

WITNESS STATEMENT

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

Statement of: PEACOCK, RICHARD

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

Occupation: FIRE OFFICER

This statement (consisting of 12 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: R PEACOCK

Date: 21/12/2017

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

This statement is about when I attended Grenfell Tower as a fire fighter to assist with the emergency response.

I am a competent fire fighter based at Wimbledon Fire Station on Red Watch. I have been a fire fighter since June 2008 and have spent my entire career on Red Watch at Wimbledon Fire Station since I passed my training. The call sign for Wimbledon Station is H34 and we have three different appliances that we use when tackling fires based there. We have a Pump Ladder, Fire Rescue Unit and an Aerial Ladder Platform. I will explain what these are in further detail. The Pump Ladder is a standard fire engine that attends fires and alarms and has the call sign H341. The Fire Rescue Unit is a more specialist unit and has the call sign H346. This contains "EDBA" and is equipped to attend road traffic collisions and contains rope access gear. "EDBA" is Extended Duration Breathing Apparatus; this is a piece of equipment that allows fire fighters to breath in areas of smoke. The difference between this and "SDBA" Standard Duration Breathing Apparatus is that it lasts longer and allows fire fighters to stay longer in areas containing smoke. I think the EDBA gives fire fighters up to about 40 minutes breathing time; however this depends on how hard you are working. If working physically hard or the conditions are worse this may be shorter. I have had training on how to wear and use EDBA proficiently. We also have ALP which is an Aerial Ladder Platform, this is another specialist appliance which is used in situations when height is involved and this appliances call sign is H345. I am trained on H341 and H346, the only appliance I am not trained to use at Wimbledon Station is H345, the Aerial Ladder Platform. After initial training, the Fire Rescue Unit training was a further 4 weeks I believe. We have additional training every 6-12 months

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on fire fighting situations including underground training, but I do not think there was any refresher training on the EDBA. The EDBA is a lot heavier than the SDBA because there are 2 cylinders as opposed to 1 of the SDBA. The way you operate both is pretty similar, it's just that the EDBA lasts longer. EDBA users can be identified by stickers on their helmets and their cylinders are different colours from that of SDBA wearers.

On my team Red Watch our roles vary from shift to shift but we are all trained to a similar level, I think there is only one person that has not had Fire Rescue training, and not everyone is ALP trained but everyone can ride on the Pump Ladder. In this statement I will be referring to several of my colleagues that I was working with on the night and following morning. They are Crew Manager CLARKE, and Fire fighters Lewis RICE, Dave FRIEND and Matt HAROLD. All of these are based on Red Watch alongside me at Wimbledon Fire Station. I regularly do Section 7(2) D visits to high rise tower blocks in the Wimbledon area but I have not done this at Grenfell Tower. In this we look around preparing ourselves for the event of a fire in that high rise tower. We have training at Park Royal occasionally in regards to fires in high rise towers however that is nothing like what I experienced. I have had no practical experience in tackling fires in high rise towers previously.

In this statement I will be mentioning two places, the first is my place of work, Wimbledon Fire Station where I have worked for about 9 years now. This is based on Kingston Road. The second is the place where the incident took place, Grenfell Tower in Kensington and Chelsea Borough. I had never attended Grenfell Tower prior to this incident and I had also never had any previous knowledge of the block. Whilst providing this statement to Police I have used a printout of a map of the surrounding streets for reference. On this map I have made some markings which I will be referring to throughout my statement and I exhibit this map as RTP/2.

On the 13th June 2017 I was on duty with my colleagues, Crew Manager CLARKE and Fire fighters Lewis RICE, Dave FRIEND and Matt HAROLD. We were on Red Watch conducting a night shift working from Wimbledon Fire Station. I started my shift at 8pm and the first few hours went by as a normal shift would do. This started with a roll call, making sure everyone was there and here the night's duties would be arranged. For example who would be driving and what appliances each person would be riding and what our jobs would be for that shift. We then moved on to inventories, this is where we check our breathing apparatus is in working order and that all the equipment we need on our appliances is there and fully operational. On that shift I was posted to the Fire Rescue Unit (FRU) as a designated Breathing Apparatus (BA) wearer. At the roll call it was decided that Fire fighters RICE, HAROLD and I would be

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sat in the back and that Fire fighter FRIEND would be driving, Crew Manager CLARKE would sit in the front passenger seat. Being in the back us three would normally expect to wear our BA if we were to attend a fire. One of us would work with the BA Board which is equipment that monitors fire fighter's air supply in their BA. But normally because we are a FRU another lesser qualified pump would control this. Every person on our appliance had a BA set with them ready for use. During the inventory and equipment check I did not discover any issues and it all appeared to be in perfect working order and nothing appeared to be missing as far as I can remember. I then signed off the logs to confirm this. After these were done we continued with our shift, and as far as I can remember the first few hours were relatively quiet and we had no calls to attend.

