

WITNESS STATEMENT

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

Statement of: LEADER, STEVE

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

Occupation: BOROUGH COMMANDER BARNET

This statement (consisting of 10 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: S LEADER

Date: 23/05/2018

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

This is an account of my role and actions during the fire at Grenfell Tower on 14 June 2017.

I joined the London Fire Brigade (LFB) in May 1995. I started as a Firefighter at Southwark. I was later posted to Barking where I joined the Blue Watch. I remained there for 4 years during which time I completed the promotion exam to be a Leading Firefighter. Whilst at Barking I acted as a Temporary Leading Firefighter (or Crew Manager as it's known today) on and off for a few months. In 1999 I went from Barking to Enfield Blue Watch on promotion as a Leading Firefighter. I remained at Enfield for 2 years and completed my development programme. Whilst at Enfield I also successfully completed the Sub Officers (or Watch Managers) written and practical exams to qualify for the Watch Commanders process. I remained at Enfield but moved to Red Watch in 2002 as a Temporary Sub Officer. In 2002/2003 I completed the Watch Commanders Ops Course, which was a 6-7 week intensive training course including Incident Command. I then completed my development record and was made a substantive Sub Officer in 2002/2003.

I then took part in the SOAP Process, which is the Station Officer Assessment Process, and successfully completed the written exam. I was advised my then Borough Commander to develop a specialism as a Station Officer was required to have both an Ops Role and a Specialist Role. I opted to be a Trainer as I used to be a teacher. In 2004 I was placed in role as a Substantive Station Officer in the Leadership and Management Development Team (LMDT) at Southwark. Here I trained Leading Firefighters (Crew Managers), Watch Commanders (Watch Managers) and other Trainers. We covered leadership,

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management, interview techniques, incident command, how to train and give lectures etc. At the end of the 7- 8 weeks of training, the trainees were sent to the Fire Service College to be assessed as to whether or not they were competent in their role. I remained in this role for about 2 years. Whilst there I completed a Watch Managers Specialist Book. This course still exists but is now completed in smaller blocks.

In 2006 the 'Rank to Role' came in. This meant that Station Officers were now referred to as a Watch Manager B. At this time I went through the Station Manager (SM) process and subsequently, in October 2006, I went to Whitechapel as Temporary Station Manager (SM). I remained there for about 6 months. From there I went to Walthamstow where I acted as Temporary Station Manager for about a year. I was then posted to Leyton where, in 2008, I was made a Substantive Station Manager. In 2009/2010 I was moved to Chingford as a Station Manager. I then returned to Walthamstow and project managed the station's redevelopment, as the old station had been knocked down and a new one built. My role was 2 fold; to act as an operational Station Manager and to project manage the personnel logistics of the station's transformation. I saw this through to fruition. In 2011 I applied for the Group Manager (GM) process and was successful. I was given a Temporary GM post in July 2012 at Finchley Fire Station. Having successfully completed my development record for this role, I was made substantive in November 2013. I have been based at Finchley as a Substantive Group Manager for the last 5 years or so.

As a Group Manager, I am Borough Commander and Strategic Lead for Barnet. I have 4 Fire Stations; Hendon, Mill Hill, Finchley and Barnet and about 160 personnel. I am responsible for ensuring they respond to operational issues, complete the right amount of training, fulfil their community safety obligations and also deal with any other borough related issues.

I produce the Borough Training Plan, which is then disseminated down to Watch Managers for them to then follow. The crews also have a set number of activities that they have to complete through the DAMOP training process. Crews have to train and practice their 'core skills' such as Ladders and Breathing Apparatus (BA) etc., and also complete 'Catch Up' training which is specific to them. We also quickly respond to training needs identified by Service Bulletins. We also consider and train for our own Borough specific risks. In Barnet for example, we train for incidents that might occur at Saracens Rugby Club. Crews will visit and familiarise themselves with the layout of the venue, and discuss what steps

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they would take should an incident arise there. The training completed by crews is record on the electronic station diary and fed into their training records. Barnet has about a dozen or so High Rise buildings. All crews are trained in High Rise Firefighting and conduct 7(2)D Familiarisation visits on a regular basis.

