

WITNESS STATEMENT

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

Statement of: NEAVE, ANTHONY

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

Occupation: POLICE OFFICER

This statement (consisting of 8 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:

Date: 17/06/2017

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

This statement has been typed at Kensington Police Station on Saturday 17th June 2017, this was the earliest opportunity to type up this statement after going on rest days after the major incident, there has been around a 72 hour time lapse in starting this however the incident is still reasonably fresh in my memory. I have not spoken to anyone about my statement and I have not viewed my body worn footage before the point of starting this statement.

On WEDNESDAY 14TH JUNE 2017 I was on duty in Met Police uniform paired with PC 528BS and we were assigned to the call sign BS82N and were patrolling in a marked police car. We were assigned to CAD 482/14JUN17 to assist BS21N who had gone to a fire at GRENFELL TOWER and were now declaring a critical incident and needed more units. I was travelling from BELGRAVIA POLICE STATION and listening to the updates coming through, it was around the time I hit NOTTING HILL GATE when I heard BS1N declare it as a major incident and all available units were now making their way to the scene from borough and across London. While on route I could hear the updates coming out that it was quite a large scale fire, with this in mind I started to brief PC 528BS on what she could expect when we arrived and explained it would be busy, as we turned into BOMORE ROAD at around 0135hours I caught a glimpse of GRENFELL TOWER and noticed the North East side of the building on fire and it was progressing up to the roof, I was initially shell shocked by the scale of it all and could see people running around already, I immediately looked over to my colleague PC 528BS and could see she was in a bit of shock and just tried to reassure her as much as I could and told her to just stay with me. Once the car was parked we moved towards the grass area at the front of the leisure centre where the

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initial cordon had been put in, there was a large crowd already there and they were all distraught and just amazed at what was going in front of them, I looked up a few times at the tower and just knew this wasn't going to end well, the fire just looked aggressive and was constantly growing in size every time I looked up at it. I then heard a radio transmission telling us we were changing to PLONEVENT8 radio channel so I changed my radio channel and then went around making sure others knew to change their radio, we were then instructed to move back all of the people in the grass area as we were going to use that area for the ambulances. We started moving people back slowly and secured a new cordon but were soon told this wasn't enough and that they had to go back further, when trying to move people back I was told on numerous occasions that people had family in there and I just kept advising them that the LFB were inside and doing their best to get to people, when we then started to move people back further and were met by some resistance within the crowd with people not wanting to move back and were in the stages of fight or flight. I had the impression many wanted to fight us and some began to stand off us off and started to get verbally aggressive telling us they didn't to move and to not touch them whilst trying to move the crowd back I was using powers under common law as I believed by these people not moving back they putting their selves in immediate danger due to bits falling from the building and the build-up of people in this area could cause crushing or for them to be trampled if there was a big surge in the crowd trying to get forward or back, we were trying to emphasize with them as we understood they had family and friends in there but we just had to clear them back to let more people in to help. I remember moving people back and seeing an old guy just walking around lost and confused in his pj's and dressing gown as he had lost his wife, he wasn't upset he was just lost and confused. We carried on moving people back for the emergency services to get in to the RVP and eventually pushed the crowd back to WALMER ROAD, members of the public didn't want to back here and the crowd made that felt with one male refusing to move and another then calling myself and another officer with me aggressive, we tried explaining we weren't we just had a job to do and they needed to move back. I had one argument with one male asking him to move and him telling me he didn't like me or the police and I responded to him that I understood that and he didn't have to like me or the police and tomorrow he could go back to thinking that but right now I just needed his help and for him to move back. When up at WALMER ROAD I spoke to a male who was trying to get in his black 4x4 with his friend to move it, I advised the male to leave his car there as now there was no chance of getting the car out as the road was blocked with emergency services vehicles. We were shortly joined by aid serials coming to help us and they helped moved a lot of the crowd back and allowed to hold cordons. I then made my way back to the leisure

