

**WITNESS STATEMENT**

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

Statement of: COLLINS, STEVEN

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

Occupation: FIRE OFFICER

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This statement (consisting of 17 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 COLLINS

Date: 16/01/2018

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

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This statement refers to my attendance at the GRENFELL TOWER fire on WEDNESDAY 14 JUNE 2017 as part of the London Fire Brigade (LFB) response to this incident.

After leaving Grenfell Tower and returning to PADDINGTON FIRE STATION I completed some notes in relation to this incident. These notes were made contemporaneously on 14 JUNE 2017, which I now exhibit as SMC/4.

The people that I will mention in my statement are: Dan HARRIMAN crew manager from Paddington in charge of A213; Jamal STERN crew manager of G33 at Kensington; Ray KEANE firefighter from Paddington and pump operator;; Mike DOWDEN watch manager at North Kensington and the initial IC1 (Incident Commander); Gary WILSON watch manager special operations group who was called on for the Positive Pressure Ventilation; Will MURPHY firefighter from Ealing fire station, G25, I believe riding Acton's pump ladder (G261) as a standby that night; Chris REYNOLDS firefighter driver of A213; Nathan Ashe, crew manager from Chelsea; Steve MILLS firefighter who was driving the appliance I was in, A211; Guy TILLITSON CM on A211; Dave O'NEILL group manager now DAC; Crew Manager GALLAGER who told me about the firefighter lift; Chinese guy on the eleventh (11<sup>th</sup>) floor; deceased male casualty; deceased male casualty that lost his leg and struck firefighter Chris REYNOLDS; Two (2) people on the fifth (5<sup>th</sup>) floor that we rescued.

I joined the fire brigade in February 1995. I then became a leading firefighter in either 1999 or 2000 I can't remember which, then a sub officer in 2001 / 2002, then a Watch Commander as it was then, it changed to Station Officer on second last promotion round to that, in 2004. In 2004 to 2008 I was a Fire

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Investigation Officer. Between 2008 to 2012 I was a Watch Manager in charge of West Hampstead. From 2012 to September 2017 I was Watch Manager in charge of the Red Watch at Paddington fire station. I am now Watch Manager at London Fire Brigade (LFB) attached to Operations Policy at LFB HQ. At the time of the fire I was Watch Manager of Red Watch at Paddington Fire Station.

At Paddington there are four (4) fire engines. You have got a pump ladder. That always ends in a 1. Paddington's primary call sign is a A21 and so Paddington's pump ladder will be A211. Then we have got a pump which is a second fire engine and that will be staffed by a crew manager as the appliance commander. The pumps will always end in 2. So using our prefix of A21 it will be A212. We have got a turntable ladder which will be staffed by, the appliance commander will be a crew manager, and this is a turntable ladder and turntable ladders have an ending of 3. So A213. Then we have got a fire rescue unit (FRU) again will be staffed by a crew manager in charge but could be a Watch Manager but generally Crew Manager. FRU always end in 6 so A216.

Out of nineteen (19) people on the watch at that time, seventeen (17) of them were on duty that night and they were all at this fire. I cannot remember who was riding which appliance. There will be a record somewhere I just can't remember.

Our shift started at eight (8) o'clock (2000 hours) on TUESDAY 13 JUNE 2017. Around about 0114 hours in the morning on WEDNESDAY 14 JUNE 2017 the bells went down at the fire station and a pump was ordered to an incident. I did not go down to the teleprinter to see what it was. It was just pump only. I think that went on make pumps six (6). About a minute after or maybe two (2) a Turntable Ladder (TL) was ordered to an incident also, so I was thinking this is interesting, what is happening, for both appliances to be called out. Again, I didn't go down to the taele-printer. Then at about 0120 hours in the morning myself A211 pump ladder with me in charge and A216 FRU unit were ordered to an incident. So when Mike DOWDEN made the incident a six (6) pump fire, A212 was despatched. Mike DOWDEN is the Watch Manager at North Kensington so he was the initial IC1 (Incident Commander) at Grenfell Tower and his appliance call sign number was G271. I believe Mike requested an aerial at this point but there was a delay in the despatching of that so A213 about a minute or two (2) minutes later was despatched. Then when he made pumps eight (8), as part of that A216 should have really gone on the six (6) as the Fire Rescue Unit (FRU) but A211 and A216 were despatched on that.

I went down and saw that was I believe an eight (8) pump fire at Grenfell Tower. I was not aware of where this was. I knew that it was on North Kensington's ground but I was unfamiliar with the building. I did not know any more than that. I was not aware of any preprepared fire plan for Grenfell Tower. We

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mounted the truck and pulled out. I went in A211. Steve MILLS was driving. In our appliance there was me, Steve MILLS, Guy TILLITSON and two (2) other firefighters on the back but I don't recall who they were. There were five (5) of us including a crew manager on the back which is unheard of. Most of the fire engines that turned up had a full complement of people. We were well resourced. I had no previous knowledge of Grenfell Tower, had not worked there before and had not been there to do a section 7 (2) d visit.

Very shortly after pulling out I heard the makes pump ten (10) and in quick succession make pumps fifteen (15), from G271, so we obviously knew we had something going on. Navigating our route to the tower itself it was quiet a convoluted route. There were roads that were shut off to roadworks and we had to double back on ourselves. Looking on the Mobile Data Terminal (MDT), which is an on-board computer on the fire engine, I was map reading that trying to give direction to my driver, explaining to the crew and relaying the information was getting over the radio to them. I don't recall getting any additional information or updates on the MDT. As we turned into LANCASTER ROAD I believe it was, my driver said to me 'don't worry guv I've got this' and pointed out the window. At that point I looked up from the screen and I could see what looked like a roman candle of the building alight. At that point I took some pictures of it to get some time snaps of that. I now exhibit these photos as Exhibit SMC/5.

