

**WITNESS STATEMENT**

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

Statement of: DUNCAN, STEVEN

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

Occupation: FIRE OFFICER

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This statement (consisting of 14 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 DUNCAN

Date: 08/02/2018

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

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I am the above named person and my details are known to Police. This statement is in relation to the Grenfell Fire which occurred on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> June 2017 and what my actions were on the night of the fire.

I didn't have any previous knowledge of Grenfell Tower via visits or attendance at previous incidents. Nor have I ever been to a Section 7(2)d familiarisation visit to Grenfell Tower or a similar high rise block of flats in the same area before 13<sup>th</sup> June 2017.

I have though completed a section 7(2)d familiarisation on a different block. This is where we do a visual check of high rise buildings, we look at how to get into the block, where the hydrants are placed, where to set up the appliances, is there a fire fighting lift etc., we look at all aspects of the building. All this information is then put onto a data base.

I have been a firefighter (FF) since 2010. I am based at Heston Fire Station. The night of the fire I was on night duty on the night of the fire at Grenfell Tower. I was posted as G382, I am part of Red Watch.

On Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> June 2017 I was started at 8pm. When we start the shift we have a role call. Role call is where we make sure that everyone is there, everyone has their equipment and everyone knows what they are doing. We would parade in full fire gear stand in front of the truck, lined up whilst the crew manager reads out our names and delegate our role. That night I was riding at the back of the pump.

The Fire fighters that were working alongside me that night were:

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Crew Manager: Paul MARKS.

Driver FF Russell HALL.

Fire Fighter Dan KNAPMAN.

On the FRU was:

Crew Manager Paul GRAY

Fire Fighter Dan PEGRAM.

Fire Fighter Gary HISCOCK

Fire Fighter Alan HUDSON

Fire Fighter Ben HOLEHOUSE

On the pump Ladder:

Fire Fighter Suzanne PURSEY

Fire Fighter Helen CHRISTMAS

Fire Fighter Chris LANG.

Fire Fighter Carrie WRIGHT.

Heston Fire Station is a Technical Rescue Centre. So we have a pump ladder which is where a watch manager is in charge, this rides a minimum of four people. We have a pump which is managed by a crew manager, minimum of four people and a maximum of six people on there. We also have an FRU a specialist Fire Rescue Unit. This rides a minimum of four people and a maximum of five people. It has specialist equipment on it to deal with certain situations for example it carries cutting equipment for road traffic accidents, water rescue equipment and line equipment. It can also be Urban Search and Rescue Capable. You would need though a minimum of three to be Urban Search and Rescue trained in order for this is to be taken out.

Not all FF (Fire Fighters) can be on all of the appliances that we have. Any FF can be on the pump and pump ladder. With FRU, you need to be Fire Rescue trained in order to be on this appliance, which, in the past you would have to attend a four week course. I am FRU trained. I am able to ride and drive all three appliances. On the night of Grenfell I was sat behind the driver in the pump.

The roles of each FF is: Driver, once at the call will become the pump operator, so they will supply us with firefighting media, they will also send messages to brigade control and also depending on how many are riding the pump, the driver may turn into the entry control officer. The Crew manager is the person in charge. They delegate jobs, they let you know what's going on. The Governor is the Governor.

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On the back of the truck you usually have two FF who will be wearing BA equipment. BA stands for Breathing Apparatus, this is a Standard Duration Breathing Apparatus and is a standalone set which is a single cylinder. We will wear this on our backs and it weighs around 15kg. The duration will last around 29 minutes; this is as long as you are breathing at a rate of 50l per minute. This is charged to 300bar and all pumping appliances has breathing apparatus sets. All fire fighters are trained to wear SDBA.

EDBA, this is Extended Duration Breathing Apparatus and has two cylinders. It weighs 22kg and breathing 50l per minute lasts 47 minutes. It's used for more prolonged jobs, going deeper into buildings. These have a different colour cylinder so they are easily distinguished from SDBA sets. These are also only found on Fire Rescue Units. In order to wear EDBA, you need to be trained.

On this shift we test out BA sets, did the appliance inventories this is basically our normal routine. With regards to the BA sets, it is for the individual wearer to test that the set is ready to be used. All sets at the station is tested, regardless of whether or not someone will be using that particular set.