On night shifts if there are no calls to attend, we sometimes have lectures, to further train us and so we are up to date on the policies and procedures. On this night I cannot remember if we had one or not, but it is possible. If this did happen we would of probably of had dinner and then from 12ish would be on "Stand Easy" where we can relax. I know I was relaxing at the station when the call came, I do not know the exactly time we received it, but it was between 1am and 2am of the morning of the 14th June. I remember hearing the bells and hearing our call sign H346 on the stations "Tannoy" system. It was only our appliance called, no others. I made my way down to the Watch Room and met my colleagues to be told we had a "40 pump fire". I have never heard of a fire requiring 40 pumps in my experience before so thought this could have been a joke initially. I asked "What have we really got?" and I was told, seriously we have a 40 pump fire. The most of heard of in all of my fire fighting experience is a 15-20 pump fire, so to hear 40 was shocking so I thought it must be an error. The higher the number of pumps it means the bigger the incident is. I remember being told it was a fire at a tower block in North Kensington; I remember thinking "How can it be?" but at this point it didn't really sink in. We then boarded our Fire Rescue Unit appliance with the call sign H346 and made our way to the incident using blue lights and two tones. On route we three fire fighters in the back of the appliance were using an "A to Z London" map in order to find the quickest route to the scene from our station in Wimbledon. Also whilst in the appliance we all put our fire gear on, which is our tunics and leggings, the BA equipment was in the back in a locker. As I was in the back and for parts of the journey my head was down I do not completely remember the route that we took. However I am pretty certain that when we left the station we turned right and possibly headed towards Putney. In our appliance we had a device called an MDT which can be helpful in finding a location but it is no better than a map book as it is not like a GPS system. The MDT also allows you to send and receive messages from our control about incidents and on this call Crew

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Manager CLARKE was in control of the MDT, I do not remember any further information coming to us on route on our radio other than what was on the call slip. Our main radio was tuned to Channel 2 and this is the main station for fire fighters on the South of London. Some of the other fire fighters had some knowledge of London and were able to offer advice of routes to take. I personally have no knowledge of North Kensington or of any routes to get there. On route no assignments were made on pairings etc as we did not know what the situation would be when we get there.

When we were close to the venue I remember the driver Fire fighter FRIEND saying something similar to "We have to take one of these streets on the left in a minute" and at that point I looked out the window to my left and saw the tower I now know to be Grenfell Tower alight, and at this point I knew we were pretty close. I was looking along a side street off of the main road we were on and at the end I could see the tower, everyone on board was in shock when they saw it including myself. I was sat behind the driver in the back of the fire engine so I had to look across two of my colleagues and out of the window to see it but I still could see it clearly. It was dark due to the time of night and I could see Grenfell Tower glowing orange and red, it was an inferno, I have never seen anything like that in all of my fire fighting experience. I am not entirely sure which route we came in but I believe it was from the South, we were instructed to get to the address however there were a huge amount of fire engines there so the roads were blocked. I believe we parked on the East side of the tower as I vaguely remember walking through an estate to get there. When we walked through this estate, I remember walking over a green bank and the tower was right there in front of me. On the map I exhibited as (RTP/2) I tried to find where we parked but I think it's off the map due to parking so far away. The journey from Wimbledon to the Grenfell Tower happened quite quickly due to limited traffic on the roads; it took maybe about 20-30 minutes to get there and parked. We parked there as we saw fire engines and assumed this was the closest we could get. We disembarked the appliance, went to the rear, and opened the lockers to take out our EDBA equipment. We then strapped them our backs after Crew Manager CLARKE instructed us. At this point I was thinking that because of the time of night it was there would be a lot of people inside of that tower block and I was thinking about how big this fire was. I am unsure whether Crew Manager CLARKE had his BA set on at this point but all of the rest of us did. We then collected the TIC which is a Thermal Image Camera that allows us to see clearly in dark and smoky areas. It shows heat which allows you to see where a fire is and if there are any potential casualties, we have one TIC on our appliance. I cannot remember who took the TIC, however I do not think it was me. The TIC can record however I have no idea where it goes after an incident, that's for the brigade to use. Every fire fighter is trained on how to

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use the TIC including myself. We also had gloves, some of which have radios built in along with our personal issue radios. The BA radios were tuned to Channel 6 which is the standard channel for BA wearers. The radio system is not great, you can hear but it's not the best.