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centre where I found PC 528BS again and got her to stay with me, it was nearly instantly I heard PC 440BS call up for help and in the confusion of the whole situation unable to even picture where he was, I just knew it was near the tower so myself PC 528BS and PC 412BS ran from the leisure centre over to GRENFELL TOWER, I couldn't believe the state of the building so much more was already on fire and bits were falling down from the building, there was multiple firefighters all around the base of the building and some already looked exhausted and defeated, we all headed up the stair case on to GLENFELL WALK and we were joined by the superintendent who immediately shouted at us to watch out heads and keep an eye on the building, as I looked I could see more objects falling some quite large bits, we were told all the people on the walk needed to be moved it was unsafe for them to be there. I knew if it was unsafe for them then it was probably unsafe for us to be up there any length of time, I therefore immediately started shouting at people with PC 412BS to move back down the walk way and on to BRAMLEY ROAD, most people complied and moved with a lot of shouting, PC 412BS stayed back to try and get people to go back inside in the block and I carried on pushing them down the ramp, as I got to the top of the ramp I was joined by PS 4BS and she helped me push the crowd back towards the road, while we pushing the crowd back down the ramp I had members of public telling me to look at the tower and what was going on and I told them I didn't want to look back as I knew what was going on, I also had it in my mind that I just couldn't physically keep looking at it as when I reached GRENFELL WALK I had already seen members of public waving at the window for help and while I was walking along GRENFELL WALK I had already heard a member of public screaming as I saw them falling from the building, this was quite distressing as I knew at this point there was going to be so many more people doing the same and it must have meant they had no way of getting down already. This also made me realise there was going to be so many people trapped as we had been told to advise people to stay inside and the fire service would get them out as they were already going up floor by floor. PS 4BS told me she was round on BRAMLEY ROAD with PC 621BS but they needed units to help her, when we got to the bottom the crowd dispersed and I went back up to the top of the walk to find PC 412BS.

As I got to the top of the walk again some residents had come back out of the block and I shouted for them to go back inside again, they did this straight away and apologised for coming back out. I then noticed PC 412BS having trouble with people that had come out of one of the flats along GLENFELL WALK and they were just arguing with us throughout and couldn't understand why they needed to go back inside and just kept telling us we couldn't tell them what to do, we eventually managed to get them back inside but at times had to use force under common law as they were putting their selves in

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immediate danger with the smoke and stuff falling from the building, they didn't liked being touched but it was for their own safety. As we walked away the superintendent again shouted at us to watch our heads as more stuff was falling, we told him we were having trouble with some of the members of public and he advised us not to worry as the decision had already been made to evacuate GLENFELL WALK due to the fire and the stuff falling down, he told us TSG would do this so I left the balcony and went back down under where the garages were, at this point I had lost PC 440BS and PC 528BS, I made my way back to the original RVP near the leisure centre and looked for PC 528BS there but couldn't find her, I therefore phoned her and she told me she was still near the tower with PC 440BS trying to get crowds away, I went back there to help them and look for them but couldn't find them in area around the garages, I went back up to GLENFELL WALK and saw TSG clearing the walk and again saw more and more DeBry (debris) falling from the building. I was just in shock at this moment in time as I could see the fire spreading so quick and couldn't do anything to help other than keeping the people back and making sure they stayed safe. I then left the walk and went back to the garages I saw exhausted fire fighters trying so hard to carry on going back in and out and some just sat there trying to rest before they had to go back in and they were changing their oxygen cylinders, as I walked back up GRENFELL ROAD I heard PC 528BS call me from behind so I met up with her and we moved up towards the junction of GRENFELL ROAD / BOMORE ROAD, at this point with the situation getting so severe we said we would make sure we stuck together throughout the night to make sure at the end of it we got home safely. We supported other officers on the cordon that had been put in there and constantly kept moving the crowd back some of which were hostile towards us and couldn't understand why we weren't doing anything ourselves, they kept trying to break the cordon to go down and help but we kept reminding them there was nothing they could do to help other than to stay back and just let us do our job, it was hard to keep the balance between understanding how they felt and the emotions we had ourselves as we knew this was a crazy situation and it wasn't going to end well.