We also have to do inventory checks, which is checking the equipment on the appliance, the accountability, test the entry control board making sure that's working, the driver would test the truck to make sure it starts, the lights are working, etc., we have to just make sure that everything is there and working as we could get a call at any time. These checks can take between half an hour to forty five minutes.

I believe the night of the Grenfell fire all equipment was accounted for.

Once these checks have been completed we then have the time to go through lectures which are talks that cover policy, practices, operating procedures, looking at pieces of equipment. This is normally anything to do with the job. The person that leads this can be the governor but the Crew Manager takes it. It involves the whole watch.

Then at about 9pm we have a meal in the mess. We tend to relax by either watching television or tidying up. It was quiet during the evening until we got a call at about 1:30am, at the time of the call I was in bed. When we get a call the call bells will sound and the call signs will be called, that way you know who will be going. On this occasion we were called to standby, with a standby you get a series of bleeps and the call sign of the appliance. Nine times out of ten it's usually the pump that gets called for standby. A standby isn't so rushed, whomever is in the Watch room will sleep in there. This is because it is their responsibility to answer the phone and read the call slips. I remember going to the watch room that night, FF HUDSON was in the watch room and he had already logged on into the computer and found out what was going on, it was then he said there was a twenty five pump fire. We are able to log onto the computer

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and through a programme called "Boss" we are able to look up any appliance, at any station at any of the boroughs across London. With that you are able to look up their call slip and find out where they have been sent, what other appliances have been called, what they are doing and how long they have been there. We were called to standby at Chiswick Fire Station.

FF HUDSON has logged into this programme to have a look at what Chiswick are doing, assuming that they may have been called to a house job. It was then he stated that there was a twenty five pump fire going on, with that information it was likely we would be there for a little longer than a few hours, so I have then gone back upstairs to collect my bedding. As we are currently on standby which means we are there to cover their station.

I have gone to the person who was in the watch room to find out more information and he has stated to me that we have been called on standby to Chiswick fire station as there's a twenty five pump fire going on. When they say twenty five pump they mean the amount of appliances that are needed for that call. That is all the information we had, twenty five pump fire isn't something that is common and is quite big. So we have then gone to grab our bedding, this is because if we are on standby there, we will be there for a few hours and so we will be able to rest. We have got what we needed and left for Chiswick

This was a call to say that we were on standby to Chiswick fire station. Due to Chiswick being out, there isn't an appliance on their ground, as we have two at Heston we were tasked to go. That means if any calls come through we will take their calls. I am riding the pump and they asked for G382.

We have taken the normal route to Chiswick from Heston Fire station which is the A4. Due this being our neighbouring Station there is no map reading involved. So we have whilst on our way there we have been listening to the radio.

Currently we are status six, this means we are out of standby but if a call comes in we are able to take it, although if you need us you will have to contact us by radio as we aren't currently at a Station. Depending on what you are doing will depend on the status of the appliance.

Another message comes over the radio which a priority message is stating that there has been an increase in the amount of pumps needed and it is now at forty. When I heard this I was in shock. I mean this is massive, I have not come across anything like this before. This is whilst we are on the A4 driving down to Boston Manor Road, A major incident has been declared. Even though we haven't been mobilised we have been rigging up on route to Chiswick as there is a likelihood that we will be going to this. We didn't know much more than the fact that it was declared a major incident and the amount of appliances being called.

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The officer in charge has been keeping an eye on the MDT in the truck, this is a Mobile Data Terminal, which is just like a Satnav in a car. So this is being watched and we are expecting for a call to come out and get a call slip telling us to mobilise. It would tell us the address and we would know more about the major incident. Even though it was made a forty pump fire we still didn't know what was going on. We have arrived at Chiswick Fire Station, roughly about 0140Hrs, we are still yet to be mobilised. I remember wondering why we haven't been mobilised considering we are just next door to Chiswick. We were just reversing the machine into the station and as we were doing that we got the mobilisation to go to Grenfell Tower. The MDT was playing up at the time, failing to respond. CM MARKS was trying to figure it out and I'm not sure when he did but he managed to change our status to status 25 which means we are available at our standby location. So when a call comes through it will go to Chiswick Fire Station with our call sign. This is what happened and I remember getting the call slip from Chiswick stating on it that we were being mobilised. The call slip stated "14/06/2017, time of call 0055Hrs, Flat 16 Grenfell Tower, Lancaster West Estate W11 1TG". This was written down on my notes and exhibit SCD/5 refers.