My initial thoughts were that this fire is on the outside of the building. When they have got scaffolding up you've got the facia, the netting on the outside. That's what it looked like. It looked so unrealistic for a building to be that alight, structurally, as opposed to something on the outside. Generally when I have experienced these before it was a fire that started low down and just run up the netting and set that alight. Once nearing it, once off the truck and could see it, I could see it was structural. There was no builders netting, it was actually structural. It was pretty apparent that it was the outside of the building that was promoting the fire spreading so quickly. Getting there, it was quite awe inspiring, quite captivating, everyone was swearing expressing their disbelief of what we were seeing. To see something all the way up like that, fires don't normally spread that like that. It was unusual, I've never seen or been to anything like this before. Because of the nature of this fire, you could see this was going to be a disaster. Policies would be a guidance but in this incident this was going to be more about needing to get it done, get people out, and saving life as the priority over trying to put the fire out. That fire didn't seem stoppable, it was too quick and too established.

We turned into a road quite near the tower, I can't remember the what road was called but is where the command unit had just pulled up in front of us. Initially we parked approximately one hundred and fifty

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(150) to two hundred (200) metres away from Grenfell Tower. Looking at a map now I think that we would have parked in BOMORE ROAD. The journey took roughly six (6) or seven (7) minutes. I think we probably got there about 0133 hours maybe. Something like that. We attended after the fire had spread beyond the initial flat. Our appliance stayed there the whole time, it didn't move. It was totally grid locked and we were blocked in. We walked down GRENFELL ROAD down towards the tower that way. I exhibit an area map showing our route into Grenfell Tower and where we parked A211 pump appliance as Exhibit SMC/2.

I think just as we arrived they made it make pumps twenty (20). We pulled up, got off. Mike DOWDEN approached us, in a white hat, approached my fire engine and said 'can I have four (4) people in BA' (breathing apparatus). We were riding five (5) people so the driver and the three (3) on the back got rigged in BA. I checked into the command unit with roll board. I made my way down to the tower as my guys were still getting their BA sets on and getting sorted out. As I went down the side that was where the aerial appliance was, where Surrey's aerial appliance was eventually, I think that's probably the south side, where the green was, the grass play area, that was probably, an inverted triangle going upwards, it was probably fifty percent (50%) alight that side, debris was falling down. I said to Mike DOWDEN who just appeared again, watch manager G27, 'should I set the ground monitor up?' We had been doing training at Paddington on ground monitors and using them as covering jets for high rise fires only four (4) weeks ago prior to that, so it was something fresh in my mind and thought that we should do that. He said 'yes absolutely, can you get that sorted'. I started sorting that out.

I exhibit a map of Grenfell Tower walkway and my locations as Exhibit SMC/1. With reference to SMC/1. 'GM' is where I started to set up the Ground Monitor initially. When A213 being our turntable ladder has made its way down. There is a covered/raised walkway and it came from underneath it and took the position where I was going to put the ground monitor. A21 3 came into that point there where I have marked. The tower was about that much alight in an inverted triangle at that stage (marked on diagram).

The ground monitor traditionally is under used. Just used on piles of rubbish, it has a defusing head initially. So basically, I only had a single line of hose going into this. It has a single instantaneous 65mm coupling male on it, and the female end of the hose connects onto it which connects onto the pump. The pump pumps water into it. It's basically a big jet. As opposed to a handheld jet. It delivers maximum one thousand nine hundred and fifty (1,950) litres per minute. That's it's maximum discharge rate. So it's a massive volume of water that goes through. Because of the way, the jet reaction involved with that, it

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would be unwise and undesirable to have that as a hand held jet as you'd be thrown around everywhere.

So it's floor mounted. It has a pivot head so that you can adjust it and it shoots water up. Since the incident at Grenfell Tower we have done further experiments at Paddington so if you twin it and a collecting breach connected to it, we are getting about eleven floors with a covering jet.

Just then, as I got the ground monitor laid out, our turntable ladder, A213, appeared next to me with my crew manager and one of my firefighters on. I said to them 'are you going to take over this then?' As they wanted to position where I was going to put the ground monitor. I was going to put the ground monitor up to try and fire stop, to stop the fire spreading round, to try and limit it as much as possible. They said 'yeah, I'm going to take that'. They pulled into to the position where I was. I pulled the ground monitor out of the way, it didn't have any water running through it at this time, there were hoses but, might not even have been connected. We then used the hoses that were going to go to the ground monitor to feed into the back of the turntable ladder. I started helping them set that up. They were getting it pitched and set up. Putting the jacks out.

At that point Mike DOWDEN came out from somewhere around the back of A213 and said 'Steve, can you take yourself and two (2) firefighters and go up to the walkway?', which is a raised walkway on the second floor that linked into Grenfell Tower. He said 'can you go up there, there is a flat on the second floor where we believe people are going to be exiting out. Can you take an IEC kit (Immediate Emergency Care pack), a first aid kit, and render first aid to any people coming out of that. So I grabbed a couple of firefighters and an IEC kit and we made our way up there.

When we got up there, there was no one presenting themselves as needing rescuing. I could see the flat he was talking about, the window of that was open, where the walkway meets the tower. There was also a metal fence, an eight (8) foot high metal fence, railed fence round it in a courtyard around it, around this flat. So even if somebody had got out of the flat you couldn't have got any further then just this fence.