As regards the Brigade Coordination Centre (BCC) I have received training and acquired practical experience of its operation on at least 3 distinct occasions. I worked in the BCC some half a dozen times, during the LFB industrial action of 2009/2010. At that time the BCC was used to ensure we had adequate appliances and personnel 'on the run'. About 5 or 6 years ago I was retrained along with other Station Managers and Group Managers at Southwark when the BCC policy was revamped. This consisted of a morning presentation, and then a table top discussion as regards the 4 separate BCC cells and how we would engage and run them. We debriefed at the end of the exercise as regards positives and negatives of each approach. Furthermore, about 4 years ago I took the role of GM in a training simulation where my role was to support DAC COHEN-HATTON who was running the BCC for a simulated large scale Marauding Terrorist exercise. This was set up in the Special Operations Group and all 4 cells were activated.

Each year I undergo Incident Command training. My last training was in March 2017 and this was a simulated High Rise incident. As a Firefighter at Barking I dealt with numerous High Rise incidents and was involved either wearing BA or in a support role. As a Blue Watch Crew Member in Enfield, I recall 2 or 4 significant incidents concerning High Rise buildings where I was the first officer there and took the decision to 'make up' or increase the number of pumps. As a Red Watch T/Sub Officer (or Watch Manager A) at Enfield, I was in charge of a High Rise incident on the 18th/19th storey of a block.

During my tour of duty on 14 June 2017 I spoke with many people, but I constantly liaised with Deputy Assistant Commissioner (DAC) Adrian FENTON.

I have never been to Grenfell Tower and have no knowledge of any pre prepared fire fighting plan for it. If compartmentation failed in any High Rise building I would implement the LFB High Rise policy. Personally, I would try and identify where the fire is going and seek to contain it and 'make up' the incident so that there are sufficient personnel present.

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The BCC is set up to support the LFB Commissioners Group and whoever is designated as the Assistant Commissioner I (AC1) coordinating it, and to support the Incident Commander at the scene. Its other role is also to help support and coordinate our other resources across the Brigade in the event of another significant fire or incident in London that would stretch our resources. It is only set up at fairly major incidents which use a lot of resources, as it is designed to help maintain 'Business as Usual' pan London. It is normally set up at Merton but on this occasion, it was set up at Stratford.

The Commissioners Group sets the Strategic Lead for a particular incident and has an overview of everything else that is happening within London. It also leads on the Media Strategy in terms of what information is released, and on 'Business as Usual' and how this is to be maintained.

That night, Stratford was being used as fall back for our 'Control Room'. The Control Room at Stratford is on the 1st floor and contains the Control Room Officers (CRO's) who take fire calls via the telephone and mobilise appliances, equipment and officers across London accordingly. The BCC does not have a dedicated room at Stratford. On that night, we used part of the Eastern Areas Team office space on the ground floor as this had all of the infrastructure we required.

The BCC comprises 4 cells; Resources, Planning and Logistics, Operations and Communications. Each cell practically operates by utilising phones and LFB computer systems such as BOSS, STARS and the CSS. On this occasion I also encouraged the cell leads to make notes on whiteboards to record 'who is where and doing what'.

BOSS is a computer system that displays what appliances and officers are deployed and where across London. It displays a list of current incidents and what appliances and officers have been assigned to them. It is also possible to look at any one incident and read the messages associated with it. Another screen, colour codes officers and their status, i.e. whether they are at an incident, on route, available to be deployed or not available.

Officers can show themselves at an incident by phone or radio or via a Command Unit. Such updates are made by the Control Room or via the MDT's carried on the appliances. BOSS captures all incidents regardless of their size.

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STARS is an electronic rota book that records who is on duty, on which Watch and when. This is updated at the beginning of every tour of duty with details of who is attached to which appliance. This is completed within 10 minutes or so and the database refreshed. Any changes during a shift must be noted on STARS and the system refreshed again.

CSS is the Command Support System. It is essentially an electronic version of the Headline Boards used on Command Units where key information as regards Sectors and Personnel is recorded and displayed. This can be viewed by anyone who logs into the system, either at the scene or remotely. If the CSS is not operational, the Command Unit will still know who is present on the Fire Ground by collation of the nominal role boards from the appliances. CSS, BOSS and STARS all have the capability to talk to one another. Typically CSS and BOSS draw information from STARS.

The Resources Cell looks at all the resources that are in use at a particular incident or incidents. This cell would be determining and recording who was at the incident, what appliances we had in reserve, what officers were at the incident and what officers we had in reserve etc.