Now that we are going CM MARKS is looking on the MDT with regards to where we have to go. We had to have a quick look on the map as it's not an area we are familiar with and the MDT in the truck was playing up. We have then worked out a route and made our way on blue lights.

The route we have taken to Grenfell was through Shepard's Bush. We have made our way back onto Chiswick High Road, went to Turnham Green Tube Station, turned left and then Shepard's Bush is like 5 minutes from there. Once we arrived at Shepard's Bush I knew where I was although I didn't know where Grenfell was from there. I have looked at the map and I know where North Kensington Fire Station is so I could get the driver to the area. We have gone straight over the roundabout at White City, turned left into a crescent and this goes into St Ann's Road. I have marked out the route on exhibit SCD/1 of how we got to Grenfell Tower. I have printed this map out myself and placed a 1x where there was a road block, causing us to turn around on St Ann's Road. We have turned back and gone through Royal Crescent and we are now behind Wembley FRU G306. Heston's FRU has also come around the crescent and we are also behind them.

There were a lot of appliances that met us near St Ann's Road and were doing the same as us and turning around due to the road block.

I know Ladbroke Grove, so I have suggested that we make our way back to Hollands Park to go up via Ladbroke Grove as I know the route from previous travels, as we have gone the way I suggested we have

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been met with a number of other Fire engines. We have ended up following them and we have gone in convoy to Grenfell.

As we start getting closer you start to see the glow of the fire. We have then pulled into Bramley Road via Silchester Road. At that point I first see the Tower, it looked like a candle, it was 100% alight. The whole side of the building that I could see from the truck was alight. I was looking between buildings at the Tower. Having seen it I then understood why it was a forty pump fire. It was like a big flame, I have never seen anything live like that before.

We have gone under the bridge at Latimer Road, we have ended up on the other side of the road block from where we had been previously. We have parked the machine up on the junction of Bramley Road and Whitchurch. I have marked where we parked with a 2x on exhibit SCD/1. I believe we got here roughly about 0230Hrs. I have also marked where we parked on exhibit SCD/2 with the number 2. Having got out of the appliance, at that point I couldn't see the Tower at all, due to a three story building being in my view. CM MARKS has left to get our brief from the command unit. Whilst we have disembarked from the appliance we have been waiting for CM MARKS, whilst he was off doing that we have then decided to get our BA sets off the truck. It is procedure for the crew manager to go the command unit. The crew manager will inform them that we are here, take the nominal role board and basically book us in. The nominal role board is a board that each fire engine has with everyone's names on it. Everyone that is riding that engine on that particular shift. It is basically a way of accounting for the crew. This board is then taken back by each crew when they have finished at the deployment. The command unit will inform the crew manager where it is they then want us.

This was the worst time for me because we were just stood there on the side of the road with people from the community/residents just shouting at us. They were upset at the fact we appeared to be doing nothing. They didn't understand that we can't just run in there, we need to wait and be told where to go. Especially since our Crew Manager has gone, imagine if he comes back with a brief and his crew have gone. I believe we were waiting on our Crew Manager for roughly 15 minutes, although I can't be certain. Eventually the crew manager comes back and he's told us to grab our IC Pack and thermal imaging cameras and other equipment and that we are to go to BA main control point. We have gone on foot in convoy to this point. The route we took was via Whitchurch Road and then onto Grenfell Road. I have written this down on exhibit SCD/1. This route has also been highlighted on exhibit SCD/2. We have then gone across the grass at Kensington Leisure Centre.

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When I have arrived at the BA (Breathing Apparatus) Holding area, which was Kensington Leisure Centre this was when I had my first proper look at the Tower. I have marked the BA holding area with a 3 on exhibit SCD/2. Looking at the tower from this point I remember seeing heavy black smoke. I believe from floor six all the way to the top was on fire. The fire was coming out the windows and all up the sides. By the time I had got there the building was well alight. I can't say with regards to the other sides of the building, but from the side I was facing it was alight. I would say from floors six to eight it was certainly smoky, but from floors eight to the top it was alight. I could see a lot of blue flame in a lot of the flats, which would suggest that there is gas present, like a gas pipe had ruptured. The sheer heat of it was intense, even where we were you could feel the heat.