At the time this fence was locked, it was probably six (6) to eight (8) feet high. Obviously stopping people breaking into that flat from this side and flats here. A lot of people around, people coming down the stairs here as we were going up. A lot of residents as you can imagine. A lot of shouting, a lot of hysteria going on. There was loads of people from the low rise flats where this walkway linked in to. A lot of noise, a hell of a lot of noise, a lot of people screaming, people screaming who weren't in the building people screaming who were in the building. You could hear it more from around the grass verge side of the building. A lot of screaming coming from that. It just sounded like swallows, like swallows in

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the summer you know when they whistle and whirl around, it sounded like, I remember that in my right ear.

Two (2) people then appeared up on the fifth (5<sup>th</sup>) floor, directly above. Two (2) males presented themselves and said they needed rescuing. They said they were trapped by smoke, and we were saying 'Is there no way you can get down via the stairwell?' and they were saying 'no, no'. They needed rescuing. I detailed the two (2) firefighters and said go down and get the nine (9) metre ladder and asked them to get a toolbox because I thought we might have to unbolt this fence to get the ladder in to it. Whilst they went off I actually found that there was a padlock on one point of it with an FB, one of our fire brigade keys unlocked it and I opened the gate so we had clear access in there to get the ladder in. They turned back up with the nine (9) metre ladder. We pitched the nine (9) metre but it was too short.

At that point a crew manager from Chelsea turned up. He said 'guv, why don't we get a 135 (13.5 metre ladder) up here'. I said 'how are we going to get that up here?', there is no way we are going to get that up the stairwell'. He said 'just haul it aloft'. I said 'alright' that was a great idea. We shouted down to the crews below to get a 135 and they took that off G271 as best I recall. We didn't actually see it because G271 was parked underneath the raised walkway and was one of the first appliances on site. The crews we shouted down to got it from there which would have been the nearest truck. Between them pushing it up and us attaching a line, a rope, to the top of it we managed to pull it up over the top of a parapet wall into this little courtyard with the assistance of members of the public as well, they assisted. Pulled it up two (2) floors to get it up there, from ground floor. Ushered the members of the public out now as we didn't want them there while we were pitching it. Pitched the 135 between four (4) of us and then I detailed one (1) of the firefighters to go up and escort the two (2) residents down. They went up and left one (1) firefighter footing the ladder. I detailed another firefighter to go down to get the ground monitor I had left downstairs.

The firefighter who went up the ladder was from North Kensington. He went up the ladder and escorted them down, rescued the two (2) adult male casualties from the fifth (5<sup>th</sup>) floor. I don't know this firefighters name. It took ages. I had virtually set up the ground monitor over on this side (on the walkway) and was thinking what's he still footing the ladder for?.

When I detailed the firefighter to go down and get the ground monitor I said 'can you run some hose out what I want to do is set a ground monitor up, up on this walkway, again as a fire stop, to try and stop the fire spreading around. I could see it was obvious what was happening. You could see it just creeping around. When I say creeping, it was going pretty fast. It felt pretty quick.

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The turntable ladder was still up at this point, It was tackling the blaze on the grass verge side of the building, they were taking a right hammering they were, there was loads of debris coming down. They had to re-house it and pull back a bit just because of the amount of debris they were getting. We got the ground monitor set up, trying to link it in. As we got the ground monitor set up, people started appearing at the windows on that side of the building where I was. So above where the entrance to Grenfell Tower is.

So I radioed down to the crew manager, my crew manager from Paddington on A213, Dan, stop firefighting mate, I need you now to pitch the turntable ladder (TL) to do some rescues. He got down. The driver had obviously gone off somewhere else so he was on his own down there dealing with it. He was trying to sort the hose out, as it was being used as a water tower, he had to manage the hose at the same time, house the ladder and rejig it, relocate it. These people probably on the ninth (9<sup>th</sup>) floor, on the right hand side initially, so he tried to get the ladder up to them, the turntable ladder up to them, actually, he got the TL down before that because the people we got the 135 up for had asked him if you can pitch to get to that but he said no way it couldn't reach can't get to it, and we got the 135 up to it which was the solution for that. But there were people on the ninth (9<sup>th</sup>) floor who were probably above where the walkway is but on the right hand side of the entrance into the tower. Got the TL, got as near as he could to them but it wouldn't reach, couldn't get it near. You can get ten (10) floors out of the turntable ladder but that's straight up reach, close up to the tower in ideal conditions. However, at Grenfell Tower because of the bollards down on the ground floor and the parked cars we couldn't get the jacks out far enough to give it enough stability. You can't override the turntable ladder's alarms it will stop you. If you over stretch the TL it will topple over so the alarms are going off. I also don't think there would have been any way to move the parked cars or bollards and even if you could have, there was very little room. It wasn't a viable option. Dan couldn't take the TL any further. He said 'Gov I've given them advice, they look alright at the moment' so Ok. So they rehoused the ladder then, the TL, and pulled it back under the walkway as they couldn't do any more, the debris was raining down. As he was coming, when he was going to get up in the cage he had to walk up the ladder he couldn't put the cage down on the floor so he had to just walk up the ladder. It was just like someone was on top of the building just throwing metal at him. It looked like something from the beachhead of Saving Private Ryan, it was just crazy.

We set up the ground monitor and just started projecting the jet up on the corner area really trying to protect that as much as possible. It was having an effect up to as far as it could reach which was probably

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about ninth (9<sup>th</sup>) or tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) floor. We had one (1) hose to it. We were already two floors up so at most during the incident we were perhaps getting to about eleven (11) or twelve (12) floors up. We were getting way over pressure what it should be. The optimum pressure is seven (7) to eight (8) bars and Ray was giving me about fifteen (15) bars pressure to try and reach as far as we could.