Once we collected all of our equipment we all made our way to the tower together through the estate. It was chaos there with lots of members of the public walking around, some of whom were handing out bottles of water. They offered water to us and were offering us encouragement saying things such as "Stay safe", "Do what you can" and "Well done". Whilst walking through this estate I could see Grenfell Tower quite clearly, there was lots of activity on the ground with fire fighters and I could also see a lot of debris falling from the tower. Lot of bits of the building were falling, some small and some big, I just could not believe the amount coming down. Some of these bits fell quickly to the ground and other bits would come down much slower and floated down. Some of these pieces of debris were still alight, some were out and some were smoky. When looking at the tower from where I was I could see a lot of external flames on the building, I was facing the East side of the tower and it appeared to be a light from about half way up until the top. I could also see external flames on the other sides but they did not seem to be as bad as the East side. I could see the flames moving around the building, they were moving around the side, up and downwards across the building. On making my way I could smell a strong smoke and burning smell. We then entered the area on the East side by a grassy area into the grounds of the tower. I have marked our entry point as (A) on exhibit RTP/2. As I looked towards the tower, I could see an aerial appliance between me and the tower by the East side and on the South side there was an underpass, I think there may have been another aerial appliance there too. The aerial appliance on the East side was in operation and being used however I am unsure whether the South side one was. The aerial appliances have a big hydraulic platform that rises up to about 30-40 metre high and can fire water, however I can't remember if it was at this point. At this point I was wondering how we was going to get in and what we was going to be doing.

We were asked to get some bottled water by someone but we couldn't find any. On the grass bank I could see a number of fire fighters servicing their sets and recovering. We were then detailed that the initial entrance had too much debris by it and it was not safe to use so that crews were using another entrance on the other side. We were told that we would have to go under the underpass to get there. We walked through and there was a lot of water which I assume had come from the fire fighters trying to extinguish the fire. Also under the underpass I saw a body on the floor that had a tarpaulin over the top of them, so I was unable to see any more of them. There didn't appear to be anyone with the body at this time. I have

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marked roughly where I saw the body on exhibit RTP/2 with (B). We were then instructed to wait there for a little while as riot police would be escorting us across using their shields to protect us from the debris. We waited for about 5 minutes by the underpass awaiting a safe passage through. There were initially safety officers there telling us when it was safe to go, but then the riot police came to assist. There were still lots of pieces of debris falling from the building and now I was closer I could see it was pieces of bent metal, window frames amongst other things. We had to walk under the cover of the underpass heading West to get to the other side of the tower and here I could see numerous other fire fighters making their way over to a BA holding area.

We waited on the South West side of the tower to cross over. I have marked (C) on exhibit RTP/2 roughly where I think I was waiting. From this new position I could see the entire tower and my view was not obstructed. This was my first view of the West side of the tower, I could see it was alight but I do not think it was as bad as the East side. I do not know where the riot police with the shields came from but they arrived shortly after. From entering the area at mark (A) to arriving at mark (C) it took me approximately 5-10 minutes including getting our BA equipment on. We were then called forward to come through to enter the ground floor of the tower; I was paired up with a Police Officer who was going to escort me across using his shield as protection from the falling debris. Whilst we were crossing I had to be carefully with my footing due to the debris on the floor. It was hard as you did not want trip but I wanted to get across quickly to avoiding being struck by further debris. Some of the debris on the floor was still alight as far as I can remember. Whilst crossing I kept my head down and headed towards the entrance, I did not look up at the building at this part. I could hear the debris falling and little bits hit the shield, but none of this affected our journey across. I reached the other side by the entrance to Grenfell Tower, as far as I can remember this was a glass double door to get in to the foyer area. When we entered I saw lots of fire fighters in the lobby on both sides, we waited there with them with our BA sets ready to go. I was stood there and I witnessed other fire fighters bringing out casualties from the stairway. In the time I was stood there I probably saw about 10 of them. I remember some of these were children, it was hard to tell from my view what their conditions were like, I could not see if they were conscious or unconscious. I witnessed some of the casualties walking out and some of them were being carried by fire fighters. They were being taken to the entrance I just came in and then being escorted back across by the Police to safety to receive medical attention. I do not remember seeing any casualties being attended to in the lobby. If the members of the public were able to walk then they were ushered towards the exit, I

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didn't speak to any of these people as they were leaving, nor did I speak to any members of the public on the exterior of the tower.