Where we were there was also an Ariel ladder platform. I have marked this as a 4 on exhibit SCD/2. This is an appliance that is squirting water at the tower consistently. From my understanding of an aerial ladder, I believe it goes as high as six floors. You can pump water into it, it doesn't have its own pump. So the water goes up the ladder and there is someone at the top who directs the flow of water. It looked as though it wasn't doing anything. The jet is usually an effective way to fight a fire but due to the scale of this fire it didn't seem to be making much of a difference.

I believe the Ariel ladder was definitely needed but with regards to it putting out the fire, the fire was too much for it. We would have needed maybe two or three of them in a row for it to have had more of an affect. Although what was going on inside, I wouldn't know as I had just arrived. They could have been pointing the jet at a particular flat to protect someone, I mean I wouldn't know.

There was a lot of other Firefighters at Kensington Leisure Centre with us. We are all stood there looking at the building. I remember being told just to sit down and wait to be called. At the time we had SDBA sets. It felt like we were there for ages just waiting around. The crews I have seen leave the tower look exhausted. As we have been waiting around for a while they have at this point stopped using SDBA and were now using EDBA.

BA main control has then said to us to dump our SDBA sets and go and find EDBA, there are crews coming out so take theirs, service them as we will need them to go into the tower.

When we service a set I would literally strip it down and take the cylinders off for them to be changed. This is because they need to pass a test and it needs to be a certain pressure. So I have got a new cylinder which they had a pool of them in the grass area of the leisure centre. As they were being delivered by the support units. I have put this fresh cylinder on and given the face mask a quick wipe down. I have given it a quick visual check, this is because as far as I'm concerned they are waiting for me to go into the tower. I

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have then switched it on and checked the pressure, made sure the alarms work on it, do a leak test to make sure it's not leaking any air and then put it on, make sure it seals properly, breath it down and make sure it purges. As long as it has more than 270bar that set is ready to go. This was done completed and I was ready to go.

FF KNAPMAN and CM MARKS were also there ready to go. Our FRU crew was also there and ready to go due to the fact they already had their EDBA sets as they carry them on the FRU. Heston pump ladder had also been given the same brief.

Eventually crews are then starting to get called forward. We have then highlighted to them that we are available and are ready to go in. I have seen a crew from our station so I ran up to them and asked them what's it like? What's been going on? Just so I could get an idea of the conditions and the layout of the building, but due to their adrenaline I wasn't able to get much information from them. They did say it was hot and really hard work, even just getting up the stairs. You could see it on them bearing in mind these are really fit fire fighters. They had been called up, gone in and come out and we were still sitting waiting to go in. It was then after speaking to them that we have been called forward.

The main entrance of the building I have marked with the number 6 on exhibit SCD/2, but the entrance that we have entered in is marked with a number 5 on exhibit SCD/2. I don't know why we were entering in via the number 5 entrance. It was like a temporary entrance.

There are four of us that make our way to the tower I think it was around 0430Hrs. FF LANG, FF KNAPMAN, CM MARKS and myself. We have made our way from Kensington Leisure Centre, number 3 on SCD/2, walked on Grenfell Walk, it was like a covered over walk way, I remember there being a bin store by where we were walking and we have then stopped by the playground on the other side of the tower. This is sector 2 of the tower, from there the tower didn't look as bad in comparison to the side of the tower I have just come from.

We divide buildings into sectors, for example if you are looking at the front of a house that would be classed as sector 1, sector 2 would be the side, sector 3 would be the back and sector 4 would be round the other side. This is basically the brigade's way of chopping up a job and making it into smaller manageable pieces. There would be someone in charge of each sector. I have highlighted the sectors on exhibit SCD/3. Sector 1 was the main entrance of the building, sector 2 was the temporary entrance, sector 3 was the back and sector 4 was where the Ariel Ladder Platform was positioned.