It was holding the fire to that level as best we could but anything above that we were just losing it. At that point I remember someone. There were just people appearing at windows on my side and they were looking to climb out, straddling the windows. People getting twitchy on that side. I was concerned that once one person jumps, they will all do it. People will think that's it, there's no chance of us getting saved. Twin towers kind of thing. They are going to die if they jump out. At least they will have a chance of coming out if we can get to them. Some did. There were some that had linked up some bedding and started to climb out down that. Advised them to stay put. Stay where they are, we will get to you. I got one of the firefighters to go down and get me a megaphone and I just started shouting 'stay where you are' 'stay where you are'. This may have been about half two maybe (0230 hours), quarter to three (0245 hours).

At that point I still believed that they had a real chance of fire crews getting up to them and getting them out. That was the best chance of survival. Certainly jumping out of the window they weren't going to survive. They were way too high. So the advice from me for them was 'stay where you are we will get to you' seemed relevant.

I was very diverted at this point flitting backwards and forwards from the monitor and trying to keep them where they were.

The stay put policy is the standard guidance given. The reason is that each, certainly in purpose built blocks, each unit should have an hours fire resistant capability whereby generally we will either put the fire out or if it's a fire in a flat next door it will have burnt itself out even if we made no intervention at all. So people are far safer staying where they are in their flat if they are not affected by smoke or fire itself.

Policy aside, operationally, their best chance of getting out if they couldn't get out down the stairs because they were feeling that they were trapped. Their best chance of getting out alive was having firefighting crews going and meeting them and taking them out. Even if they took them through smoke filled conditions and end up passing out or even dying on the way out they have got more chance of post rescue recovery coming out that way then they have jumping out of twelve (12), fourteen (14), sixteen (16) floors drop. That's my understanding of it.

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I knew there were firefighters in the building trying to save people. Although I was seeing no positive signs of firefighting actions I knew that there was a hell of a lot of activity going on within that building. It was just a matter of doing what we could from the outside to try and keep the fire back as much as possible whilst those actions were being undertaken.

The crowd were getting quite restless on this side, on the left side and low rise flats. Police turned up in riot gear so they were clearing the flats, clearing them out of the way. Up on the walkway, they were evacuating the residents out as initially they were quite reluctant to leave. There was a big safety issue with radiating heat, things dropping down. They were quite proficient at getting people out of the neighbouring building. I think they cleared the flats about two (2) or three (3) times but there were still people within them, still in there.

At that point once the turntable ladder was housed, Dan came up with Chris, that's the driver of the turntable ladder and then a firefighter from Ealing who was with me on the ground monitor. They got a hose reel up there and started tackling the burning debris that was falling down from the tower that would have set alight to the low rise flats, they were putting them out. Putting the bits of fire, the debris from that, out. It felt like the blitz, that's what it felt like, not that I was ever there obviously but there was stuff just raining down and just as close as you are to me lumps of burning insulation and metal. It was mad. More people were just appearing within the tower and then I was just saying stay put.

I couldn't see any positive signs whatsoever from inside the building. As a watch manager, quite often in the incident command you get to see changes of smoke, jets coming out, you get to see stuff like that, positive signs that we are making an impact but there was nothing. It was just getting worse and worse. Flats where people were and we couldn't get them out. Within fifteen (15) to twenty (20) minutes those flats were alight and it was just. It got to that point, if you're on the tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) floor or below I could stop it with the jet but other than that you're stuck I'm afraid and that was it. It felt very helpless and it felt. Anyway, we were there staying, doing all we could. The firefighter from Ealing carried on damping down stuff that was falling down.

And then it seemed probably an hour later maybe more Chris must have been downstairs it must have been a bit more. I got reports that someone had jumped out the building from our side and had struck one of my firefighters Chris on the way down and they said he had lost his leg, not Chris, the guy who had jumped down. I remember thinking I hope that Chris is alright. Over a period of time later, I was thinking 'how have they lost a leg on the way down' and the only place I could think was to hit the parapet. Maybe the leg was somewhere up near where I am. There was a lot of debris around on the floor at this time. So I

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remember thinking right Ok, I detailed the firefighter from Ealing just take hold of the ground monitor for a minute I'm going to have a look around and see if I can find this guy's leg to reunite it that might be of benefit. I don't recall what time this was but I'd have said it was probably about half an hour, three quarters of an hour after the jumper hit Chris to me going to look for his leg.

So I'm walking along, the walkway is to my right. Stopped raining as much stuff down at this point. I remember looking at it and surveying the whole scene. The nine (9) metre ladder laying there because it didn't reach. There was just foam and debris and it just looked ridiculous. So I walked down to the courtyard area to where we had the 135 ladder pitched, where we done the two (2) rescues earlier and I noticed someone. I didn't see a leg. I'm guessing that the person that struck Chris didn't hit our parapet. There was a slight cover for the entrance into Grenfell Tower and maybe he hit that. I don't know. I didn't see a leg. I didn't see blood or any evidence of a strike.

At the gate, I just saw, I could see someone in amongst the debris. There wasn't a massive amount. A lot of panels were coming down so I remember there was one, quite a big two (2) metre by one (1) metre panel that was all buckled and curled up sort of laying across him. I remember, because I pulled that out of the way cause we're going to have to get this out of the way whilst I am waiting for the two (2) firefighters, the crew manager the firefighter, to come and give me a hand. I was just literally at the base of the ladder. It wasn't near enough to be touching it but he was laid on his back right by the base of the ladder. I now produce Exhibit SMC/3 - location of male body by 135 ladder.

I later also took some photographs. I didn't take them at the time, but rather afterwards once we had recovered him. I did not take any pictures of him. The reason I later took some photos was because when doing Coroners and fire investigation reports it's nice to be able to have something to place it to. He must have been in and around that area otherwise I wouldn't have focussed so much on it (see Exhibit SMC/5/29). I think that blue part is the bit I pulled off him. Yeah. So I took these pictures specifically to know where he was.