At this point I was desperate to get under air and get up to the floors and rescue people as I was aware there was still a number of people there. I still had not been given much more information about this incident then I already knew. I witnessed a number of fire fighters coming down and I could see that they had been working extremely hard; I didn't speak to them as they wanted to get out and rest for a moment. I remembering EDBA being called for from a senior officer, so my crew and I walked through to another room at the back that was being used as the "BA Entry Control" and from here we were detailed on what they wanted us to do. There were other EDBA fire fighters there too; I believe they may have been from Paddington and Battersea. I was partnered up with my colleague Matt HAROLD whilst Lewis RICE and Dave FRIEND partnered up together. There were numerous people in this room and I am unsure who was in command but our tasks were being given to us on a slip of paper. On the slip of paper I was given it said Floor 23, Room 203 and I was told there is a family that are stuck in there and they need our help, however I was not given any further information such as names. This information probably came from our control room. When people call the fire brigade if they are stuck they will be given Fire Survival Guidance. The controller will give them information in order to help save their life and then their location will be given to fire fighters on the ground. I have never been in a situation where a piece of paper will be given to you though; it must have been because of the scale of the situation. BA entry control is the process of briefing you of what you are required to do and where you need to go and is standard practice. In a smaller fire it wouldn't have been so chaotic and would have been easier to organise the situation. When I received the piece of paper saying Floor 23 I thought "That's a long way up". My EDBA kit weighs 25kg and along with my other equipment it is very heavy and I was already hot from walking to where I was. Fire fighter HAROLD and I looked at each other in way that felt like we were saying "Good luck" but this was not said. Fire fighter HAROLD is a good friend and I have worked with him for some time. I had witnessed the fire from the outside and when I realised I had been given Floor 23, which I knew was near the top, I did think "Will I make it?" Just when we was about to go under air to head up to floor 23 we was told that the situation has changed and we would not be going to there, and instead we would be going to search either floor 5 or 6, I can't quite remember and to clear upwards. I was not told the reason why this changed but I do remember feeling relieved I wasn't going to the top due to how bad it was up there. I have no idea who the officer was who made this decision but he was wearing a white helmet. He had someone helping him who is a crew manager, I recognised him but I do not know his

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name. He was writing details on the walls of this room, he may have worked at Tooting before and I have seen him when he has come to Wimbledon before.

We then went under air, and handed our tallies into BA entry control. These link up to our BA so that we can be monitored from the ground, they can see our air consumption and other details. It is all linked to an audible whistle that will sound when we are running out of air and will need to return. In the ground floor lobby it was very wet, there were several inches of water there and items were floating around. It was also very noisy with lots of people in the area talking and making other noises. On that ground floor there must have been around 30 people, mostly fire fighters and an occasional Police Officer or casualty. We then started to head up to our assigned floor. The first bit was a bit odd as you had to climb several floors before you came to the first floor of flats. From memory there was a balcony area you come to just before the stairs taking you to the flats. I was not aware if there was a fire lift in the building but I was instructed to take the stairs so I assumed the lift was out of action. Lifts do assist as you can move up the building quicker than the stairs. The first staircase we went out was quite open plan; it didn't feel enclosed at all. When I got to the main staircase I could see out the window and witnessed more debris falling to the ground outside. On the staircase there it seemed quite normal to me, there wasn't much smoke and I could see clearly and I think I would have been able to breath without my BA at this point. When we were here Fire fighter HAROLD and I came across a member of the public coming down the stairs. He was begging us to go up to floor 10 where he had lost his pregnant wife; he was standing there on his mobile phone and was clearly distressed. He said "I've lost my wife, I've lost my family, she is pregnant, I need you to rescue them". I felt very confused at this point as I wanted to help. He was speaking to fire fighter HAROLD and then a woman came down the stairs and was asking something similar, however I do not remember too much about her but she was saying that she had family and needed us to rescue them. HAROLD and I told them both that they need to go downstairs and speak to our colleagues who will do their best to get someone to try and save them. I saw them heading towards the stairs heading down but I did not stay to check if they did as I needed to head upstairs and continue my work. I got to the stairs and saw they were concrete and that the staircase was quite narrow, it would have been difficult to get two people side by side on it so we walked one behind the other. I cannot remember if there were any railings or what colour the walls were but I do remember it being wet and I remember seeing equipment on the floor. There was breaking in equipment along with fire hoses and that it was now smokier than before. The water was sitting on top of the steps at this point rather than pouring down them. I then climbed the staircase with HAROLD counting the floors as we went to make sure we went to the right place. We were

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very close to each other and made sure we could see each other. On the way I noticed previous fire fighters had written on the walls the numbers of the floors to assist with this, however I do not remember seeing any of the building signs. I found the climb to be hard work due to the weight of my equipment and the energy exalted from climbing the stairs.