The Planning and Logistics Cell considers what we might need in the future in terms of reliefs, Extended Duration Breathing Apparatus (EDBA), cancellation of Strategic Resource (SR) training and how we maintain 'Business as Usual'. SR is where at any one time, a proportion of your resources are off the run for training purposes.

The Operations Cell provides an overview of what Operations are taking place at the scene and at other incidents across London with a view to 'Horizon Scanning' for likely operational impacts. The information is gathered and then provided to the AC so that they can decide on strategy and tactics.

The Communications Cell establishes communication internally between cells and externally to the AC, Commissioners Group, Incident Commander and Fire Ground. This cell will also email a list of relevant mobile numbers and contact details to all parties. They also liaise and coordinate with the Commissioners Group and Fire Ground as regards Press Lines etc. Communication between the BCC and the Command Units at a scene would be via radio, telephone and emails. There is a computer on the Command Units so you can look at the LFB computer system provided the downlink is working and you have appropriate

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access. On this occasion contact with the scene was via the Deputy Assistant Commissioner (DAC) on the Command Unit. The BCC would not communicate directly with the Incident Commander.

Communication between the BCC and the Commissioners Group would be via telephone and email.

In recalling the events of 14 June 2017 I have relied on my own recollections and On the handwritten notes I made some 3- 4 days after the event. I have handed these notes to DC Kath WATSON and identify them as my exhibit SKL/1. For the sake of completeness I have also produced a document called the London Fire Brigade Strategic Response Arrangements (Gold Command) which sets out the role and function of each BCC cell. I have handed this to DC Kath WATSON and identify it as my exhibit SKL/2.

On the 14 June 2017 I was located at my camp out base in South Ockenden as I was on "24's". "24's" are a 24 hour tour of duty commencing at 0800, where outside of core office hours (0800 -1700 hours), I remain on call and can contacted by pager and/or phone. In being 'on call' I respond to operational incidents or urgent managerial action (e.g. welfare.)

I was there at the camp out base with DAC Adrian FENTON and SM Richard TAP. I was woken at about 0130 hours by a lot of banging and crashing about and the sound of radio chatter as Adrian had turned his radio on. Adrian was Duty DAC and I think he'd been notified about the incident when it was an 8 pump fire. I was up so I went and had a chat with him about what was going on. I got BOSS up on DAC FENTON's laptop to see what was happening. We had the radio on and heard the pumps getting made up and up. As the incident approached a 20 pump fire, Adrian said that he was making the decision to go into Stratford and that the BCC would likely need setting up. He asked me to be ready to deploy to Stratford to assist with this, as I was already awake and understood the situation. At about 0200 hours I was called by Adrian and asked to come to Stratford. He said that if I get another call and am mobilised to the incident that I should go there, and that he would find someone else to support him.

I made my way to Stratford using blue lights and sirens. I didn't have my Main Scheme radio on but I did have Radio 5 on low in the background. George CLARK, the TV presenter from Amazing Spaces, was on there and was explaining that he was close to Grenfell Tower and could see the fire spreading from top to bottom. I thought 'Nah, this isn't right, he's over exaggerating it' as in my experience that kind of fire spread didn't happen. However, I could hear in his voice that he was getting quite emotional and so in the

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back of my mind I started thinking that maybe this was bigger than I thought. George CLARK went on to explain that as he was stood there, he could see and feel the ash coming down and see people at the windows of the Tower.

I arrived at Stratford at about 0230 hours and went up to Control. It was manic, everyone was on the phone and other phones were going. There was a lot of noise, a lot of talking. I didn't hear any specifics but I could tell that CRO's were speaking to people in the Tower in the form of Fire Survival Guidance (FSG) calls and to LFB personnel in terms of mobilising appliances, officers etc. I haven't been to Control for a long time but normally it's quite quiet with the odd operator taking a call. However, on this occasion everyone was busy and it was buzzing. The Control Room is perhaps 25m square and on that night, had 15-20 people in it talking on headsets. The room has a number of desks with multiple computer screens and keyboards on each. Adrian was in there and said to me that he'd remain in the Control Room to deal with the FSG's but that he wanted me to go downstairs and start setting up the BCC. FSG's are calls from people who are in their flat and trapped. Once in contact with Control, our officers ask a series of questions as regards their details, where they are in relation to the fire, the number of people present etc., and then give advice to make them as safe as possible. The details of this call are then passed by Control to the Incident Commander who would prioritise that person, as they would be most at risk. The calls would go to the Incident Command Pump, or first pump there, and be recorded on the Control Information Form. This form is then passed to whatever structure is in place to try and rescue that person.

