

WITNESS STATEMENT

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

Statement of: ROOTS, TERENCE

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

Occupation: FIRE OFFICER

This statement (consisting of 11 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: T ROOTS

Date: 04/03/2018

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

This statement relates to my attendance and involvement at Grenfell Tower on 14/06/2017. It is provided in conjunction with the notes I made immediately after leaving the incident, a copy of which I have referred to, and which I exhibit as TJR/1.

I am currently attached to Red Watch at Soho, where I have been based since June 2017, although I have served two previous tours there. I have been a firefighter for 16 years.

On 14/06/2017, I was on the 20:00 (13/06/2017) to 09:30 night duty. At approximately 01:00 we were ordered to a 20-pump fire at Grenfell tower. At first there was a little bit of confusion as we weren't sure whether it had come through as a 'relief' — whereby the fire had already been established and we were going on to replace other crews already on it — or whether it was a 'make up', which means they've made pumps 20 and ordering us on to a working fire. Also the information for the call disappeared from our mobile data terminals on the appliances. It took no more than 30 seconds to clarify on the phone to our control to confirm - so much information had come through on the call slip, we wanted to guarantee what we were going to. I didn't see the slip myself, though.

I had no previous knowledge at all of Grenfell tower, in fact I'd never heard of it before.

I was on the pump A242, which was the second away at Soho, we were following our pump ladder. I was with Fire Fighter Richie MITCHELL in the back. In charge was Crew Manager Andy PEARCY and driving was Fire Fighter Theresa ORCHARD. We normally ride four on a pump.

Our aerial appliance was already out on an unrelated call, so it was just our fire engines that were ordered out at the time. We were on the Bayswater Road making good progress when we heard the Fire Survival

Signature: T ROOTS
2018

Signature witnessed by:

Guidance calls coming through over the radios, which made us realise it was really serious fire. There was constant radio traffic; I could hear on the radio other crews and units turning up, appliances being detailed, the Fire Survival Guidance crews were getting information about where people were, what flats, so we immediately knew it was something serious.

We came in through Ladbroke Grove, and we did not see the extent of the fire until we actually jumped off the machine. Our governor Watch Manager BEALE directed us in. We parked down Grenfell Road which is down the side of the leisure centre. As we arrived you could see it going, people shouting, a lot of smoke. Just before we came to a halt Richie MITCHELL and I both rigged in BA, before we stopped, so we got straight off and had sets on. The crew on the pump ladder did exactly the same. There were no body-worn cameras as we don't use them.

I don't recall the time of arrival. A242 remained where it was from that point up and until we later left the incident.

As we looked up, people were shouting that equipment was needed so we went straight to the lockers, grabbed hose, grabbed breaking in gear gear and started making our way around to the entrance where the marshalling area was. As we rounded by the leisure centre, it was like 'pass it on' we looked up and the first person that actually saw the extent of the fire verbally expressed their shock, and we all looked round and passed it down the line really. I don't think anyone really comprehended how bad the fire was, even though we'd heard about it on the radios - quite how bad it was going to be. On arrival it wasn't on all floors, but within minutes it was. We could see the fire climbing the East face and making its way round even whilst we were there until it appeared to me that almost every floor was alight.

The building looked like it was surrounded by scaffolding. I'd never seen anything like that before. I don't recall thinking too much about how or why it had started, or what was burning or why it had progressed so quickly, it was just in front of us and needed to be dealt with as it was.

At the marshalling area it was like organised chaos; there were a lot of people doing some absolutely fantastic work there already, officers were organising people. My old Officer In Charge at Lambeth was there. This was Watch Manager Paul SADDLER, he was responsible for some of the Fire Survival Guidance calls, they've got a pad that takes all the information, I remember looking over to him and he looked to have about 30 sheets in front of him and I remember thinking 'this is big'.

Whilst all that was going on there was a lot of debris coming down, so that was a major hazard for us all. There were officers trying to control that, and controlling our progress to the marshalling area as the debris was coming down. A senior officer was acting as lookout, telling us "standby" and "go".