On the route we did not see any further casualties however we did find some breaking in gear on the stairs close to floor 4, we took this as we knew we would be breaking into flats to search for people. We were informed before we went up that this equipment would be there for our use. I am pretty certain that HAROLD had the TIC and that I picked up a yellow enforcer that was there which is used for breaking down doors. This is quite heavy, weighing about 10kgs and I was carrying this with one hand as I ascended the stairs. At this point it was smoky but not as bad as I expected it to be, it was a bit whispery but I could still see clearly. We got to floor 5 I think and went through from the staircase to the hallway via a closed door; I am unsure who opened the door. When I entered the 5th floor I noticed it was dark and couldn't see an awful lot. This wasn't mainly due to the smoke but more due to lack of lighting. At this point we were joined by fire fighters RICE and FRIEND on the 5th floor. We needed to search the flats so HAROLD and I started with the ones on the left when you exit the stairs whilst RICE and FRIEND searched the ones of the right. We started by knocking on the doors to see if anyone was still inside because we wasn't sure at that point. As there was no answer I knocked the doors open with the enforcer I had acquired. The first flat I went to I found by following the left wall when leaving the staircase turning left. We decided to search furthest first and then make our way back, I don't know why we did this, it just happened that way. I do not know the flat number but the door was locked so I forced it open. HAROLD and I searched the flat not finding any people inside; I did notice that there was no fire damage in this flat at this time including the windows from memory. I cannot remember the level of smoke or if there was any inside the first flat. However outside in the hallway it was hard to see in places. I remember getting hotter and hotter but that may be due to the physical work I had been doing. The hallway was also quite narrow in places which made it difficult to knock the doors through; I even hit the wall once whilst entering the 2nd flat. I am unsure whether this was due to poor visibility or physical exhaustion. I managed to enter the 2nd flat; we searched this again finding no persons present. I remember saying to HAROLD "It's getting really hot in here, let's go out to the hallway and take a breather" so we came outside. At this point I was made aware RICE and FRIEND had completed the other flats on this floor so I was having a quick moment to catch my breath. I cannot remember which flat it was but it looked like people hadn't even been there that night because all the beds had been made. During this search we had been in

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communication with our control via radio informing them of the flats searched and that no persons were present. FRIEND said to me he felt like it was getting hotter too, so this worried me because we did not have a branch with us that would have assisted in fighting a fire and I do not remember seeing a hose either. The branch is a device at the end of the hose that sprays water. I then noticed on the stairs another fire fighter or crew manager bringing down a casualty from a higher floor. I could see he looked absolutely exhausted from carrying this person. We have then said to this fire fighter "Have a breather; we will carry on taking this casualty down". Between the four of us we started to take the female casualty down, we had two on each end, two at the head and two at her feet. She was foaming at the mouth and unconscious so I knew this was a medical emergency and she was not in a good way. The foaming at the mouth to me is an indication she had inhaled smoke. As we were carrying her down her clothing was very baggy and made it even hard for us to carry her, so at one point we took her jacket off to assist this. She was a completely dead weight and could not believe how heavy a slim 14 year old girl could be. All four of us were struggling, and because the stairs were narrow and smoky this didn't help. I was at the front holding her and walking backwards down the stairs. We decided the best course of action was to get her out as quickly as possible, with breathing issues there is little we could have done where we were and she needed to see a medic. We carried her down to the lobby and as I carried her through along the balcony I saw the man who was begging me to save his wife earlier. It had been about 20-30 minutes since I last saw him, which means it had taken me that time to go up there, search the rooms and carry the casualty down. I can't remember exactly where it was but fire fighters took the casualty from us, it was either in BA entry control or in the foyer. I felt exhausted at this point. We checked our BA gauges to see if we had enough air to go back up but there was not enough when we looked. We went to BA entry control, informed them of the work that we had conducted and collected our tallies. Then we headed towards the entrance to wait to be escorted back outside of Grenfell Tower by the Police and removed our masks. Whilst down there it was still very busy with fire fighters waiting to go up, others dealing with casualties and senior officer co-ordinating everyone. I cannot remember there being any smoke down there, I could breathe absolutely fine without my BA. The ground floor was being used as a bridgehead. The bridgehead is used a base area and is usually held two floors under the floor which has a fire. We were escorted the same way we came via the West entrance under the shield being held by a Police Officer. We had one officer in front and one behind, we was escorted across the yard and behind the playground. We sat down on the grass and had a drink of water and tried to recover. I was feeling really tired, this was a lot more work than a standard fire that I am used to attending. However I really wanted to