On several occasions they attempted to break the cordon there but eventually we found common ground between us all and started to work together, whilst there I heard PC 528BS get called over by BS1 who appointed her as the LFB liaison just down the road on BOMORE ROAD, whilst I was on the cordon I had one gentleman who had been arguing with me a lot already stood inside the cordon back there again he was now a lot calmer and told me he had anger issues and that he just wanted five minutes to take it all in and pray, I let him do this as I just felt sorry for him as he knew people inside the tower, he next went to the floor and started praying and this sent shivers through me as it made it sink in that actually some of

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those people would need a miracle now to get out as the fire had spread so much and the heat was just so intense I could feel every time I got near the tower. At his point I left the guy to his prayers and went to check on PC 5288S and was joined by PC 440BS, I asked him if he was ok and did he need any help, he told me I could help him as we needed to find a make shift mortuary for the people who had already been declared dead. We then headed back round the original RVP on BOMORE ROAD. When we reached the RVP some of my colleagues were there already including PC 106BS who was helping LAS with the casualty's that had already came out, I noticed that all of them there which I believe was about 3 people had been covered as they didn't make it and they were expecting a lot more. During this period (I think it was) I was asked to move my car a bit to get it out of the road and to allow a barrier to be put in around the deceased that were already there. While there was no direct plan to sort a mortuary I went to head back to GRENFELL ROAD as I had heard people were getting through the cordon again, as I arrived they had then brought down a load of long shields that were going to be used to protect the fire fighters, the crowd that had formed then broke the cordon and wanted to take the long shields down and go into the building to save others, we quickly stopped them and pushed them back behind the cordon while other officers took shields down. I then heard someone tell the crowd if they wanted to help then go and get water for the fire fighters as they were in desperate need of water to rehydrate.

When the crowd were told to go and get water a large majority of them left some of which had been causing us hassle, while they were away I had lots of people coming up to me distressed and wanting me to talk to family members on the phone who were stuck inside the tower and asking me what they should do, I told them to give me the floor and flat number and I would pass it on to LFB and they would come and get them from their flat and that should stay there as this is the advice I had been given, lots of people gave me numbers and every time I would go back to the LFB command and update them, this seemed to allow them to map the tower and work out where they needed to reach and send crews, I had already heard them saying they were struggling to get anywhere near the top floors due to the heat and how quickly the fire was spreading. On returning to the cordon at one point I noticed members of public running towards us with trolleys of water, I had wondered where they got it from due to the time of the night but at same time I wasn't bothered how they got it as I knew it was needed before the fire fighters collapsed from dehydration, I took a trolley off one of the members of the public and pushed down as far as I could initially get it and then I pulled cases of water out and ran down the road with it chucking it at the fire fighters to drink, I then ran back and got more and ran it over the leisure centre where there was more fire fighters, as I got back to the trolley another police officer who I know as Josh was there and I