Signature: T ROOTS
2018

Signature witnessed by:

It wasn't obvious what the debris was, but some of it appeared to be insulation as I could see silver foil, some of it had writing on it. Some of the debris was floating down. Some of it — aluminium I believe — was dripping down, like a spiders web, coating trees, lampposts, everything. There were also larger items coming down.

I didn't think 'cladding' straight away, but I knew there had been some sort of cover on the exterior because you could see some sort of metal had come down in a big lump, something had come off the side of the building, or off the top.

One of the other issues that I noticed was that hoses supplying the dry riser had been compromised, some of the larger debris pieces had come down and cut them, so there was a fountain effect right by the entrance so there was an issue about our gear getting wet as well. The piece of debris in question was next to the damage, it looked like a piece of sharp aluminium. Other pieces were scattered about. I became aware later that some people had been hit by these pieces.

We got to the marshalling area. I was still with my BA partner Fire Fighter Richie MITCHELL. We were also then with Fire Fighter Ollie DESFORGES and Fire Fighter Adam JOHNSON; we were the four immediate BA wearers from Soho — two from the back of each machine.

We got up into the lobby of Grenfell. Whoever was controlling the bridgehead, they were conscious that there was a *lot* of people traffic so they were saying 'we don't need all of you in here', so we were trying to control that and telling people to go back. I shouted down to the people on the ground floor that we needed second set carrying bags (they allow us to carry a BA set aloft with us) but again, at the same time we didn't have spare BA sets so that was another thing that became quite prevalent — even though we had the bags, spare sets were in short supply as they were on everyone's backs and being used.

The Entry Control Officer — I believe it was Kensington's Watch Manager Brian O'KEEFE — called us through, and Chelsea's Officer In Charge Watch Manager DE SILVO, she was divvying out the flats. This was for the Fire Survival Guidance calls, usually you get a lot of information; how many people, where they are in the flat, conditions in the flat, floor and number, but I think there was so much information coming through, it was impossible for them to record it all. There were boards on the wall and they had written on these, putting our call signs against flat/floor number so they could see who had gone where.

They said 'we want another four', and as we all arrived together we ended up getting slightly split up. All that meant was the four of us from Soho, just got shuffled so my original BA partner Fire Fighter Richie MITCHELL went together with Fire Fighter Ollie DESFORGES, and I was together with Fire Fighter

Signature: T ROOTS
2018

Signature witnessed by:

Adam JOHNSON. It was just the way we were standing, they basically said “you two”. They literally gave us ‘flat and floor’.

The first flat we were given was Flat 14 on the 4th floor. We headed up to the 4th floor. The visibility was quite clear, but there was light smoke in the stairwell, to my eyes anyway. The fire door on the landing was closed. We reached Flat 14, the door was wide open, lights were on. There was very little smoke in there, if any at all. No one in there. We did a quick search; we were pretty happy that whoever was in there had obviously decided to make their way out themselves. I don’t recall if any windows were open. We realised we had used an amount of air already, and we didn’t want to waste air going back down so I tried calling through on my BARE (Breathing apparatus radio interface equipment) - which are radios connected to our breathing apparatus sets, and which allow us to talk whilst getting air. There was an enormous amount of radio traffic on channel 6 (dedicated BA channel), and I couldn’t get through, so Adam said to me words to the effect of “let’s just get ourselves back down and get another brief face-to-face”.

So we went back down to the bridgehead, met Chelsea’s Watch Manager DE SILVO again and she told us Flat 161 on the 19th floor. We were slightly surprised as we’d done the 4th floor already and were conscious that we’d wasted air and would we even make the 19th. She was pretty good and said it was at our discretion, as in if you don’t think you can make it, don’t do it. To us it wasn’t an option, so we went for it.

I can’t remember what floor we got to. I was leading, and I’d lost track of the floors. Where we’d gone to the 4th floor already, Adam said to quickly duck into one of the floors to get the floor number to get our bearings again. It turned out to be the 7th floor. We then carried on up. I can’t what floor we had got to, but we started reaching a *lot* of other crews. There was an enormous amount of traffic on the stairs as well; crews coming in, crews trying to get on the floors, some casualties coming out. Lots of noise, lots of people.