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get back in there as quick as possible and do what I could to save people. Whilst sitting on the grass outside I looked up at the tower and I could see the fire continuing to spread across the building externally. The flames were travelling downwards and I could see the silhouettes of people in the windows and I could see the fire heading towards them. I remember some of them waving trying to get attention but do not remember much else about that. We then attempted to try and find some fresh cylinders in order to service our BA sets so we could go up again. We left our sets at point (C) on exhibit RTP/2 and thought we would look for more cylinders that may have been left on other appliances nearby. We tried to find our appliances as we knew we had spares but could not remember where we parked it, so we looked for other FRU's. We found a trolley and stacked it up with a number of cylinders we found on another FRU. All FRU's will carry 4 spare cylinders, so we loaded the trolley up and carried some too. We then headed back and I am fairly sure we got back to where we first started at point (A) on the map exhibit RTP/2. We then moved over to where we left our sets to discover they were gone. On this route I saw that the aerial appliance on the South side of the tower was still in operation. We found out another crew had taken our sets and were using them and was told that everyone was doing it. We then managed to obtain another crews BA sets as they had recently returned from the tower and used them instead. They are usually issued to you for that shift but they are not custom sized, as long as you test it then it will work fine. We did test these and they all worked fine. There are 5 straps on it and these can all be adjusted. Quite a while had passed since I had come out of the tower and I had rested and had some water. I felt ready to go back into the tower and so did my colleagues. I was with fire fighters HAROLD, RICE and FRIEND whilst servicing the sets however we did lose HAROLD for a short while when we were looking for the cylinders. Once this was all complete we walked back along the safety of the underpass to go back into the building. Along this route I noticed there was more debris than there was before and there was a lot of water on the floor also. We sat around that area for quite some time waiting to be escorted back across to the building; it might have been about an hour. I do not know what time it was at this point but it had started getting light as the sun was rising. Then I was aware that the Pump Ladder Crew from my Station of Wimbledon had arrived and joined us in this waiting area. Both our crews H341 and H346 went over and were escorted across to the tower again under the shields. We waited in another area on the ground floor to where we waited last time; this place was closer to the lifts. We were in there with a number of other fire fighters waiting to go up, they were standing and sitting in chairs in a big puddle of water. There was a queue to go to BA entry control and people were talking, I

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hadn't had any real information at this point but I heard people talking about problems with water. I spoke with H341 about our previous visit up the tower and the conditions and what to expect.

I spoke with HAROLD about the man who begged us to go to save his wife and we both felt bad about that, because we wanted to go up and help her. We questioned ourselves whether we should have, but we stuck with the brief because that's what we are trained to do. We waited for about 30 minutes and at this point it must have been about 6.30-7am and it was daylight outside. It wasn't too smoky in the room but there was about a foot of water in the room, we couldn't see where the water was coming from but it was like a paddling pool. I then heard a call for a team of 4 people. I was teamed up with Watch Manager MCKAY, Fire fighter STEWART and Fire fighter JONES from Wimbledon Pump Ladder. The others on my team had standard duration breathing apparatus whilst I had the extended. The only reason the crews were mixed was because we were the first 4 that came forward when asked. We then attended BA entry control where we received our brief. The task was to attend floor 11 to fire fight and rescue if anyone found. My thoughts at this point was it was going to be hard, I had been to the 5th before and that was difficult, now I knew I had to go all the way up to the 11th. We were briefed that it is quite hard to tell what floors are what due to the smoke but there is a body on floor 10. I am not sure if anyone was carrying a TIC, I wasn't but I am sure one of my crew would have been. We were informed that there will be a branch on the floor up there left from the previous crew. We then went and went under air, handed our tallies in and repeated our briefs. We then started to ascend the stairs. On the way up the conditions hadn't massively changed since my last ascent apart from there was a lot more water now. I did notice there were fire fighters not wearing BA up to about floor 3 or 4, possibly helping with hose management. It wasn't particularly smoky until I reached floor 7. As we were climbing the stairs we were counting the floors so that we knew where to go. I could see that someone had attempted to write the floor numbers on the wall with a Chinagraph pencil but a lot had come off. As we got higher it became warmer, smokier and noticed there were a lot of hoses on the floor. This made navigating the stairs quite tricky along with the increasing water; it was like a waterfall coming down. It may have been smoky but I could still see where I was going fairly clearly. As we were on the stairs just before we reached floor 10 and I could make out that there was a body on the floor of the landing. It was quite a large body, so stepping over that as well as being entangled in hoses was tricky. There was a crew above us on the stairs waiting to go in floor 11. They moved in once the previous ones left but I don't think they made much progress because it was really hot. We couldn't get any radio signal so communication with control was impossible, so there was a Watch Manager who asked me to return down and speak to the fire fighters we saw earlier. He