I went downstairs and logged on and pulled up the LFB Strategic Response Arrangement policy (my exhibit SKL/2). This sets out the strategic arrangements for Gold, Silver and Bronze, the Commissioners Group, the BCC and Business Continuity. It also details the BCC cells and sets out their responsibilities and so offers guidance for those in that role. I printed off 5 copies; one for me and one for each cell so that everyone had a copy in front of them, should they need it.

I went upstairs and spoke with Adrian. He confirmed that he was remaining in Control and that I should continue setting up the BCC. I explained that I had the policy document, that I could physically gather equipment such as desks and whiteboards etc., but that I now needed people to run it. I asked initially for a Station Manager to get it up and running and take one of the most important cells. I asked for SM Richard TAP, who was at the camp out base in South Ockenden, to be mobilised to Stratford. It was clear

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that there were very few other Station Managers available to be deployed to the BCC to head up the cells. So instead we decided to utilise our cadre of Watch Managers who are specially trained as Operational Resilience Support Officers (ORSO's). They typically work in the Special Operations Group but have also been trained to work in the BCC cells. I requested that all 4 ORSO's be mobilised. They were all on a recall, on a pager, and some were coming from a fair distance away, so would take a reasonable time to arrive.

I then prioritised my cells. SM Richard TAP arrived first and I gave him the most important cell of Planning and Logistics. I knew that he was on the same duty as me and would be on duty until 0800 hours, so he'd provide continuity throughout the incident. The first Watch Manager to arrive was Paddy MALONE and I gave him the Resources cell. The next was Lee SMALL and I gave him the Comms Cell. I took the Ops cell until I could hand it over to one of the ORSO's. So by 0300 hours I had all cells covered with 2 Watch Managers still on route. Soon after this, Adrian requested a loggist and Lee SMALL took this role, so I lost him fairly quickly.

By 0330-0345 hours all the cells were set up and running. Each cell had one officer; SM Richard TAP was doing Planning and Logistics, WM Paddy MALONE was doing Resources, WM Mick REX was doing Comms and WM Gary WILSON doing Ops. Gary was subsequently called away at approximately 0450 hours as he was also Specialist Entry and Recovery Team (SERT) trained and a Positive Pressure Ventilation (PPV), or fans, expert. I think he was called to the scene with regards to exploring the use of fans for smoke extraction. After Gary left, I jumped back into the Ops Cell. At that time, we had mobilised all our Watch Managers and only had 4 GM's and 6 SM's available across all of London. These would either be deployed to the fire at Grenfell or to other incidents across London, so I couldn't call anyone else in. We had to wait for other officers to come on duty.

At 0600-0630 hours the Establishments and Performance Team (EPT) who usually work out of Stratford arrived. On a daily basis they deal with allocating training and transfers etc. They had access to computer systems that I didn't, and could see who was on training courses and who could be called in to assist. I was able to use these personnel to bolster my cells, to make them more robust and more efficient. I added EPT SM Chris LEYTON to the Planning Cell and later added SM Joe KENNY. I also added a Watch

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Manger to this cell but I can't recall his name. Another Station Manager, Mark REED was given the Ops cell. Mark has done this role before and was really good. He took a lot of pressure off the Ops side of things and gave me some good prompts. So for example, he suggested a regroup meet to clarify positions and issues. Consequently, at about 0700 hours we called everyone in to a meeting room and made sure that people knew what they were doing, that they had what they needed and a plan for the next 2 hours or so. I knew I'd be handing over at some point and wanted to give an up to date and concise plan for my relief. No notes were made of this meeting. WM Mick REX was given the Comms cell and was also very good. I gave him my Main Scheme radio so he could listen to the traffic. At some point during the shift, the calls stopped coming to me, but went straight to Mick and the Comms cell. At some point I added another Watch Manager to Resources but I can't recall who this was. So by 0700 hours I had 4 personnel in Planning and Logistics, 2 in Resources, 1 in Ops and 1 in Comms. Such staffing numbers are typical for the BCC.