We carried on up. We made the 19th floor, conditions had deteriorated considerably on the way up. I can’t swear to it, but around the 10th or 12th basically the fire door had given way; the fire protection had given out and there were flames in the stairwell and really thick black smoke. You couldn’t see your hand in front of your face. So, it was hot and you couldn’t see anything.

We got to the 19th. We were trying to suss out which flat was 161. On the landing, I thought I could hear someone so I clapped and shouted “fire brigade” and people were shouting at us from across the hall, so we went across to the door where we could hear people inside. I am pretty sure it was Flat 165. They told

Signature: T ROOTS
2018

Signature witnessed by:

us it was two adults and they had a dog. We told them basically 'don't worry about the dog'. Adam then told them to get wet towels, and get them ready, put them over their heads, we're going to bring you out. We also had to check the other flat, to see who's in there. We also told them to shut their door while we did that. There wasn't fire on the landing at that point, but there was thick black smoke floor to ceiling. You could just about see the emergency lighting.

I went over and found flat 161, which was to the left of the door as we came in. You could barely see the numbers on the doors. I started hitting it with the 'enforcer', I was having a go at it then Adam took over. He gave it another few goes, and it went. I then went in. Flat 161 was not fully alight, but it was well involved. All the lounge was alight. I was conscious we had no water at all, so we had no means to protect ourselves or extinguish the fire. I had a thermal image camera, so realising that we definitely had two casualties that were alive in the other flat, we did a quick sweep of all rooms to try and find anyone in Flat 161. I couldn't see anyone or anything. The windows were completely gone, if I remember rightly. It was very hot in there and I was conscious that we didn't have much time left. Adam called me out, reiterating, "Tel we have got no water", as in we had no way of fighting the fire.

I came out of 161, went and spoke to the casualties in Flat 165. I didn't know their names. We prepared them to come out, it was a husband and wife but we didn't know that at the time. The male came out, he seemed ok then the lady came out, I thought she was elderly as she seemed fragile and stumbled straight away. Adam was now going to lead us out, so he was at the front with the female, the male casualty was behind with me at the rear. I didn't see the dog, but there was no way we could have taken a panicked animal with us also. I was worried about getting the couple out as it was, let alone the dog.

We started making our way down the stairs, and I think the lady was struggling immediately. She fell straightaway on the 19th floor literally as we brought her out of the flat, so we knew we were going to have a lot of trouble.

I glanced at my gauge then, I don't know how much air we had left, but it seemed hopefully enough not to have to worry about it at that point. Air in a standard BA lasts around 30-35 minutes, but that is in ideal circumstances. The duration can go up or down depending on, how hard you're working.

We started making our way down, we were making really slow progress. We might have gone down one floor, maybe to the 17th, and the female casualty was falling over and stumbling the whole time. At one point I think she might have caught her leg in a railing. We couldn't really see anything, so I couldn't confirm it. We got on to the half landing on either the 18th or the 17th and we either found another casualty on the floor, or our same lady fell forward past Adam. It was thick black smoke and very difficult to see,

Signature: T ROOTS
2018

Signature witnessed by:

we were going down by feel. We normally stick to the walls as we come down, so we were on the left hand side and I think she may have been holding a railing, which would have been on our right hand side, I don't know for sure. We're pretty sure it was the same casualty, but not a hundred per cent. It was confusing because she ended up in front of us. At that point we were starting to panic ourselves a bit, to get out, so there was some confusion.

So we've got a casualty on the floor that we believed to be our female casualty, in front of us on the half-landing. Adam advised me to come past him with the male, so I made my way past them and continued down. He then picked up the casualty and brought her down with him. I didn't know this at the time, I thought he was just getting her back on her feet to carry on down. So I was walking down and had the male casualty by the shoulders, guiding him down. I believed Adam was assisting the female casualty down the stairs. I did not realise that Adam had in fact carried the female all the way down. It was too tight in the stairwells to carry them over the shoulder or using crossed arms.