We have walked to the tower under police riot shields in pairs, this is due to there being falling debris from the building. The debris were literally raining down off the building. The size of the debris would

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range from the size of a golf ball to the size of a car bonnet. I know for sure that the debris was falling from sector 2 and also from sector 4. The Police officer with the riot shield has positioned themselves in the middle with a FF in the front and one in the back with the riot shield covering all three of us.

We have entered the Tower through the temporary entrance. As you go into the building there is a room and it goes into a big communal area and there are a few stairs that go into the mezzanine floor. I have got into the communal area and remember seeing a queue of FFs as if they were waiting to go on a ride at a theme park. I assumed that you basically wait in this queue till you get to the front to then be committed. This is basically what happened.

The bridge head is on the ground floor and the BA Boards and everything is also there. I believe I was in there waiting for around 20mins. Considering what was going on with the situation I would say it was organised. There was a lot of writing on the walls, this would have been call signs, briefs, different floor numbers, etc. We have information boards but due to the level of information that these Entry Control Officers had to take on, there was no surprise they had been writing things all over the wall. There was also fire survival guidance going on, this means if you have a fire going on and someone calls the fire brigade highlighting this and stating that they can't get out of where they are, the fire service will stay online with the person in the flat and give them advice over the phone. They may tell them to put blanket under the door, ask them questions like what the conditions are, how many people are there, where are they in relation to the fire, is it hot, is it smoky? They will try and get as much information from them as possible and this information will then get sent to the fire brigade. When we get Fire guidance calls they will then mobilise appliances, so for every type of survival guidance call they receive they will send a pump ladder. The pump ladders job then is to solely deal with rescuing whomever needs the help.

Having got to the front of the stairs, the four of us have been given our brief. We are not under air at the moment even though we are all rigged up. Under air means when we have our breathing equipment. We then go under air and have to pass the test that makes sure you have enough pressure to go in. To pass entry control you need 240bar. I then take my tally out of my BA set and give it to the entry control officer and they place it in the entry control board. The tally comes from the BA set. On the tally it has your name, the pressure and the time in which you have gone in. It is a way of just keeping a record of who has gone in and what their pressure is.

The brief we were given on our first wear was to go up to the ninth floor and find Bethnal Green FRU Crew as they have lost communication and need to come down. I don't actually remember having communications at all during the incident. Our procedure is that if we lose communication with crews

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then they need to be taken out. As anything could have happened to them and we need to find out what that is. There was a massive problem with communications on this incident with the fact that we just didn't have any.

Once the first brief is completed they have also stated to us that there is a casualty on the stairs between floors nine and ten. This casualty is a bariatric casualty and they need to be moved from the stairs as they are in the way. There are crews going up and down the stairs as well as hoses which are also on the stairs and the casualty is currently in the way.

On leaving the bridge head there was a little confusion as to how to leave the mezzanine floor to actually go up into the main body of the tower.

Being in the main stairwell now, we have lost a bit of light, there was water cascading down the stairs, there were hoses everywhere and I remember trying to count the floor levels but that didn't go too well due to what was going on around me. There were crews passing us and crews just about the stairwell.

When I got to floor four I remember that's when it started to get smoky. Then you realised you were going into the smoke. It was then it started to get a bit more disorientating. Going up and having to pass hoses on the floor made it difficult as well as some of the hoses were charged and it would make it coil. It started getting warmer as we ascended but I think that was due to the smoke, there was no fire in the stairwell just smoke. I can't remember hearing any fire alarms or seeing any sprinklers I don't think there was any.

We have been making our way up the tower, I am third in the line of four. I have taken the axe off the guy behind me and he gone in front of me so I am now fourth. We were sharing the weight as we have been climbing the stairs. The reason we had the axe with us just in case we needed to use it on order to break any doors down, its good practice to carry such equipment.

Whoever was in front has found the Bethnal Green crew and informed them of the fact that they need to get back downstairs. They have done this and we have continued onto completing the rest of our brief of locating and moving the casualty that is on the stairs. I believe that Bethnal Green crew were met on the ninth floor.

After sending Bethnal Green down we have amalgamated on the stairwell and I have straight away seen the casualty on the stairs. It appeared as though they were coming from the tenth floor and they have been found on the 9.5 floor.