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got him to help me lift the trolley over the hoses and I pushed the trolley up to the leisure centre before running back and helping get more water and running back with it, I made several trips with the water and eventually saved some for myself and PC 528BS who had now moved round on to GRENFELL ROAD to the forward LFB command for all the fire fighters going into the building. I gave her some water and had some myself, I helped Josh with more water trips and assisted on the cordon on GRENFELL ROAD junction with BOMORE ROAD as well as trying to help PC 528BS and make sure she was ok with everything that was going, it came to a point where I heard it come out over the radio that the advice from LFB command was to now tell members of the public to self-evacuate as it was just too dangerous for LFB to get in and get up to the top floors of building, hearing this and having to tell members of the public this sent chills through me as it went back on the advice of telling them stay put and LFB would save them, I instantly knew the level of fatalities was going to increase massively. It was either just before this or after this when I remember a news reporter in a blue suit quite tall and skinny breaking the cordon in GRENFELL ROAD and walking towards us and the scene, I remembered him from being round near the leisure centre and trying to break through the cordon there to film, I repeatedly told him to get back behind the cordon and he kept raising his iPhone towards me as he was recording, as he was walking back I got the sense he was drunk as he kept stumbling backwards and falling into parked vehicles and hedges, he did get back eventually but I remember he had really annoyed me as I had already moved him on once and was now trying to get in again just to get the story first when the place was crawling with families grieving and emergency services working through levels of fatigue trying to help everyone. I can then remember NPAS sending down a message saying they had concerns about GLENFELL WALK the flat numbers of 101 to 111 as it looked like they were getting very hot from the roof, the information was passed on to the fire command unit but they told me to go to the main command unit on BOMORE ROAD, as I got there I was told to go inside and speak to the command team and give them the information, I done this and it was decided that they wouldn't turn hoses onto this as TSG had cleared this area earlier and I confirmed it, they decided the priority had to remain the main tower block and getting the people out of there. My night started to slow down a little after this and I stayed with PC 528BS for a majority of it until one officer from the fire service came asking for more long shields to be taken to the tower to protect the fire fighters, a sergeant from another borough said there was still a stack up at the top of GRENFELL ROAD so myself him and Josh went and got the shields and started running the down to tower, as I got below GRENFALL WALK outside the tower, I noticed conditions were tough, there was a massive build-up of water and lots of DeBry (debris) and even more falling on us just while we were

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there, I passed the shields off to people and tried to keep myself safe from the falling objects, I could tell it was dangerous and intense as bits were falling around us and one fire fighter turned their back on the fire and got shouted at to never turn their back it was too dangerous. I made a few more trips with shields down there and every time it seemed even more dangerous.

I then returned to the command point with PC 528BS and we were asked to get officers to clear all the other blocks in GLENFELL WALK as it was believed the fire could spread or DeBry (debris) could fall from the tower onto there and cause another fire, they instructed that all rooms were to be cleared even if it mean breaking the door and checking it was empty and people weren't sleeping. At this point a fire fighter from the FSU came up and looked exhausted, he kept getting told to sit down by the officers in the command unit and eventually did, I went over and gave him water and made him drink it before making him remove his tunic, I could see he was sweating loads and becoming dehydrated, I knew from wearing public order kit he would be boiling and needed to get some around him, he then removed it and sat down again before asking me to check him for burns, I then moved away to what I believe was to contact PC 621BS and let him know the LFB had set up another command post on BRAMLEY ROAD where he was and they needed another Police liaison there, he told me he would head up there and take over that role for them, it was when I came back from this he had gone again to carry on working, it felt like time had stopped while I was there throughout the night.

When it started getting towards the early hours I remember being joined by PC 337BS and PC 284BS and PC 459BS, while we were there a member of public was brought down from the cordon by another fire fighter to the command unit, it transpired he was in contact with his dad in the building who the male we had been getting reports about on the 11th floor waving things out of the window. The fire fighters spoke to his dad on the phone for a bit while we spoke to the son and tried to consul (console) him while the LFB done their bit, LFB decided they were sending a crew in to try and save his dad and asked the NPAS kept an eye on him at the window and gave a update if things changed. Once LFB had the information they needed I sent the son around to BRAMLEY ROAD, I done this because I knew that was where he would be taken to if they got him out and because I knew there was every chance they wouldn't be able to get him out as the crews just couldn't get up there and I knew they wouldn't want the constant reminder of it all stood right outside their door.

