

WITNESS STATEMENT

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

Statement of: ELLIOTT, FRANCESCA

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

Occupation: POLICE OFFICER

This statement (consisting of 2 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: F ELLIOTT

Date: 17/06/2017

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

This statement is in relation to the major incident I attended at Grenfell Tower in North Kensington. On Tuesday 13th June 2017, I was on patrol with PC 284BS, our call sign was BS83N. At around 0100 I heard via the radio that a fire had been reported at Grenfell Tower in North Kensington. Another unit was attending I believe on the I grade, therefore my colleague 284BS and I completed a task we needed to do by dropping off some paperwork to Belgravia Police Station. We were monitoring the radio for any further updates in case we needed to attend. We heard via the radio that the fire was getting worse and our colleagues needed more units to attend. The incident had been declared as a critical incident by PC 119BS and shortly after declared a Major Incident by Inspector THATCHER. We attended the incident immediately after and arrived on scene around 0140. We first arrived at the scene on Silchester Road, W14 and from our view point we could see the fire was down one side of the building and appeared to be from a middle floor rising above very quickly and violently. As the fire was getting worse by the second, PC 284BS and I decided that a road closure was needed to keep the members of the public on looking safe from falling debris. The street was filled with members of the public with mixed emotions. Many were crying, angry, shocked, scared for their friends/families and community's safety and some had safely evacuated the building. There was a large crowd of around 100 people at the bottom of Silchester Road, junction with Bramley Road who were behind the cordon I was manning alongside PC 284BS. PC 337BS also joined shortly after to help manage the crowd behind the cordon as it was very hard keeping the public back from the falling debris and the burning building due to the emotions the public were facing. We attempted many times to comfort the public by ensuring that the emergency services were

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doing everything they could to save people and evacuate the building. I also tried to help further by giving them information on the areas where people could go to find people who were being evacuated. As I am writing this statement I cannot remember the location of this. As the fire was spreading rapidly around the building, I felt very frightened that the building was going to fall down especially with the amounts of debris that were laying on the floor on Silchester Road and scarily were continuing to do so. I am not sure on exact times but colleagues from Southwark borough arrived on scene and joined us on the cordon of Silchester Road, junction with Bramley Road. I could hear on the radio that colleagues were calling for urgent assistance near what I now believe was Barandon Walk as they were having problems managing the crowds there and there were many casualties in this location. London Ambulance Service also needed space urgently in order to treat the victims of the fire and maintain their dignity. PC 284BS and PC 337BS and I ran as fast as we could to the location where help was needed. From this moment it was a bit of a blur what happened. We arrived near Whitechurch Road and we heard our colleagues again calling for further assistance in a different location and where I now know to be Station Walk on the corner of Latimer Road. When we arrived here, there were many members of the public attempting to make their way towards an entrance to Grenfell Tower in which we needed to stop them. The members of the public here were in deep distress and tried to get past us at every opportunity. Luckily there were British Transport Police officers who arrived to support us to control the public there and create a cordon. Many members of the public came up to me to give me information on where their families were trapped in the building which I relayed back to my colleague PC 528BS who was liaising with London Fire Brigade. It was incredibly sad to see the families and friends in so much pain and distress when they were speaking with people trapped inside the flats. This information was relayed back to PC 528BS and the fire brigade via the radio with the flat number, floor level. The public were then advised to stay behind a cordon on Bramley Road as they would have been in the way for the paramedics to treat victims and the fire brigade to bring out victims from the tower. After this, I helped carry and walk with victims who had just been brought down by the fire brigade up Station Walk to the paramedics for immediate treatment. This was around a 150m long pathway and the fire brigade were incredibly tired and worn out, hence why I helped along with other colleagues PC 337BS, PS 4BS, PC 284BS and PC 621BS to take them off their hands. At one point, there were many victims coming out but unfortunately it got lesser and lesser as time went on. My role at this point was to help to transport the victims to get the help from paramedics and comfort and support them to the best I could. I saw a male lying on the floor in Station Walk who had unfortunately died and he had a white sheet over his body to protect his dignity. He was later placed into a

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body bag. A radio message came out at around 0500 from the London Fire Brigade that they were no longer allowed into the building as it was unsafe to do so, this meant that self-evacuation was the only way for people to get out. On speaking to members of the public, I relayed this message back to them as some were on the phone to people trapped and obviously in a huge distress. I told them to tell the people who were trapped to self-evacuate as that was the only way to get out. Earlier in the night I had heard rumours that some people had jumped from windows for survival and unfortunately had died. It was an awful and incredibly upsetting scene at Grenfell tower. During the remainder of the evening when I was at the scene, I was making sure that members of the public on Bramley Road were keeping the roads clear by standing on the pavements for ambulances to leave the scene. I was dismissed from the scene around 0730 and returned to Kensington Police Station where I had a de-brief of the incident.

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