He was in amongst the debris. He was quite visible but not, not, he hadn't, it didn't feel like he had got there very recently because of the amount of debris that was over the top of him. To me it appeared that he had jumped. There was debris over the top of him so he had obviously been there for a little while. He was motionless. The guy was laying up that way on his back. With a burn to his right forearm. I called the two (2) people over and pulled the debris off him. I did not see any personal possessions on or near him. I didn't notice anything in the debris near him and do not recall seeing a phone.

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I remember he was, he had a burn to his right arm on the forearm sort of area and around by the elbow.

I'm no doctor but he looked pretty dead. I called the guy from Ealing and there is a crew manager, Jamal STERN that turned up around this time. I called him over. I said come on guys. Then I think we just grabbed him. I said right 'let's just get him over there and pulled him out of the way. There was still stuff raining down. Let's get him out of the hazard zone. So we grabbed him. I was on his left side so his arm underneath, hand underneath his armpit and had hold of his waist belt and trousers on this side. Someone else, dunno that must have been Will MURPHY on the other side with the same grip as me and Jamal STERN had hold of his head and we picked him up. He was quite heavy and we dragged him over, across more debris unfortunately, him over and into the walkway. There were no noises, there was nothing that gave me an idea that there were any signs of life in him. There was no response to physical touch or moaning or groans or anything. Or movement of the eyes, he looked dead. We dragged him out into the walkway, or the sheltered walkway within the low rise flats, so we pulled him into the lobby area and we laid him down in there.

The reason we moved him into the lobby was shelter out of the hazard zone. So if we are going to do any assessment and give any first aid then let's get him out into a place where we can actually do it. There was a lot of water raining down. Despite all the debris we were getting soaked just standing there. The hoses going into the dry riser had burst so there was a fountain of water coming over the walkway and us. So that was it, just get him out of the hazard zone and then let's make an assessment from that. Like I said, it just seemed like Armageddon. How bad is this going to get. Is this whole walkway, in the end, going to be covered in burning debris and he was going to be in a worse position. I think that was as basic as my decision making had got but certainly let's get him out and we are in a safer position, he is in a safer position, he is not going to get any worse. We had a roof over us. There was a door. The lobby seemed relatively unaffected apart from the odd bits of debris that were around the front of the doorway to it. The lobby itself was clear. The debris was hitting these roofs. Once you were inside the lobby you were fine because it had a door, but the roof would have been covered in debris. The idea of mentally noting it and then photographing it after at least we will record where he was.

The door to the lobby was just a local authority security coded perhaps composite door. I don't recall if it was unlocked but we got straight in. It had drop key access. I left my drop key dangling in there and then had to go back and retrieve them later.

I grabbed the IEC pack which we had laying down there from when we first went up which was by where the ladder was. I then went over the two (2) firefighters Jamal STERN G331 and Will MURPHY and said

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ok, he don't look very good but get the ICE pack, get the defib on him and see if he is worth shocking. He looked, he looked, he'd need a lot more than me or anyone else who wasn't a saint to bring him back I think, he looked like he had gone. I went off then to find somebody to get the LAS (London Ambulance Service) to come up and do an assessment. But to all intensive purposes he looked pretty dead. He wasn't burnt but his eyes looked dead. They were pretty much in the back of his head.

I must have met a Group Manager somewhere up on the walkway or somebody up there, there was definitely somebody, and I said to them 'can you go and get the LAS?' I am pretty sure that it was a crew manager from Chelsea called Nathan. I don't recall his surname. Anyway, Nathan, he went down to sort the LAS out, to get them to come up and have a look. Nathan kept flitting up and down, he kept coming up on the walkway and then not on the walkway. I said 'Nathan we've got a, looks like we've got a casualty over there. Can you go and get the LAS. He looks like he is dead but we need it pronouncing'. He said 'yeah sure' and he disappeared off. I came back to the two (2) firefighters and explained to them what we were doing.

When I came back the two (2) guys were 'no sorry, no shock advised'. I don't think anyone did CPR on him but I am not sure. I think we all came to the same conclusion he was not a saveable life but we are not doctors. As you can appreciate it was quite a dynamic and stressful situation. We have all seen dead people before. He looked dead, he didn't look saveable. Personally I remember thinking there is nothing more I can do for him. There is far more valuable things I can do, be putting water on this fire, trying to save other people.

I left one (1) firefighter, Will, with him and went back to the ground monitor. Jamal came over to me. It seemed like five (5) or ten (10) minutes later the LAS came in from the left side, the hard hat team. So it was that hectic that to triage the event there was nothing more I can do for you mate I need to leave you here and I need to try and save any more people we can get. In my head the more I can save that building the more chance of my guys or crews in there getting in and rescuing people. That was my thought process. There were other things to be getting on with. That was how it was.

The guy was in jeans, like a vest top, he may have had brown shoes on, brown leather shoes. Unshaven. Jeans as in trouser jeans. Vest top — like the Americans wear underneath a shirt, like a vest. Sleeveless vest. Speculate dark colour, like 501 sort of colour (for the jeans). He had a belt, a waist belt on the jeans. I'm just trying to remember as we pulled him over his jeans were coming down. Like dead people are, like a sack of potatoes just falling between your hands. I never had any gloves on so I could feel his temperature. He was, I'd have said he was there for a while, he wasn't cold but he felt like if someone had

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been, if you'd been out in the cold with hardly any clothes on and had been exposed to the elements for half an hour that's what I'd have said was the time frame of it. He felt warm, he wasn't stone cold but certainly there was a chill to his outer skin so he hadn't recently jumped. And there was quite a bit of debris on top of him which, when I say quite a bit I mean three (3) or four (4) bits that we had to push off him.