I then had many talk throughs between NPAS and the LFB with updates on the male and at some points the scary thought of the fact the male has disappeared from view, a constant chat continued between us all and eventually a serial on BRAMLEY ROAD asked for an update as they were with the next of kin and

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had been for some while, before this NPAS had been given us updates and even telling us the fire fighters had their water jet aimed at the window just above where the male was, it was at this point one of the fire officers come walking up GRENFELL ROAD from the tower with a huge smile on his face and shook hands with both me and PC 528BS saying they had got him they had finally got him, I had never felt so much happiness and sense of relief just knowing even after all this time we had managed to save someone and could reunite the family, I managed to let the serial know on BRAMLEY ROAD who liaised with a refuge centre and they were able to establish the male had been taken in an ambulance to Chelsea & Westminster as he had taken in a lot of smoke.

Daylight had already started to break on the tower and it was a massive sense of shock seeing how much it had been destroyed and how easy the fire managed to spread all around it, I was still under the impression as well it could still collapse and had made sure PC 528BS knew that if this collapsed then we just had to run as quickly as possible as we were so close we'd be caught up in it all. Once the male had been recovered from the window we didn't have too much more to do other than make sure no one passed us who shouldn't be there and we were able to talk and start to try and process what exactly had happened overnight and what we had seen, during this officers came round and gave us new radio batteries and we had visits from the superintendent who was taking over the day shift and our borough commander all checking on our welfare and making sure the correct things were being handed over, we were then joined by A/PS 295BS who stayed with us until early turn arrived to take over from us as we were one of the last to be taken over from, he was also checking we were ok and understood in some sense what had just happened over night. When we left our point we returned to the original RVP on BOMORE ROAD and met up with the rest of our team that were still there, when there I managed to grab some food and have a quick break before assisting PC 412BS write down details from a bag of property that been recovered from flat 16 where it was believed the fire had started, during this time I wrote down the names and other details of the occupants listed on the paperwork as they were currently unaccounted for and we had been told the original call was from there so needed to identify any criminal aspect, these recorded detail were then given back to PC 412BS who put them on a crimint on the police system when we returned to the station and he booked in the property and exhibited it. Shortly after this we were joined by PC 621BS who was the final member from our team to be relieved and at this point we got into cars that we had arrived in and headed back to the station to be debriefed.

Throughout the whole incident I found our team Inspector Mr Thatcher to be great and Superintendent Warnett as well as our team sergeants PS Paajarvi, PS Valente, A/PS Handley and A/PS Logue, they kept

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cool, calm and collected throughout the incident and helped support us during a challenging time and made sure we always knew what we were doing.

During the whole incident I had to move multiple people back behind the cordons who had broken through the cordons, not many people were happy with this as they didn't like being touched by the police, I however had an honest held belief that if I allowed them inside the cordon and anywhere near the tower they would put their own lives in danger and cause more issues for the fire service who were already battling with tough conditions, I therefore used common law to push the people back behind the cordons when they didn't comply with the commands given to them, this force was only used to keep people safe and protect them from running down to the tower and putting their lives in danger trying to reach loved ones inside.

During a majority of the incident I had my body worn camera running and recording what went on, I have viewed this camera footage to try and increase my knowledge of what went on and to enable me to provide the best statement possible, this footage has now been saved and labelled as OP NORTHLEIGH which is the operation name for the major incident at GRENFELL TOWER, I am exhibiting this footage as AON/1 and AON/2, AON/1 is the main body of footage lasting three and a half hours and AON/2 is the smaller section of footage lasting around two minutes.

The main body of this statement has been completed on Saturday 17th June 2017 at Kensington Police Station finishing at 1618hours, this statement was started 1100hours with a small break in between where I went back to Grenfell Tower and visited the scene to pay my respects. The rest of this statement was completed on Tuesday 20th June 2017 between the hours of 1500hours to 1900hours, this statement was updated after reviewing body worn footage of the incident to try and include as much detail as possible to give the best evidence for any investigation that may take place.

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