The body was blocking the stairs, although you could get past them it would be a case of leaning on the bannister and maybe missing three or four steps to avoid stepping on them. Their body was face down,

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facing down the stairs. At the time I didn't know whether or not they were male or female but they were large in build, they had dread locks, wearing navy blue t-shirt, jogging bottoms or long shorts.

One of the crew has checked the casualties pulse to see if there was any signs of life. Had there been we would have taken them all the way down and out of the Tower. FF LANG has taken his glove off and felt for a pulse, he held his hand there for a few seconds and stated that he couldn't feel a pulse. You have to remember that it is early morning and this building has been on fire for a while. If I were to take my face mask off and have two or three breaths I would have been unconscious. I'm not a doctor I can't say whether or not they were dead or alive, but FF LANG did check and bearing in mind we had been sent to move the casualty off the stairs, it was pretty much a given that they weren't alive. Our brief wasn't to check whether they were alive or not so I would assume they had been given information from other crews that this person was a fatality.

FF KNAPMAN and FF LANG have gone up the stairs and myself and CM MARKS stayed on the level we were on and gone underneath the arms and we have got hold of the person and pulled them down the stairs into the lobby area. This would have been on the ninth floor. The casualty was now well off the stairs.

The door to the lobby area was ajar because it had been wedged open with a duvet. By having that door open wasn't making the conditions any worse, had it been, for example there was smoke bellowing into the stairwell, we would have done what we can to get the casualty in and then shut the door. We have therefore completed both our briefs. The conditions at the time was warm, I wouldn't say that it was hot but it was very heavily smoke logged. There was only one stairwell running through the building and it is unusual to have smoke in the stair well as they should be protected by having fire doors. These should be heavy doors. A fire door should close itself and should seal. I would assume that the doors to the lobby areas were fire doors but I am just assuming.

We didn't have any radio communications with control. So we have made that decision between the four of us to make our way back down the Tower.

Having got to the bottom, I have spoken to the entry control officer who checked our gauges and then briefed us to go back up to the twelfth floor. They wanted us to search flats and check the conditions of the flats, if there are people there then get them out. We have been tasked to take our TIC (Thermal Imaging Camera), this is equipment that is able to check temperatures with and it's a good aid to look for bodies and seats of fire.

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So we have gone back up the tower to the twelfth floor with no firefighting media for example no hose and no water. I have been forth in the line again and I wasn't carrying the TIC someone else had that. The conditions were the same again on our way up, it was no worse. I was able to see at least a metre away from me as I climbed the stairs. Again there were other crews on the stairs as we are passing to make our way up.

At the time I didn't know the flat layout, so we have got to the lobby area of the twelfth floor. I didn't personally know where the flats are situated or the numbers of the flats, where the lift was, I had no idea about anything prior to getting there. We have gone onto the right wall and I have followed in. There was nothing in the first door which I think was a bin room. These have been checked prior to me getting there as I was still at the back.

They have gone to the next flat. This flat is in the corner of the block. The door was closed, its hot and quite heavily smoked logged. We didn't have the flat number as it wasn't seen. They have breached the door and it literally just disintegrated, like turned to ash. The front door didn't seem like a fire door to me. I wouldn't expect a fire door to react like that but it has been in the fire for about 5 hours. When this has been done it has just flashed over, the fire was orange and it was just so hot. Looking into the fire you could see it was ventilating outside. Looking through the TIC, the screen was just white. The fact that it was white would mean to me it is over its range and it's just too hot. From what I could see the whole flat was on fire, a raging fire. I was able to see through the flat outside, so it basically looked as though the walls had gone. Between the four of us we made the decision that due to what we had seen there isn't going to be anyone in there alive. We don't have any water so there's nothing that we could physically do with this situation. So having decided to leave I have gone to the doorway where the stairwell is, gone past the door and round the corner, I am now first coming out. I have done this to have a quick sweep just in case there maybe someone there. I've looked around and couldn't find anyone. CM MARKS thought I'd gone and couldn't find me so he's starting shouting my name. I've reassured him that I'm there and we have made physical contact by touch to the shoulder. I was that close to him but that shows you how poor the visibility was. You wouldn't even be able to see your hand if you put it directly in front of your face. I have then turned and he's like "come we are going". So I said that's fine. So I've come back round from where I was and we have then made our way out.