Physical appearance. I would say he is of middle eastern origin. Sort of a typical Arabic sort of stubbly face that sort of. He just looked typically middle eastern Arabic sort of look. He was probably quite heavy, I would say probably between about sixteen (16) to eighteen (18) stone and he was, he wasn't over over weight. He was probably between thirty (30) and forty (40) years old. His lips, I think he had black soot around his lips / around his mouth. Not a massive amount but certainly they didn't look normal, they looked like that had been affected. Quite dry as well like maybe had taken some heat in as a result. His eyes were like semi open. They looked very dried, like someone who had been in a fire. They were not burnt but like they had felt some heat at some point. On his forearm he had a big red patch on his arm like that. It wasn't, it wasn't full thickness burns or anything but it was certainly superficial to a little bit more. There was no blood. When I first saw him he was laid on his back. He was looking toward (east) slightly inclined head facing that way. Which was facing away from where you were approaching him. He wasn't fully over but his head was away slightly. Had not seen him before he jumped. Absolutely no idea specifically where he had come from. I was surprised to find someone. I totally thought that there was just one jumper and that I might see a leg, a limb that we would try and re-unite with the jumper downstairs before it got burnt or whatever, I didn't know how far the situation was going to go up there. Then I came across him in the debris. I was like 'oh, ok'. I called the other guys across. Then we recovered him from there into this like lobby area to the second block of flats.

I couldn't place where he had jumped from because the people who were sort of dangling out of the window and who looked in the most peril were more in the middle and the right hand side of the building as I looked at it. Where he was, the fire had gone quite late to that point and it just seemed a bit. I could understand the guy who jumped out and hit Chris had probably come from but I couldn't see. It almost felt like, where they dangled the bedding from, that area there, that flat even perhaps, there were a few people in there. That flat maybe, that would have been where the jumper who hit Chris might have come from but the other one, this guy, I don't. When I have looked through, after when you look on the BBC website about Grenfell. Very likely this is the first guy who was named. The refugee that was named, the Syrian refugee that came over in 2015. He looked very similar to him, the same sort of build.

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The fire was going across. To my memory it seemed more severe in this area here and was spreading across certainly but hadn't impacted across as far as that. I remember thinking 'I can't think where you have jumped from mate, it's not as bad as it was where the other people were. It seemed out of context to a degree. It didn't fit with where I thought someone might be.

I did not see how he came to be wrapped up in plastic. I believe LAS did it. I didn't see them do it but I'm pretty sure that a conversation may have gone on between perhaps me and Will or me and Jamal and said that LAS had done that. It looked like a professional job, it didn't look like a member of the public has come along and done it. See the area kept getting evacuated and then people kept permeating back in. Members of the public kept permeating back in so at that point there were no members of the public around. When we dragged him in there, there were no members of the public in that lobby area. And then when the LAS were there I remember there were no, I don't remember seeing anyone else around that area, as in members of the public. But there were later on, people back there, in and around. As I say there were people around after he was wrapped up.

I do remember seeing him there a while after, like I say two (2) or three (3) or perhaps four (4) hours later, maybe even while I was wandering around taking the pictures. They had wrapped him up in a sheet, in a clear plastic sheet, like cocooned him almost. And he was left there. It seemed hours later and I thought to myself that 'this must be a really bad incident'. Not just from what I'm seeing but that there can't be any body recoveries, he is still left there, there is still members of the public walking around past this dead person cocooned in a clear polythene. He looked like he had been cling filmed effectively and was just laid there where we left him.

There were two (2) members of the public, one of them was bringing us a cup of tea down from the flats above and that would have been six / half seven and was he there then. I remember having a bit of horror in my own mind thinking I can't believe these members of the public are going to walk past this person wrapped up, but was this then or was this another time I cannot remember, I'm not sure.

I know I told someone that he was there but I can't remember who it was. I probably told senior officers that were coming up. They kept coming up. They were a little worried about the debris falling down on the walkway and us being in an exposed position. It would have been known.

After I left Will MURPHY with the (deceased) casualty waiting for the LAS I went back to the ground monitor on the walkway. I had never met Will before incident at Grenfell Tower, that was the first time. He was based at Ealing fire station which is G25. He was I believe riding Acton's pump ladder which will

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be G261 as a standby that night. They came on, we were both seventh (7<sup>th</sup>) and eighth (8<sup>th</sup>) machine. So our pump ladder and their pump ladder.

Anyhow, I carried on chasing the fire around. As the fire was going around we had to move the jet, had a burst length had to change that. Then it was daylight. There were two flats where people kept appearing. There was the Chinese guy and there was another guy further up. The Chinese guy was on about the eleventh (11<sup>th</sup>) floor and the other guy was probably about the thirteenth (13<sup>th</sup>) with two people that kept appearing at the window. I couldn't do much for them unfortunately. Their flat went. But the Chinese guy. The pump operator, on the pump that was supplying us. He could give us about fourteen (14) bar pressure on the monitor that would get the jet up and around so I could cocoon the Chinese guy who was trapped and keep pushing the fire out from around him, from the flats around him. But you would get about a minute and a half on the tank and it would overrun and Ray, that's my driver, would say 'ok gov, just need to fill it up again' so I would shut it off. He would go right 'ready to go' and it would be about a minute and a half later the tank would be ready to go and we would do that. I was on the jet and we had the guy from Ealing.

There was a point also, just to rewind it a bit. They used PPV (Positive Pressure Ventilation) on the tower. Gary WILSON, a Watch Manager in the Special Operations Group at LFB headquarters, he was called on for the PPV.

