

**WITNESS STATEMENT**

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

Statement of: BAKER, DANIEL

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

Occupation: POLICE OFFICER

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This statement (consisting of 3 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: 12/10/2017

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

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On Wednesday 14th June 2017 at approximately 0045 hours, I was on duty in full uniform acting as operator of a marked police van working under the call sign of WW20N. I was accompanied by PC MEEK 452WW when we responded to a call for assistance from BS who were dealing with a large fire within a block of flats at Grenfell Tower, W11. We responded to the call and made our way to the scene from Garratt Lane, SW17 on blue lights. We took the route from Shepherds Bush, Westfield and down Holland Park Avenue turning onto Lansdowne Road and then onto Clarendon Road before finally turning onto Walmar Road where we parked. As we arrived onto Walmar Road I remember being in disbelief at what I was seeing and even mentioned to PC MEEK how shocked I was.

We had already seen a large number of vehicles heading towards the RVP. These were ambulances and fire engines. We got out of the van and walked along Bomore Road. The radio was very busy and our first plan of action was to find out where we were required as we had been given no direction other than to attend the call. We walked towards the direction of Grenfell Tower and could already hear large number of screams and panic coming from around and what I suspected to be inside the building itself. We arrived by the leisure centre directly opposite the tower and were met by BS officers who were trying to move people away from the building and were struggling trying to do this as there were a large number of people who were stood just looking at what was happening.

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From looking at the tower, I could see bits of the building coming away from the top where the building was ablaze the most and realised this posed a huge safety risk. We liaised with a PC from BS who informed us that we were trying to get people as far away as possible and pushing people back towards Avondale Park Road. There was a large amount of people crying and upset and I remember having to move a large group of Asian females who were all crying and would not move and one of them mentioned that they had family in the building, they were staring at the tower and I had to usher them away from the building. A Sergeant joined us in trying to move people back and I remember him shouting telling all the constables to 'USE YOUR VOICES, GET PEOPLE BACK'. I then recall a lot more officers turning up and we had a lot more assistance in getting people away from the area.

I then saw a Police Sergeant who I did not know at the time but now know to be a PS Clive SEAL 33LX and he was trying to put cordon tape up to create a path for people who had come out of the building to exit safely into Walmar Road. I took the cordon tape off of him and taped off the area from Avondale Park Road down to Walmar Road facilitating a path for people to get out. People started to exit and I then made my way back to Avondale Park Road to assist with cordon control as there was a large crowd building and this was slowly turning into a public order situation. We were instructed to push people back down Avondale Park Road and keep them moving as the LAS wanted to set up a treatment centre outside the leisure centre and we were told that ambulances would be requiring access along Avondale Park Road. There were houses either side of the road and also vehicles parked either side up and down the road. We moved people back to Freshers Place and secured the junction there. This was not cordoned off with tape, however was held by LX serial and ourselves. The LX serial then had to move back to the top of Avondale Park Road and myself and PC MEEK were left on the cordon of Freshers Place by ourselves for around one hour and had to deal with a growing crowd of people. These were a mix of residents, friends, family members and also people who lived in the area.

There was a lot of anger growing as people could not understand why we had moved them back to Freshers Place and accused us of lying about the ambulances coming down Avondale Park Road. We tried our best to calm and reassure people and to let them know that we were doing the best we could at trying to keep them updated with information. A small group of males then ran past us and went to try and break through the Avondale Park Road cordon. I attempted to grab one of the males and was grabbed by another male who told me to get off his brother. I tried to explain why we were not letting people past the cordon and that it was for people's safety. A few people started to direct their frustration towards

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police stating that we were letting the building burn due to its location and it being a tower block. I had no response to this other than the emergency services were trying to do all they could.

Eventually it got to the point where people were trying to move past myself and PC MEEK and I remember raising my voice attempting to give some form of reassuring speech to people in order to get them to listen to what we were saying and heed our warnings about staying back. It became apparent that we were not able to hold the cordon with just two officers for the amount of people in the crowd and so officers from the LX serial joined us and we then held a line on Avondale Park Road, J/W Freshers Place. Whilst on the cordon we were approached by many people requesting information on relatives, friends and we directed them to one of the LX officers who were recording names on a sheet.

I was stood next to PC MEEK when he was approached by a female who said that her friend and little girl were on the 11th floor and he had to advise them to self evacuate from advice given from LFB. I don't recall the time but at one point during the early hours of that morning I was approached by a female from the crowd who said that her friend had been rushed out of the building and she had recently had a caesarean two days earlier. Due to the rush and shock she had become very faint and was struggling to move or breathe properly. I requested an ambulance as she was adamant that she could not be moved. An off duty doctor came to assist and he spoke to the female. I recognised her to be one of the Asian females I had ushered along earlier from being stood near to the building crying. The doctor eventually advised the female to allow us to help her round to the LAS treatment centre which had been set up by the leisure centre a short distance away. Myself and the doctor took the female and put her arms around our shoulders and we carried her to the treatment centre and left her in the care of LAS. We were finally relieved at around 0600 hours after speaking with PS SEAL who allowed us to leave.

We were not part of a serial and had no relief coming of which we knew of. The only force used at this incident was to prevent someone from breaching a cordon and this was me attempting to grab the person. I had no details for this person as they managed to breach the line and ran off. I was equipped with TASER as part of my tour of duty however this was not used or removed from the holster. Myself and PC MEEK spent approximately five hours at the scene and the words in this statement do not echo or reflect fully what we dealt with on the night as emotions were very high and at times I was in disbelief at what I was seeing. This statement was made almost four months after the incident and the events have been recorded as best as I can remember.

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