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wanted them to pass a message down saying not to send any more crews up because we wasn't making any more progress with the fire. I then walked all the way down the stairs to floor 2 I believe and did not see the fire fighters. I then thought that I won't go all the way to the bottom and that I would return up the tower towards my crew on floor 10. When I returned to my colleagues we were stood in the stairway trying to avoid the water, but this was impossible, we all ended up becoming soaked. The crew above us finished and returned down the stairs towards the ground floor, that's when we climbed one floor to floor 11 and started trying to tackle the fire. Out of our crew I was 2nd in line behind STEWART who had the branch. I then opened the fire door and we made our way inside. As I made my way in from the stairway to the landing I felt a huge amount of heat hit me and I picked up a branch that was left on the landing. We were lying on our bellies trying to make our way in. As I moved in I remember looking to my left and seeing that the flat there was completely burnt out with a fire still raging. All of the furniture appeared to be completely burned and the windows and door was gone. We knew that no one would be alive in there because if someone was then there would have been no possible way of surviving that immense fire. The whole flat was a shell and I could see right through and out where the windows were to the outside. You couldn't even make out what rooms were what due to the interior walls being destroyed by the inferno. So we decided to try and make our way down to search the other flats on this floor to see if there was anyone that we could have saved. We moved to the next flat along that line and I remember seeing the door was shut. As we entered I don't remember breaking it down but it was a struggle due to either clothing or bedding blocking the door. When I moved in I remember seeing lots of smoke but I couldn't see any fire at this point. All four of our crew searched this flat finding nobody inside. Inside this flat it was really dark and smoky but there was a part of it was quite clear. It was like going from one extreme to another. After searching that flat I moved out to the lobby once more, and as I got there I felt extremely hot. This was the hottest I have ever felt in my life and I have been fire fighting for 10 years. As I breathed in it felt like my lungs were on fire and because I was soaking wet I do not think that helped. We were trying to keep low but I could feel the heat burning through the concrete of the floor. It was a little smoky at this point but I could still see fairly clearly. I think the fire was ventilating itself outside which helped our visibility. On the floor there was a mess of hoses and branches. I am unsure where they were connected to but I assume it was to a dry riser out on the landing. I had no part in connecting any hoses to any dry risers so I am unsure. Whilst using the branch and hose to fight the fire the pressure was fine and it worked normally as I would expect it to. It was hard moving around due to the narrow space and the hose was tight. I then made my way down onto the 3rd flat in that line with my crew. Again it was extremely

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hot as we entered, and I remember the door being shut. We entered and I remember searching the first room finding no one. Then we moved on turning a corner. Here I saw a fire well alight down in the corner and could see the flames moving. At this point I had the branch and was aiming my water supply in an attempt to move the fire back. I was aiming the water at the fire on the right and down in front of me. I was getting really hot and extremely tired. Being at the front now I had been receiving quite a hammering from the intense heat so I swapped with fire fighter STEWART. I then moved back down the corridor for a moment to take a rest and that's when I heard STEWART shout "Casualty". I couldn't believe it, I was in shock as I didn't expect any one to be alive. I looked back along the corridor and saw a man poking his head out from behind one of the doors inside the flat. We told him to get back inside whilst we knock the fire back. We said this because that was his best chance of survival, we wanted to get the fire away from him first so we could get him out of the building safely. Once the fire was back I managed to get this male outside of the room and then guided him to fire fighter JONES who escorted him outside of his flat and onto the staircase. He was conscious, breathing and not foaming at the mouth but he did have trouble seeing. He was really scared and quite distressed. He didn't speak great English but I did ask him if there was anyone else in the flat to which he replied saying "No". I went in the room he was sheltering in and could not believe how he was still alive due to the immense heat. He had the door shut from the neighbouring room and that managed to delay the fire getting to him. I then went with the branch to search the remaining 3 flats on the other side however they were very similar to the first one. They were all completely burnt out and there was no possible way any survivors were present inside of them. We attempted to fight the fire with the branch for a short while but it was getting extremely hot and we was conscious of the air left in our BA sets. I took the hose and branch outside and left it there on the floor by the staircase. This is where I saw fire fighter JONES was still there with the male casualty by the stairs. JONES then went in front and took the mans feet whilst I took hold of him by the waist and we begun to start carrying him down the stairs. It was backbreaking carrying him out due to step over the hoses and the body that was on the floor still on the 10th floor landing. The man had difficulty breathing and was asked to stop several times during our descent down the stairs. As we descended further and further down the less smoke filled the staircase became. On the way down I did not see any further members of the public, however we did pass a couple of fire crews coming upwards to take over from us. As we go to the lobby the male casualty was taken from us by other fire fighters but I am unsure who. At this point the man was able to walk and I have not seen him since. This was extremely hard work and I was feeling exhausted. I entered BA entry control, received my tally again and then briefed them on the work that we

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had conducted. I was feeling thirsty and really wanted a drink of water and I was also extremely happy we found someone alive and was able to rescue them. I was then escorted back outside of the tower to the area near the leisure centre via the West entrance where I was able to have a drink of water and try to recover. There I noticed the Salvation Army had arrived and was providing teas, coffees and food. I had some refreshments and was told that our relief was on their way to take over, so we were waiting for them to arrive.