PPV is a relatively new technology to the London Fire Brigade, all be it not to the firefighting world in general. The objective would be to pressurise the stairwell because there was only one main stairwell for escape and for firefighting activities. Therefore, keeping the combustion outside the main stairwell and making it more tenable for people to escape. Unfortunately, it was quite late coming on. It is not on any front line appliance at the moment. It is still on its trial stage. So they ordered it on, I'd speculate they got it there about four (0400 hours) or five (0500 hours) in the morning — I don't specifically recall.

It wasn't particularly clear but we could see stuff falling down, spot stuff falling down. However, when they used the PPV it had a very detrimental effect to us on that walkway. It filled with smoke we couldn't see anything coming down, we basically had to tuck in really where we were and hope that nothing hit us. As I understand it, the PPV had a detrimental effect because the fire had gone too far really. The PPV created lots of smoke on the outside of the building particularly around the entrance area, that face, and on the walkway where I was there was. You couldn't see anything it was pretty untenable.

I'm not PPV trained and I wasn't on the ground floor when it was deployed but I suspect too much of the integral structure of the building had been compromised. Therefore, it was like a colander as opposed to

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an effective flow path channel which is what you want from PPV. So putting it in but it was just coming out from everywhere as opposed to just going out the one single route which is what you want. So consequently it is going to take the path of least resistance so come out on the ground floor and on the first floor.

Then it was light (daylight). It seemed like we were there for ages. At least twice we communicated down that there was a (Chinese) guy trapped on the eleventh (11<sup>th</sup>) floor. It was difficult to count. You couldn't see the floors from our side. If we counted two then that was our estimation where the walkway went to it and the rest of it was up above. We definitely communicated down that there was a guy trapped in there and they were trying to get to him.

The main burning of that side had ceased. There was still stuff going on, fires above it. It had diminished quite a lot, a lot of the flats had diminished by this time. It was about 0700 or 0800 in the morning. We were still keeping the Chinese guy as safe as possible.

Gary WILSON, one of the watch managers here, turned up. He said 'have you seen that guy trapped up there?'. 'Yeah yeah', we are aware of him. He said 'have you communicated with him' and I said 'no we haven't' but at this point I had kinda given up to a degree it was just that it was a matter of when he was going to die rather than if and it seemed that quite a few people died along that side and it sort of became, not desensitised but it felt hopeless, quite hopeless really. As much as we could do we were doing and then Gary took the megaphone and got on the roofs of the low rise building and started communicating with him to actually get his flat number so they could give a more specific direction to the BA crews on which floor he was. Unfortunately as it transpires the guy was blind so that made it a bit more difficult as well. They did get that communication to him and he indicated which flat he was in. Then I was told that Paddington were getting away over the handheld radio so I handed over to a firefighter, Will MURPHY as he was on a different appliance and they hadn't been called to be relieved yet. I just said 'mate, keep doing what we are doing. Just keep the jet going'. We had pretty much put the fire out all around him and there wasn't much more coming in to him, there was quite a bit above but it didn't look like it was going to go down to him. I think we had done the bulk of the work and then I was relieved. I went down to the Salvation Army van and had a sandwich. That was probably 0830 or 0900 I suppose.

The Salvation Army normally turn up to any fire which is eight (8) pumps and above. We walked away from the scene there was loads of people who had been in the fire wandering around, getting drinks etc. We probably left the site at about ten o'clock (1000 hours). Probably back at Paddington at roughly about

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quarter to eleven, eleven o'clock maybe (1045 to 1100 hours). We wrote up our notes and finished our duty that day at maybe half one (1330 hours), quarter to two (1345 hours).

Regarding the withdrawal of the stay put policy. I was told by a Group Manager, I think it might have been Dave O'NEILL who is now a DAC, I'm sure it was him that came up and said they've changed the guidance now from 'stay put' to 'self evacuate'. It was daylight, that's when he told me. How long ago that decision had been made I don't know. It was daylight when he told me. I remember thinking well, it's almost redundant. Anybody who could of got out would have got out by now. Anyone who can't was dead. He was the one that kept coming up to my area. It was certainly a group manager.

Mike DOWDEN was the initial incident commander at that time when I arrived. It was a quick 'Steve go and do this task'. I could see what we were faced with. I didn't need to tie him up any more than that or explore it any further.

So far as a Mike, I know Mike pretty well. Same rank. What happens is tasks appear during an incident and you tick them off when you delegate them to people and that's what he would have been doing there. For him, He'd have been going right, I need someone to go up to the walkway up on the second floor and deal with the people. Right, Steve, tick, that that's done. He would discharge that as my role, go and do that.

Mike was the initial incident commander. Even though we were the same rank. It was his ground. He's in charge. However, a 20 pump fire Mike isn't going to be in charge of it. I'm pretty aware that it will be someone with a thicker black stripe than that, all be it at the time I wasn't aware who the incident commander was after Mike.

There was a firefighting lift at Grenfell Tower however I understand that it was totally compromised with smoke when was summonsed. So it would have been when my pump turned up because it was crew manager GALLAGER who told me. He pressed for the firefighter lift and it came down to the ground floor and the doors opened and it was filled with smoke. So he (would have) thought ok we are not using that.

As far as I know, yes, there was only one stairwell and means of escape from the fire at Grenfell Tower. In relation to the fire and the windows they were UPVC, they opened inwards. They seemed to have a, like the ones I've got at home, you can either tilt them back in or you can fully open them in so you have got a full opening. I think the fire breached the windows quite easily from the outside thus causing fire spread into the flats but that's just purely just from what I've seen. I have no fact or science to back that up but that what it looked like it was compromising the UPVC.

