a lot of hose wrapped around her. The rest of the crew knew about her from the briefing, knew she was deceased and there wasn't really much we could do for her. I didn't want to tread on her and so I stepped over her. I then told the crew behind me and warned them she was there and that they try and be a bit careful. That they step over her and try to preserve the scene as much as possible. We was all fine getting over her. We then got up to the eleventh floor managed to get some hose and kept trying to push up and support the crew in front of us.

Signature: M.A.DENNY  
2018

Signature witnessed by: PC K.OMADOYE

But the hose was too wrapped we could not loosen it and so we plugged a hose into a Dry riser. By this time the crew we were supporting had left. We then went to the twelfth floor with two other hose. It was hot on the twelfth floor you couldn't stand up and this was a long time after the fire had started as well. We tried to search as much as we could, the ceilings had come down there was debris, and if there was any there they wouldn't be alive anymore. We tried to put the out fires to the best we could and there wasn't much left to search. When we came out it was later brought to our attention perhaps by word of mouth that a gas main had ruptured up there. This had got to be about half eight in the morning and remember standing up and getting out the Twelfth floor pretty sharpish we done our air and came back down. As we made our way down stairs we again came across the deceased lady and she was in the exactly the same position we first saw her.

We got to the Bridgehead and I gave my debrief to a Bridge head Commander at the time I don't who it was. I remember saying "That there is so much hose up there your're not going to able get any further up than you are now without taking a few steps back and getting all that hose out." You couldn't move up there for hose. I then went downstairs and made way make back to the grass Holding Area next to the entrance of Kensington Leisure Centre. I put down my BA set sat and at this time all my crew from Addington were in the SDBA (Standard Duration Breathing Apparatus) queue waiting to go in. I then sat down for a bit "not looking to great" I then saw chief Danny COTTON and the Mayor of London Sadiq KHAN walked past. Chief COTTON then came over and had a quick chat with me. It is something I remember COTTON said "hello and asked if I was alright and everything". Croydon's crew then came over to me they were coming out and of their crew members couldn't go back in and he had gone to an ambulance to get checked out. I don't know what was wrong with him. So they needed an extra crew member so I jumped onto their crew. The Croydon crew were tasked to go get all their line equipment. What they wanted them to do was to move the deceased lady from the on the ninth floor, because every was stepping over her, it was causing a congestion and for her dignity. We then picked line equipment stuff off Battersea's nearby FRU rather going back to Croydon's because it was parked too far away. I then done a "B" test on the EDBA (Extended Duration Breathing Apparatus) set on of the person I was replacing on Croydon's crew. Even though I wasn't line rescued trained any more or my line rescue was suspended, I was just going back in there to support them by carrying gear for them and stuff like that.

Instead of queuing to get back up we got taken right to the front of the queue at the entrance located on the West face of the Tower. We were a group a eight split, and paired into twos. I was paired with fire

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fighter Ben DOUCHIN from Croydon. I noted the lobby area and the stairs up to the Bridgehead were still the same conditions so there was water everywhere and the visibility was good. All eight of us got to the Bridgehead where briefed and told to "Go and move this lady" was we also had assistance from one of the Police BA wearers as well. I think the Police Officer was a body recovery person who was going to come with up and help move Lady. Then there was a little bit of a debate between two senior officers about using the EDBA crews to just the move the body. It was bit of back and forth, and I think they were both right in a way. In the end we didn't have to do that job, they sent a Police crew up to do it. I think they did. A Senior Officer (Name detail not known) then briefed us to go up to the Tenth floor and carry on putting fire out.

I and fire fighter DOTCHIN with our EDBA masks on then made our way up the stairs to the Tenth floor. There was water everywhere, the visibility was fine, you and could always see the walls. There were still hoses and quite for hoses up there. I think they had moved the deceased lady by the time we got there. I think they just moved her into a side door, or something like that. I am not sure, I couldn't tell you what they done with her. We were on the ninth floor fire fighting for about fifteen minutes using 70Mil hoses. We were then called on our BA radios and all our BA alarm went off. We were then instructed to make a tactical withdrawal. This withdrawal was to allow for an Ariel Pump to be use to tackle the fire from the outside. Due to this withdrawal a few people were frustrated because they had waited so long to get in there. At that time we felt we were in there and actually making a bit of progress putting a bit of water on. Then we got called out so they could flood it from the outside. We came out debriefed the bridgehead Commander again said the same thing earlier about I said about the hose.

That was it, that my day done pretty much I went back to Kensington leisure centre and where I located a few of the Addington crew. I think we them got away about fourish. I had something to eat that was it really. We didn't go to Paddington fire station, we went straightback to Addington I think we got back to Addington about half five, I might be a bit wrong by an hour or, so.

I later completed a proforma at Addington fire station on Thursday the 15<sup>th</sup> of June 2017 about the Grenfell fire Tower incident. Shown as my Exhibit MAD/3 Refers.

It was about a mile between the Holding Area where we parked and second Holding Area at the entrance of Kensington Leisure.

#### Definitions

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Statement of: DENNY, MICHAEL ANTHONY

Form MG11(T)

Page 8 of 8

SDBA (Standard Breathing Apparatus) is a single cylinder and a EDBA (Extended Duration is a double cylinder). The working is about thirty minutes I think and it depends on how hard you are working.

In the EDBA you've more air, more working duration and you need more specific training. The working duration is forty nine minutes and is longer than the SDBA.

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2018

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