The male casualty couldn't breathe or see where he was going, so he was being cautious with his steps. I was pushing him down the stairs and holding him up and the same time, we were running and tripping the whole time we were going down the stairs. There were lots of hose, lots of breaking-in gear and equipment that had been left on all the floors as we were going down.

We seemed to be going down alright, we were meeting other crews. We got to about the 10th or 12th floor where the fire protection had breached and I could see the flames rolling across the landing. I could feel the heat and I realised that the male casualty that I was bringing down must have been feeling this as well. I was starting to get a little bit nervous as it felt like the stairs weren't ending, but then the smoke started to lighten up and I thought we must be there soon. We were on about the 7th floor still - though it was hard to know exactly where we were, as there were no floor numbers in the stairwell - so quite a way to go still. He started buckling a little bit, by the end and I thought that I would have to drag him out. I did not know how much air I had left to do this so I was motivating him to get down the stairs.

The original bridgehead for the control point when I went in, was on the landing 1st or 2nd floor but it later became apparent they'd had to move it to down to the lobby due to the smoke coming down and breaching the bridgehead. I wanted to hand over my casualty and to find out where my BA partner was. When I reached the location of the original bridgehead I realised the bridgehead had moved. Initially I thought 'bloody hell, where is it' and then I realised I had to carry on down to the lobby area. Once I got there, I handed my casualty over to one of the firefighters who wasn't in BA.

Signature: T ROOTS
2018

Signature witnessed by:

I then spun round expecting Adam and his casualty to be right behind me, they weren't. I started making my way back up the stairs to meet him. I didn't go that far, and I met Adam with I believe Fulham's crew, who were helping him bring his female casualty out and I assisted them bringing her down, and we got down to the lobby area.

There were lots of people down there, other firefighters. Even though we were standing next to each other we kept losing track of who was who. We then shut down at our entry control point and then made our way back to our appliances to do a BA Fire Ground A test and put another cylinder on.

I was quite hyped up and grabbed another cylinder and was cracking on putting it on, it was then that we met Ollie and Rich, who had gone in as well, and they were saying calm down a bit and if we're going back in we need to drink plenty of water, and chill out for a second, that made loads of sense and we threw down as much water as we could, did our sets, allowed ourselves to cool down a bit, got rigged again and went back.

At this point it was slowing down quite a bit now, the marshalling area had been moved back to just in front of the leisure centre, so we were all there for a bit. They then started calling for all BA wearers, they were moving the marshalling area and wanted to keep the East-facing areas as clear as possible, so the marshalling area was moved to the West side at the back of the tower. We all went through. At this point it was decided they only wanted EDBA (Extended Duration Breathing Apparatus) would be used in there. We are SDBA (Standard Duration Breathing Apparatus), this meant they would not need us at the moment. We were told to stand down and rest although we were all champing at the bit.

Fresh EDBA crews were turning up and going in. We were saying there must be another job for us do, but we were told to stand down. We waited about another hour or so. They then said they needed crews without BA to go and assist inside. I think the plan was due to the hose supplying the dry riser that may have been compromised, we were going to try and run hose internally from a lightweight portable pump, so they wanted us to help with the hose, and getting it up and getting it aloft.

So I went with five others; Fire Fighter Theresa ORCHARD and Fire Fighter John SAUNDERS, both from Soho, and three others who I didn't know and we helped carry hose, got it up to the 7th floor, running it out and connecting it up.

Whilst we were up inside running out the hose, fire ground radio messages suggested there were some floors that hadn't been searched as yet, or they weren't sure which floors had been searched. Someone said that there was a casualty inside a flat on the 7th floor. I think that was miscommunication, but a couple of us did a quick lap on the 7th floor, banging on doors trying to get attention from anyone. There

Signature: T ROOTS
2018

Signature witnessed by:

were no responses. But obviously we weren't in BA at that time and it wasn't sensible to stay in there for long.