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During the fire at Grenfell Tower there were massive sheets of aluminium coming down. The fire was spreading in an unusual fashion, it was coming down as well as up. As foam from the cladding panels was dripping down it was catching alight to the rest of it.

All four sides of the building had crews with covering jets. It would have been obvious task for firefighters to monitor fire spread without needing to delegate it. The four sides would be sectorised and will be dealt with by sector commanders. The sector commanders would communicate and coordinate between them and the incident commander for an overall tactical approach.

The firefighting tactics / equipment I observed being implemented to tackle the external fire included the TL and Pro Jet one's on two (2) of the other sides of the building. We had a ground monitor. There was a hose reel coming from the top of Surrey's TL or an ALP that was there. That was it. They were the covering jets.

One of the difficulties was that our jets would only reach part way up the building on an unusual and rapid fire, making it unstoppable to a degree. The circumstances of the incident and way the fire behaved prompted the focus on mass evacuation and saving life rather than firefighting. People were prompted to work outside of their usual firefighting practices to get the job done and save as many people as possible. There were many heroic deeds carried out that night and lots of actions that were just above and beyond. Everyone went above and beyond.

Another difficulty was radio communications. We generally use one channel for everybody so that's incident commander down to people who want an increase in pressure on their jets if they're not in BA. So if you are on the outside. So that radio channel becomes absolutely deluged with people that want to talk to one another. So you will get broken communications, you will get people who are waiting for ages to talk and whilst waiting to speak the situation will have evolved or changed anyway so it's not, not a great system.

There are more channels but the procedure is that fireground channel one (1) is the initial incident command channel or the initial channel apart from channel six (6) which is for breathing apparatus crews to communicate with entry control. The problem is that always the first stages of the fire are the most dynamic where most people need to talk to other people about what's going on. The channel gets wiped out.

Later on they did split the radio traffic and use extra channels. I was aware they had switched I believe channel two (2). But all I needed was channel one (1) between me and my pump operator Ray, that was

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the sphere of communication that I needed. I certainly wasn't ever going to get to speak to the incident commander. He would have had a million people to talk to.

I didn't enter Grenfell Tower and each of the tasks I performed were all external. I didn't hear any fire alarms. I didn't use a thermal imaging camera and was not wearing a body camera. I suffered three (3) injuries during the incident. One (1) to a hand where debris fell down and one (1) to a shoulder. I also suffered smoke inhalation from when they activated the PPV. I did not receive any first aid or later seek treatment from a GP for these.

I am considered competent in my firefighter training. We last did training on high rise a few weeks prior to the incident at Grenfell Tower. As they watch commanders we implement training. We train a lot. Paddington has such a concentration of high rise around it we train a lot, it's one of our major risks so. We probably train on it every other week, we will do some form of high rise training, be it setting up bridgeheads and using the new firebags or be it working with the turntable ladder or with the ground monitor. Pending on what aspect I want to take on it. But we do train a lot on high rise, it's a regular feature.

The tower in the yard we practice our on arrivals and gets everyone an idea of what everyone needs to do. Realistic training is a more subjective question. A realistic would be, probably Malton, which for me would be 2004 maybe. That will be when they set alight in the fire service college, to a building, in a high rise building you actually go and tackle it there.

I have experience firefighting in high rise blocks of flats. Quite a lot of incidents. Me personally putting water on anything, probably not since been a firefighter or a temporary crew manager. The last incident of putting water on something in a high rise would have been probably 2000 maybe, something like that, when we rescued a lady out of her flat. However, I've been on quite a lot, as an officer, I've been to quite a few high rise incidents where I've not been putting the water on them but certainly involved in the tactical decisions and supporting the tactical decisions that are employed. Most recently would have been the twenty pump fire in Shepherds Bush last summer in June or July (2016).

The Shepherds Bush fire is where I came up with the idea of playing with the ground monitor in the yard. The reason being, so turned up there, it was an eight (8) pump fire, they had enough people to go inside. I said to the incident commander 'can I get a covering jet on this to stop the calendar effect, it looks like it was going to spread up the side of the building. Really difficult to get around. We had to pitch a 135, two floors, go over a spikey fence, very similar situation. Go right round this side, it was really difficult to get around there. Using a Pro Jet, which is our biggest hand held branch we've got and it wouldn't reach what

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I wanted it to. So by that time the fire was out anyway, it took that long to do it. So working on the tactical side, what can I do. Certainly dealing with far more landlocked high rise buildings in London now than ever before so therefore aerial's can't get there so what do we do, what extinguishing media do we deploy for this. So worked on the ground monitor. But that was my role there, was the covering jet on the outside of the building but it didn't pay off on that occasion. The learning from it helped on this occasion. At the time of this incident to my knowledge there were not any pre-prepared plans for fighting fire I search and rescue when compartmentation fails. High rise policy doesn't really encompass that. No, there are none but it is now being looked at. We evolve. The high rise policy prior to this had served us well. I had contact with members of the public as detailed further above in this statement. During the incident members of the public were screaming. They were getting quite agitated, 'why aren't we doing more?', 'why aren't you going in there?' but we just tried to calm them down as best as possible, that we were doing all we can, there are firefighting operations going on inside. Police were really good. Hats off to the police they were really good. Especially the tactical support group with the riot shields. They were commendable, very brave.

The police TSG guys were escorting anyone who needed to get into the tower under riot shield. Basically in almost a roman shield wall ferrying people back and forward to the tower. A relative as best they could safe system of work. I imagine they were getting struck, I didn't see it, struck fairly regularly as there was a lot of stuff coming down. They were very brave. It's different for us we are used to dealing with fires. They were good, really good, impressive.

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