I think the time now is about 6am, we have I think been there for about three to four hours now. I remember going back to the bridge head and informing them of who we were and what we did, which crew we were. So they have said to us that's fine and that we were able to leave the Tower. In order to do

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so we have had to wait for the Police with their riot shields to walk us out due to the debris still coming down. We have again exited from sector 2.

I have got to the walkway and there are a lot of fire fighters about, I have dropped my set, opened my tunic and had a drink of water. This was on the sector 2 side of the building and I have marked it with a number 7 on exhibit SCD/2 where I have gone. I was hot and exhausted. I have never felt heat like that before whilst in my career. Having been there and looking at that side of the building the fire didn't look as fierce. It was more smoke bellowing and less flames.

That is when the commissioner came round and was asking us how we are. I think we were there for about 20mins, when we were told to go back round to the Leisure Centre and we had to service our sets as they were in desperate need for EDBA wearers.

I have gone round there and I just remember seeing a lot of EDBA wearers just sitting by the wall like we were earlier. I said to the Station Manager that was there, "Gov they need EDBA wearers". His reply was "nah don't worry, they have their own communication going on". So myself and the crew have serviced our sets and changed the cylinders and said to the Station manager that we are now going to go back round to where we had just come from due to the fact they were in need of EDBA wearers. His reply was "no, you need to sit down and you need to wait here". I have informed him again of what we were told having left the tower that they were in need of EDBA wearers and that we were needed back round there. The Station manager stated that they were sending crews through as and when. So I've just sat back down again. It felt like hours whilst we were waiting to be called again.

We have been called so we have then gone back to the walk way of sector 2. We were waiting to go in and as I have been there I have seen a casualty being brought out. I remember thinking that the casualty has been in the building for ages and he's lucky to be alive considering. We have been called forward at this point and we have been put into another holding area. I remember being so frustrated by having to wait around, they keep calling us forward but then we end up waiting around for long periods of time. So we have sat there for ages and then we have been taken in pairs back into the Tower. The same entrance and exit as before and the Police were there with their shields to take us in. We have gone back in and I remember trying to get myself back in the zone to go back up and I have gone into a room on the ground floor and there are like fifteen FF in there who like me are all EDBA. I was thinking this is getting annoying now as they say they are desperate for us and you have all the EDBA wearers just waiting around.

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We are all in this room and there are a handful of chairs in there. The floor is flooded as there is water cascading down the stairwell from burst hoses and run off from risers. We are standing up and rotating amongst ourselves with sitting on the chairs. This is due to the weight of the EDBA sets, they are about 20/22 kilos. They aren't light and they are on your shoulders this whole time. We then got called out into the communal area for the ground floor. They were just asking for people, for example saying, "we need two BA, we need three BA". There didn't seem to be much structure as to whether or not you go in with someone from your crew. They just needed two people and these could be any two people from any station.

I remember sitting there and thinking that next time they call for people I will make sure that I get picked to go in. They did call out again and stated they needed BA's to go to the fourth floor, not under air, as the Bridge head which was on the ground floor has moved to the fourth floor. I'm assuming as they are fighting the fire they are moving the bridge head up.

So I have gone to the fourth floor with another FF from my crew and sat on the bed in a flat on the fourth floor. The entry control point was in the lobby area also known as the Bridge Head and is always two floors below the fire. There were other crews also there waiting to go. Another crew from Heston came up and we had small talk and we were trying to listen to the information coming up between crews, this is so we know what is going on in the building

They have then called us forward, as they have asked for a crew of two EDBA wearers. We have been briefed to go to the thirteenth floor and look at the conditions. Basically asking us to fire fight. There is equipment up there for us to use. I was with FF HUDSON.