Doors were opening in the stairwell all the time, but we were not in BA at this point. It was starting to fill up with smoke. The Station Manager (SM) who was in charge of that task said 'that's enough, everyone non-BA, everyone out'. The hose was connected they just needed to charge it.

We then made our way back to the BA marshalling area on the West face. We rigged again, and were told that SDBA (Standard Deployable Breathing Apparatus) wasn't going back in for the foreseeable future. Later, in the marshalling area, they said they actually did want a crew of standard duration BA, not for searching, but for a specific task, they classed it as. Myself, Fire Fighter Adam JOHNSON and Fire Fighter Steve PAGE and Fire Fighter Elliott JUGGINS from Lambeth fire station were detailed as a crew of four and given a specific task of tracing a burst length from the 10th floor to its delivery in order to shut it down.

I think it was Group Manager GOULDBERG who had given us this task. He explained that that the hose we'd run prior internally, one of the lengths had burst and any crew going above it were getting absolutely saturated, and he wanted us to find out exactly which hose it was so they could shut it off down there without compromising any other firefighting that was going on, so that was our task.

We went up and found the burst hose. I don't know what caused it to be compromised, I'd hazard a guess that the pressure it was running at burst it. There would be previous repairs on hose, and some are newer than others. There were no sharps near the hose.

Whilst there, I did hear a second burst length above me and, as we were there anyway, I attempted to trace that one as well but due to time and air constraints, I was unable to do that.

We then made our way down and traced the initial burst length all the way back down to the lightweight portable pump at the bottom of the tower and I made Group Manager GOULDBERG aware. He acknowledged it. In the event, I didn't turn it off, we were told to leave it.

We were still ok for air. Because they were going to knock off that water, I think they wanted any crews that were still inside to come out. I'm not exactly sure who they were, but there was an EDBA crew in there, who were quite close to time of whistle anyway. Entry Control told us to bring them out as I think they had lost communications with them.

Next we were detailed to go back up and find them, which we did. We made contact and told them to exit. These crews were working on the 12th and 13th floors. Whilst we were on our way up to meet these crews, there was a very large deceased casualty on either the 10th or the 12th floor stairwell, I think it was.

Signature: T ROOTS
2018

Signature witnessed by:

I believe they were black, but I could not ascertain any other details due to the smoke. They were fully across the stairs up to the half-landing. We'd been informed by other crew that people had already attempted to get that casualty out, but unfortunately they had realised it wasn't practical to continue in the circumstances, and a decision been made to leave them in situ. It clearly would have been extremely difficult to get them down the narrow stairwell when they were non-conscious and no longer breathing. Afterwards, I thought about it and realised that the crews had done their best to get the casualty out. You couldn't lift that person; weight aside, you couldn't get round in the space to lift someone like that realistically. There was no way four crew could each get around the casualty to get them down. The stairwell inside Grenfell tower was the only means of escape. We then made our way back down to entry control. I don't recall seeing any other occupiers, apart from the ones already being helped by crews. I would estimate that my first entry in BA was between 30 and 40 minutes. My second entry without BA to run hose for the lightweight portable pump was around another 30 minutes. My third entry, which was my second in BA again was approximately 30 minutes.

Once all our crew was there we got our relief and we were allowed to leave the incident.

We were told by our Officer In Charge Watch Manager Stuart BEALE to go to Paddington fire station to do our notes, prior to returning to Soho. This was not something we'd normally have to do. We were shattered, but we could see the point of it, and I understood the purpose of it — to get our notes down while the event was still fresh.

Once we got to Paddington, there was food and drinks laid on. Pretty much every senior officer that had not been on duty were now on duty, and were all mucking in and helping out, making sure our welfare was alright. That was something I appreciated; that whilst we were all a bit unhappy at having to do notes, they knew that the incident would have affected us and were looking after our welfare early doors. We went up in groups, crews, at a time to write the notes.

We arrived back at Soho between 14:30-15:00. My next shift was due to start at 20:00 that same night. I stayed at the station inbetween these times, apart from going for a bite to eat. I managed to get about an hour's sleep before I came back on duty. The TIC (Thermal Image Camera) I carried was switched on throughout.