After the meeting I spoke with Adrian and suggested that we look at reliefs for ourselves. I was knackered and so was he. We wanted officers with the right shift pattern, reasonable travel times and the appropriate experience. The DAC was decided on as Alan PEREZ and the GM to take over my role was decided as Simon TUHILL. Simon TUHILL arrived at about 0800- 0830 hours and I started the handover process. I showed Simon where the cells were and gave him some notes I had made and put in a file during my shift. They weren't great notes but I tried to put down what I had done, and the times and names for who I had spoken to and actions taken. Having passed them to Simon, I never saw them again and don't know where they are now. I asked the cell personnel to make notes and to take pictures of the whiteboards etc. This handover took 30-45 minutes.

When Alan PEREZ arrived he reviewed the operation of the BCC, introduced more structure and coordination around the cells and made sure that the communication channels were properly functioning and in line with policy. I had managed to get the cells up and running but Alan made them align more with the LFB policy. It's absurd to say, but in my shift I was 'firefighting'.

I will now detail the key considerations and decisions that were made during my shift. I spent the shift flitting between Control and Adrian, and the BCC. I wasn't making decisions in isolation, but constantly keeping Adrian abreast of what was happening.

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At about 0250 hours I had a conversation with AC1 who was Richard MILLS, as regards supplying 2 SM's to the Commissioners Group at Union Street to get that up and running. I utilised a Senior Control Officer in Control and together we identified personnel with the appropriate experience/skills and who were close by to Union Street. One of these SM's was Nick McCALLUM, who I knew. I didn't know the second SM selected.

At about 0320 hours it became clear that we didn't have enough DAC's and so Adrian asked me to recall them. I spent the next 20 minutes or calling 3 or 4 DAC's and asking them if they wanted to come back on duty. I spoke with DAC's Sabrina COHEN-HATTON and Jane PHILPOTT. I also left messages with DAC Rick OGDEN and DAC Wayne BROWN.

At about 0400 hours I first spoke with Lee DRAWBRIDGE who was in charge of the Command Support Sector at the incident ground. I ensured he knew the structure of the BCC and how to contact the cell leads. This then opened up a 4 way conduit between Adrian FENTON, Control, BCC and the scene. At some stage, I don't recall the time, Lee DRAWBRIDGE and I considered mutual aid in terms of other Brigades and whether we needed their assistance. In addition, other Brigades were contacting Control and offering their services and equipment. I recall a Control officer approaching me and saying that they had Hertfordshire on the phone offering their EDBA capability. I called Lee DRAWBRIDGE and made him aware of the offer and asked if he wanted them. He came back to me a short while later and the answer was 'no'. Surrey Fire Brigade also called and offered their Aerial Ladder. This was something that we did want and I had then to consider the logistics of this. I had to consider where was it coming from?', 'where do we want it?', 'how do we get it in?', 'who will it report to?', 'what channel does it need to be on?', 'what is its call sign?' etc.

At about 0530 hours I started looking at a relief programme. I was given the instruction from the incident ground that they needed 8 GM's and 10 SM's for the 0800 relief. The cells were up and running by this point, but I still did some of this work myself. Richard TAP and I started to review what SM and GM were coming on, and on what rota. We also had officers phoning up and volunteering to come on duty early. We made a note of those officers and agreed to use those first. In the end, we got all the GM's up and running a bit earlier than 0800 hours. In terms of SM's we got 4 out of the 10 required running early.

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It was really quite an involved piece of work involving a lot of logistics, checking STARS a lot of liaison with Control.

At about 0600 hours I started looking at plans for counselling and debriefing crews. One aspect of this was with regard to the Control Officers. They had taken some seriously difficult calls and we organised for a counsellor to come into Stratford. We also decided to use Paddington Fire Station as a staging area to try to debrief as many crews as possible in order to record their actions at the scene, but also to provide counselling for them. We were tasked to get 2 counsellors from their place of work in Euston, blue lighted to Paddington. Sabrina COHEN-HATTON was posted there as the DAC and I had a few conversations with her as regards using more than one location to debrief. However, Paddington is a large station with lots of offices and parking spaces, and it was too complicated and time consuming to split into other stations.

At about 0630 hours we looked at Strategic Resource (SR) for the next day and whether we would cancel this. By this time, Chris LEYTON from EPT was in, and he had a good knowledge of this area of work and the computer programmes linked to it. I tasked him to go away and assess this. Cancelling SR it wasn't a decision to be made by me, but the information as regards the numbers of personnel and appliances involved in it, was needed for the AC or the Commissioner to make that decision. We also looked at how many personnel were on booked BABCOCK training events and how many were on their own local training. We fed all of this information into the Commissioners Group but I have no knowledge of their ultimate decision.