We have made our way up to the thirteenth floor and as you are going up we have seen a body. It is like on the mezzanine part of the stairs. I remember having to step over her in order to get to where I needed to. I remember being in the lobby area of the thirteenth floor and it was really hot, you could also see pockets of fire. It was daylight and you were literally able to see through all of the flats, this is due to the walls having been breached. The doors were gone and there was just debris everywhere. The ceiling had come down, maybe to about chest height. We have picked a hose up to start doing some firefighting but there was no pressure. I couldn't even tell you where the hose was coming from. It would have been from downstairs but it was entwined all over the place. So there was a branch on the floor. A branch is the head which you use to turn on and control the supply of water. I've said to FF HUDSON "Can you go down to the twelfth floor and get a hose", as there were some coiled up hoses on the twelfth. I have seen a dry riser so I can go in, plug it all in and see if we can get some pressure.

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A dry riser is what you use to get water from the bottom to the top and there is an outlet for you to connect it. It's just a way of stopping there being too many hoses running through. It's just like a drain pipe. The water gets through there from the fire engine and the engine then gets the water from the hydrant.

FF HUDSON has come back up with the hose, so I have bowled the hose into the lobby, plugged the branch in, he stayed with the branch in the door way. So I have gone towards the fire as I'm thinking this is the only way of trying to see if we can get some pressure. I have the male end of the hose and I've found the riser, I have then had to punch the door through. I am currently crouched down but didn't want to go on my hands and knees due to the fact there was so much debris on the floor and pockets of fire. I remember thinking how hot it was and also saying that if I am able to get this dry riser through we have a chance to start fighting the fire. I have managed to plug it in and I go to screw the tap on, the handle was quite hot, I thought in order to do this quicker I'm going to get on my knees. I knelt down and the floor is red hot, the only way I can describe it is when you go to take a tray out of the oven with a tea towel. You don't fold it up enough times and you pick it up and you're like "bloody hell that's hot". That's what it was like but on my knees. So I've got straight back up onto my feet and I thought I've turned it as much as I can. I have then just made my way out. I have gone to then turn the branch on and there is no pressure. So myself and FF HUDSON decided to go back down, as there was nothing more that could have been done. We have stuck to the brief and felt that we will go back down and let them know what we had done.

On our way down I had land marked the branch, so any crews that will follow us will know that, that is the branch that is plugged into the riser. This would be just to save some confusion. We have got back to the fourth floor and dropped our sets. I have given the debrief to the station manager of exactly what we had done. Once this briefing was done we made our way out. There was a bit of a wait to get out. We have made it out and made our way straight over to the Leisure Centre, which is where our sets were. We knew that we wouldn't go back in as by now they had a lot of resources. They also hadn't said to us to get ourselves ready again. They just told us to get ourselves back to the leisure centre. We have then gone to the Salvation Army to get some food and some water. I have marked this with a number 8 on exhibit SCD/2. I was still with FF HUDSON. I would have gone back in again if they needed for me to go back in.

My crew have all managed to find each other and around 1400/1500Hrs we have been told that we won't be going back in, but that we will be going to Paddington Fire Station. We have made our way there. On

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arrival they have asked us to write up what we had done including the incident number. I actually didn't think I had done that much so I only wrote a couple of paragraphs. I exhibit this as SCD/5. We were there for about an hour, we have then been called upstairs to speak with a counsellor and we were there for about ten to fifteen minutes.

Once everyone was done we went back to Heston. We got back to Heston about 1915Hrs, we meant to start back on duty in about 45mins. I have never been in a situation like this before I didn't know what would happen. Blue Watch were on and couldn't be any more helpful, they were servicing our sets and everything for us. We have had a quick shower and they have said to us if you want to go home then you can have that leave. I think there was only one or two that went home, the rest of us went back on duty. We serviced our sets as per usual ready to start.

We did get called back to Grenfell on relief at around 2200Hrs, I was riding the pump ladder this time. As soon as we got there though, we checked into control, they took one look at us, asked if we were Heston and told us that we weren't staying and needed to go. Before we left we did tell them that we were missing equipment, for example we were without a hose and branches. So without sufficient enough branches we aren't able to be useful. We have collected what we were missing.

It would have been a great help to have had better communications throughout the incident. I just wasn't able to speak anyone. I would say it was a safety issue but also the fact that when we had initially gone into the tower and onto the ninth floor to move the casualty, we then had to go back downstairs and relay this information. Had the communications been working we wouldn't have had to have gone back down and just relayed this over the radio and carried on. We had wasted so much air and energy going down when it wouldn't have been needed had communications been working.

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