I wasn't surprised that Grenfell didn't have a wet riser, as this is consistent with old buildings, but we could have done with it. Regarding the dry riser, a dry riser is dry, empty, so there's a pipe that goes all the way to the top of a building and has outlets on set floors but we turn up and we supply it. One of

Signature: T ROOTS
2018

Signature witnessed by:

North Kensington's machines had got there first and they got the water from a hydrant, to a pump, to pressurise it, then two hoses go into the dry riser and pressurise it that way.

Going back to the hose that had been cut by debris, it would have affected the water pressure in the tower. I don't know when that was fixed. We discussed hose bandages, which are not especially effective but do slow the loss of water, but a decision was made not to swap the hose or use a bandage as it was too risky and they didn't want people standing there for five minutes doing that, due to the constant debris coming down.

I didn't experience any problems with water pressures myself as I didn't do any firefighting; I had other tasks as mentioned.

In terms of how our first tasking to the 4th floor was decided, we've now got a procedure called Fire Survival Guidance, which came about after another nasty job we had. It's about allocating specific crew or machines, so as crew were turning up they'd be saying 'you're doing this, you're doing that'. The calls would be going initially through to our control centre, then they would be allocating them out to our Command Units at the job, who would then be passing information to a Watch Manager or ADO at that point, who would be relaying that to the bridgehead.

I've never been posted to the Fire Safety Department. Although I'd not been to Grenfell tower before, or been on a section 7(2)d familiarisation visit to Grenfell, as part of my usual role I have been on visits to more local towers — maybe not that height, and I can't remember which ones. We would go and check the fire protection measures, seeing where the dry risers were as a matter of course, sussing out where the nearest hydrants were, checking fire lifts work, things like that.

Although I did visit the 4th floor, I had no dealings with Flat 16, and did not know of its significance until after the event. At this incident, the fire lifts at Grenfell were not used by us as the lifts were on the actual floors.

I didn't see the gas mains or any issues with gas at the tower myself, but I heard after we'd come out - like a fire ground rumour, but it made sense because of the intensity of the fire around the 10-12th floor, where the fire seemed particularly fierce. The flames were rolling across the ceiling of the landing, into the stairwell. Someone mentioned after that a gas main had gone, and I remember thinking that made sense. How true it is, I don't know.

Regarding smoke management systems, I wasn't aware of one operating at Grenfell, and didn't notice any smoke extracting. I would expect, if it was in the stairwell for it to be extracting the smoke. If there was one, it either didn't work or was ineffective, because we couldn't see anything. It was supposed to be a

Signature: T ROOTS
2018

Signature witnessed by:

protected stairwell, so whilst not always totally breathable at least comfortable for people to come out. However, it could have been hampered by the amount of smoke. If a fire is raging on multiple floors, it might not have been able to cope with that.

Normally, at a fire, the utilities will be turned off — electricity and gas, in an ideal world, would be knocked off. Something like this, you would have to rely on British Gas and British Power Networks. It would not be ourselves at that sort of level, it would be beyond us.

In terms of training, whilst not specific to high-rise flats, we would do training periodically through the year. For us, it would be what equipment we would use, what's taken to a bridge head, who carries what. Every other week, really. It doesn't matter about the height; 2nd floor or 10th floor — it just means more stairs to climb. The equipment you take with you is the same, the way you proceed would be the same, bridge heads etc. My training status is 'competent'.

As a Watch, we undertook our 'Real Fire Training' at our training centre in Park Royal not long ago, and the way you enter the building is the same, they just tell you which floor you're on, and you proceed as if it is a high-rise — you wouldn't be doing 10 floors, but you treat it as the same.

I have had previous experience of fighting fire in a high-rise building quite a few times.

I wasn't personally aware of any pre-prepared firefighting plan at Grenfell tower, but that would probably have been something for the initial crews, obviously it was on North Kensington's ground so they would be more privy to the initial plan at Grenfell, the same as we would be with buildings on our ground. We have a database but there's a difference between having a database and actually being fresh with it and knowing it yourself on your ground.