At 0700 hours the SM and GM reliefs started to be implemented. At this time a message came back from the incident ground about the placement of the appliances, blocking others from leaving. I subsequently asked Planning and Resources to see if our LFB minibuses were available and if so, whether we could use them to take people to the scene and take others away. Control assisted here as they searched and identified drivers who were blue light trained to complete this task.

By 0740 hours, the counsellor Anne SCOGGINS had completed all she could do at Control. She then requested to go to Paddington to assist further, and we arranged for her to be blue lighted over there. By this time we were starting to release SM's from Stratford and I think it was one of these who took her across.

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Lee DRAWBRIDGE and I also had to consider our diesel supplies for the pumping appliances at the scene and arrange for the Brigade Distribution Centre (BDC) to be set up to facilitate this supply. The BCC ensured that there was a portable toilet supplied to the scene and that it had a place to go. We also had a discussion about recalling the Inter Agency Liaison Officers (ILO) Group instead of recalling more officers. I recall a decision was made at the Fire Ground to have all of the EDBA at the scene so we ensured that all of the Operational Support Units (OSU's) were open and ready and coordinated the delivery of the cylinders. The other big issue for us to consider was the EDBA. We asked a series of questions as regards the EDBA wearers; 'How many were we going to need, what were the requirements, what was being used, and how many would be needed further on?' We were told that the Fire Ground required 10 EDBA wearers per hour. I then tasked Chris LEYTON to look at this and to see where we could source them. EDBA wearers are all attached to Fire Rescue Units (FRU's) so we had to consider either stripping complete stations or to spread the demand and take a few from each so that we retained our resilience in those areas. Ultimately, the decision was to take them from different areas and for us to supply 30 wearers after 0930 hours. We then had to consider the practicalities of how we would do this.

At some point during the shift, Control contacted us with the information that a Watch Managers wife had called in to say that she had gone into labour. We then had to contact the Command Support Unit on the Fire Ground so that they could find him and make arrangements to get him out.

At about 0830 hours DAC Alan PEREZ and GM Simon TUHILL arrived and myself and Adrian FENTON commenced the handover. After the handover I went for breakfast with Adrian at a local café. We both needed to talk and download. We left the building at about 0900 hours to get something to eat and I eventually went home at about 0945 hours. Having got home, I couldn't sleep and made the mistake of turning on the TV and watching the fire. I still couldn't believe what I was seeing. I debriefed myself; 'did I do this?, did I do that?, should I have done that differently?' I also had some guilt about not being there at the scene. This then morphed into relief at not being there. I had all of this milling through my mind for the rest of the day.

Throughout my shift in the BCC I had sight of a TV. It was showing a BBC channel. I saw the Tower and flames going all the way up on one side and flame going up most of another side. It was quite shocking.

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This feed was turned on at about 0330 hours and it was actually very useful for us to see what was happening at the scene. I've never seen anything like it. I've seen fire burst out of a window and roll up to a floor above, but it was surreal to see what was happening there. It was unbelievable and shouldn't have been happening.

The fire should have been contained in the flat of origin. Block of flats are built as concrete units. The fire might have busted out of the window and gone up to the floor above but it should stay in that flat long enough for us to get in there and put it out without it rolling anywhere else. The 'Stay Put Policy' states that if the fire is in your flat, and it's safe to get out, then you should shut as many doors as possible and make your escape. If you're unable to get out then you should shut as many doors between you and the fire as possible, block the doorway and then get to a window to shout for help, get fresh air and wait for us to come and rescue you. If you're not in the affected flat then you should stay where you are, because you should be in a contained unit, built for that purpose. If you leave your flat, you're going out into a more dangerous environment where there is smoke and heat in the corridors. As regards Grenfell I don't know who made the decision about changing the advice. I would imagine it was the Incident Commander in conjunction with Control, but I don't know. I was not involved in this in any way.

More personnel supplied earlier would have assisted me at the BCC as I could have got the cells up and running much quicker. Personally, being more familiar with the IT I needed, might also have assisted. This really was an unprecedented, unique incident. We had to deal with it as it happened and think on our feet. As an organisation we're quite good at this, and so we coped using what we had. We had great accommodation and facilities for the BCC so it worked. We needed to be near Control as phones would not have worked on the night. Having the ability to walk upstairs made communication it a lot easier.

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