At no point whilst I was in Grenfell Tower I did not see any sprinklers but I did hear some smoke alarms sounding inside some of the flats. I was sat with the rest of my colleagues from Wimbledon and other fire fighters and we were talking about our experiences inside. I looked up at the tower and could see that the fire had reduced somewhat and I could see it was a black shell. I could see right through to the middle and I could see the fire was still raging in the middle towards the top. I also noticed the aerial appliance on the East side was still there and in operation. I was aware Blue Watch was arriving and that because I had already been in the tower twice it was unlikely that I would be requested to go again. Usually for a fire like that you should only be going up once so going a 3rd time was very unlikely. I remember someone checking how many times people had gone up and because we had been up twice I wouldn't be going again. I am unsure about the policy regarding this. We waited around that area for about an hour trying to recover by having a drink and some food. We were then told that we had done what we could do and that we were to leave to go to Paddington Fire Station to complete our statements. I then left with my crew and we walked back towards where our appliance was parked. I am unsure if we brought back our BA sets, we possibly left them there for other fire fighters to use. It took as a little bit of time to find the appliance after walking around the estate. I cannot remember what route we took but we did assist when a member of public fainted in the street at some point. I think they were overcome with emotions. On this route members of the public were asking questions such as "What floor did you get up to?" "Is everyone out?" and I remember one man saying his dad lived on the 21st floor and asked if we got up that high. I was also asked by someone "How many do you think are dead?" and I said "I don't know". People were filming and taking pictures but I am unsure if that was of us or they were filming the tower.

We arrived back at our appliance and waited there for some while because we were blocked in. Someone went off to try and find someone to move these appliances so we could get out and whilst this was happening people were giving of drinking water. Once the obstruction was clear we were able to drive to Paddington Fire Station, however I do not know what time this was. Once we got to Paddington there was some more food and drink that we was given and then we were waiting to be called in to write our

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statements. We were told to write our statements explaining what we had done in as much detail as possible. I completed this statement with my crew of H346 present along with some other fire fighters. We were told how to set the statement out and what information would be required. I think there was board in the room explaining this. I have been shown the statement I did that day by Police and exhibit this as RTP/1. Looking back at the whole experience it shocked me; I am still getting over it today. I cannot believe it happened the way it did and I feel sorry for the people inside. They were affected by this a lot more than what we fire fighters were. If there was one moment that particularly stuck with me it would be speaking to the man in the lobby who lost his pregnant wife. That has really affected me. I am torn because we had a brief to follow but he had a family upstairs and he was begging us to go and rescue them. It sticks in my mind that if we did go up to that floor, could we have helped her. I am aware of the "stay safe" policy; this is that if there is a fire usually the safest place to be is to remain in your flat. This is to stop evacuating residents blocking the access to fire fighters attempting to extinguish the fire. I am unsure who implemented this or if it was withdrawn at any point. I also look at the positives and can't believe I got to the 11th floor and managed to get that man out alive. So I have some mixed emotions about the incident, although I have not heard if that man did survive or not. After completing our statements we returned to Wimbledon arriving at around 2pm or maybe later. Here we were met by Wimbledon's Blue Watch. We spoke with them about our experiences and signed back in. On the next shift that night we spoke together about the previous night's incident and the severity of it. Looking back to make my job easier I would say that the communication sets need improvement as we lost communication with control. Also the lamps we that are issued to us are poor, you need to hit them to get them to work and they do not provide much light. I do not know how or where the fire started but I was told by colleagues that it started from a fridge.

The man who begged me to save his wife was about 5ft 6 tall, medium build, with short cropped dark hair and was about 40-45 years old, with a white tanned skinned colour. I can't remember if he spoke with any sort of accent. He possibly was wearing denim and did not appear to have any burns or smoke marks on him. The female casualty I brought down from the 5th floor was black in colour, aged 14-15 years old, slim build, and was wearing quite baggy clothing, maybe a jacket and tracksuit bottoms. These clothes didn't appear to be fire damaged. The body that I saw on the 10th floor landing was of a large build, black in colour and was laying face down. The feet were dangling over the stairs and their head was towards the wall. The man who we found in the room on the 11th floor was about 5ft 5 tall, quite elderly with quite

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puffy eyes. He appeared to be of oriental descent with dark hair and also appeared to have taken a fair bit of smoke damage.

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