I wasn't aware of any pre-prepared plan for firefighting and/or search and rescue when compartmentation failed in a high-rise block of flats. We would normally treat a job as if the compartmentalisation was intact. For me, before Grenfell, if you said compartmentalisation had been breached, I would have said it would have burned through the fire door to the stairwell. So that might affect how you reach it; you're fire-fighting before you get to it. But the way the blocks were designed originally, the compartmentalisation is unlikely to normally be breached, in the way it was.

I did not see any sprinklers in the building, or see or hear any fire alarms going off. Better fire safety measures in the tower should have been in place to help. But as hard as everyone worked, we had little to no effect on that fire. It spread too fast for us to really get hold of it. The way it spread around the building in minutes, you can't put out a fire out that quick. It was spreading faster than you could put it out. So, whatever measures were in place to start with would have been more effective than just us.

Signature: T ROOTS
2018

Signature witnessed by:

Regarding cladding panels, we've had a thing going on for a couple of years now about 'sandwich panels', but as far as I knew prior to this that was more to do with things like big industrial units. As appears to be evident here, usually with two pieces of aluminium or lightweight metals, the fire can travel within it and then pop out at another point. So, sandwich panels are on the radar, something to be aware of, but for me I'd only have expected that at a warehouse fire where that sort of construction is common. I can't elaborate on the construction of the windows in the tower.

I'm not aware of who the Incident Commander was, or where they were at the incident. Probably at the main Command Unit but I don't know, and at a job that big I wouldn't normally expect to know. We're in sectors so the Sector Commander would be more relevant to me. The command of the incident would have changed as the fire escalated; you'd expect higher seniority of officers being ordered on, and taking over. In terms of keeping a lookout for the spread of the fire outside the building, I believe — with the sectorising, the Sector Commanders would have been doing that, which would normally be a Watch Manager or a Station Manager. This would be part of our procedure, to have someone keeping observations on the spread of fire externally, and to relay changes to the Incident Commander.

External firefighting, they had a turntable ladder there from Paddington, but as far as I am aware, they had to stop as it was no longer safe for the crew due to all the debris coming down on top of them, so unfortunately they had to knock that off early on.

From what I could see, you also had Soho's ALP (Aerial Ladder Platform) firefighting, which was not as effective as it could have been because of the water pressure being so low, and on the rear/West face where we were all marshalled, there was a crew on a ground monitor who were working hard trying to put it out. But a ground monitor can only hit so far.

My understanding of the 'stay put policy' is that it is advice given by Fire Survival Guidance to people to stay in their flats and the fire crews would meet them, and we would bring them down as and when it was safe to do so. Before it was called 'Fire Survival Guidance', I've been involved in incidents like that, whereas crew we've gone in to flats, met casualties and waited with them, and when it was safe to do so, we brought the casualties out.

I'm not aware who made decisions regarding the 'stay put policy' on the night. But with the amount of traffic I experienced at the time going up and down the narrow staircase, if you had all the casualties and occupiers coming down at one time, it would have been a nightmare on the stairs. I only heard after the event about the policy being withdrawn, not on the night. I imagine it would have been recorded in a log at the time.

Signature: T ROOTS
2018

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I had no involvement in the decision making process, speed of decisions, who was making specific decisions etc. at Grenfell. Regarding the decisions affecting me that I was involved with, I thought they were really good, and concisely put. I don't recall making any specific decisions from my experience in relation to how the fire was behaving, as such.

I didn't receive any injuries or treatment, or witness anyone else having being injured, having a near miss or receiving medical assistance.

Apart from assisting the couple down from Flat 165, the only contact I had with members of the public was when I first arrived on scene, people were trying to hand us mobile phones and things and I was saying to them to hand them to police instead. I don't recall any specific details of the members of the public.

I would be willing to answer any further questions in the future, and I am also willing to allow this statement to be passed to the Public Inquiry if necessary.

Signature: T ROOTS
2018

Signature witnessed by: