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| <p>1 Tuesday, 30 October 2018</p> <p>2 (10.00 am)</p> <p>3 (Proceedings delayed)</p> <p>4 (10.08 am)</p> <p>5 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Good morning, everyone. Welcome to</p> <p>6 today's hearing, at which we are going to hear more</p> <p>7 evidence from people who were in the tower at the time</p> <p>8 of the fire.</p> <p>9 Yes, Mr Rawat.</p> <p>10 MR RAWAT: Good morning, Mr Chairman.</p> <p>11 May I now call Paulos Tekle.</p> <p>12 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Thank you.</p> <p>13 PAULOS TEKLE (sworn)</p> <p>14 Questions by MR RAWAT</p> <p>15 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Thank you very much, Mr Tekle.</p> <p>16 Would you like to sit down and make yourself</p> <p>17 comfortable.</p> <p>18 THE WITNESS: Okay.</p> <p>19 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Thank you.</p> <p>20 Yes, Mr Rawat.</p> <p>21 MR RAWAT: Good morning.</p> <p>22 A. Good morning.</p> <p>23 Q. Can you give the inquiry your full name, please?</p> <p>24 A. My full name is Paulos Woldesilassie Tekle.</p> <p>25 Q. Mr Tekle, first of all, thank you very much for coming</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 1</p> | <p>1 have, please, the first page of that statement. The</p> <p>2 reference is IWS00001051.</p> <p>3 If you look at the screen that's on the desk in</p> <p>4 front of you, Mr Tekle, you can see that that's the</p> <p>5 first page of your statement to the inquiry. If you</p> <p>6 need it -- you've already found it, I think -- there's</p> <p>7 a paper copy there, and if you turn to tab 1, you'll see</p> <p>8 that the statement is there as well.</p> <p>9 If we go to page 16 of that document, and hopefully</p> <p>10 page 16 is also on the screen, it's got a statement of</p> <p>11 truth and then a signature.</p> <p>12 A. Yes.</p> <p>13 Q. Can you confirm that that's your signature, please?</p> <p>14 A. Yes, it is.</p> <p>15 Q. And it's dated, as we can see, 21 August 2018.</p> <p>16 A. Yes.</p> <p>17 Q. Have you had a chance to go through the statement</p> <p>18 recently, Mr Tekle?</p> <p>19 A. Yes, I did.</p> <p>20 Q. And can you confirm that the contents of the statement</p> <p>21 are true?</p> <p>22 A. Yes, it is true.</p> <p>23 Q. We also have to the statement seven exhibits, which are</p> <p>24 identified as PT/1 to PT/7. They are in the same</p> <p>25 document at pages 17 to 39.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 3</p> |
| <p>1 to give evidence today. Your willingness to continue to</p> <p>2 help the inquiry is very much appreciated.</p> <p>3 The core participants and their representatives will</p> <p>4 all have had the chance to read the statement that</p> <p>5 you've provided to this inquiry.</p> <p>6 A. Yes.</p> <p>7 Q. And the purpose of today is not for us to read out the</p> <p>8 whole statement or to ask you questions about every part</p> <p>9 of it. As with other witnesses, my questions will focus</p> <p>10 on the conditions that you encountered on the night of</p> <p>11 the fire, and on what you yourself saw and heard.</p> <p>12 I appreciate that reliving the events of that</p> <p>13 terrible night will be difficult, and so if you need</p> <p>14 a break at any time, please just let me know and we will</p> <p>15 stop.</p> <p>16 A. Yes, okay.</p> <p>17 Q. I'm going to try to take your evidence in time order.</p> <p>18 I hope that I will keep my questions short and simple,</p> <p>19 but sometimes they don't come out like that. If I do</p> <p>20 ask you a question that you don't understand, please</p> <p>21 don't hesitate to tell me, and I will then ask the</p> <p>22 question in a different way.</p> <p>23 A. Okay.</p> <p>24 Q. The first thing that we need to do is to put your</p> <p>25 inquiry statement formally into the record. So can we</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 2</p> | <p>1 A. Yes.</p> <p>2 Q. We'll be looking at some of those exhibits as we go</p> <p>3 through your evidence, but could I start, please, by</p> <p>4 just asking you some background questions.</p> <p>5 A. Yes, okay.</p> <p>6 Q. If we go back to the first page of your statement, you</p> <p>7 begin in your statement by explaining that your partner</p> <p>8 and two boys moved into flat 153 on the 18th floor.</p> <p>9 Can you remember when that was?</p> <p>10 A. It was 1 June, but obviously the council give a week</p> <p>11 notice, you know, to move the stuff, so officially they</p> <p>12 moved in 1 June.</p> <p>13 Q. Was that in 2016?</p> <p>14 A. Yes.</p> <p>15 Q. Was it your partner that held the tenancy?</p> <p>16 A. Yes, she did. She did.</p> <p>17 Q. Can you remember who that tenancy was with?</p> <p>18 A. I think with TMO.</p> <p>19 Q. And it's right, isn't it, that whilst you didn't live in</p> <p>20 flat 153 all the time, you were there virtually every</p> <p>21 day?</p> <p>22 A. Yes, every day, every other day, visiting my children,</p> <p>23 sometimes I stay with them. And anything when they need</p> <p>24 me, I'm there always with them.</p> <p>25 Q. And was one reason that you could do that because you</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 4</p> |

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| <p>1 had a flexible work schedule?</p> <p>2 A. Yes.</p> <p>3 Q. So you could work around your family commitments, could</p> <p>4 you?</p> <p>5 A. Yes, yes, that helps me as well because my job is</p> <p>6 24 hours available, so I can do morning, evening. So</p> <p>7 that helps, you know.</p> <p>8 Q. Thank you.</p> <p>9 The next topic I want to ask you questions about is</p> <p>10 the layout of the flat in June 2017.</p> <p>11 Can I just take you to paragraph 6 in your</p> <p>12 statement, which is on page 2.</p> <p>13 In this part of your statement, you say that when</p> <p>14 the family moved into flat 153, there were problems with</p> <p>15 the windows. You had a lot of draughts and air coming</p> <p>16 in through the windows.</p> <p>17 Was that still a problem in June 2017?</p> <p>18 A. Yes.</p> <p>19 Q. Was it a problem with windows in a particular room in</p> <p>20 the flat?</p> <p>21 A. All of the rooms except -- I don't know about the</p> <p>22 kitchen, but all the other rooms, there was a problem.</p> <p>23 Q. Can I ask you a few more questions about that, and</p> <p>24 I want to show you a plan that might help you.</p> <p>25 If we go, please to MET00012593, page 12.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 5</p> | <p>1 lounge --</p> <p>2 A. Yes.</p> <p>3 Q. -- on that plan; would that be the furthest room in your</p> <p>4 flat from flat 152?</p> <p>5 A. Yes, yes. Yes.</p> <p>6 Q. Again, if we expand the part of the plan that's flat 3,</p> <p>7 please.</p> <p>8 What you've told us was that, with the exception of</p> <p>9 the kitchen, you noticed a problem with all windows. So</p> <p>10 if we look at the bedrooms, they've each got a window.</p> <p>11 A. Yes.</p> <p>12 Q. Where was the air coming in in the bedrooms, can you</p> <p>13 remember?</p> <p>14 A. From both bedroom, from the bottom of the window.</p> <p>15 Q. When you say from the bottom, was that at the windowsill</p> <p>16 level?</p> <p>17 A. Yes, windowsill level, yes.</p> <p>18 Q. Was it below the sill or above it?</p> <p>19 A. I'm not sure, but it looks like above the sill, yes.</p> <p>20 Q. The lounge, as we can see from the plan, would have</p> <p>21 windows facing south and west.</p> <p>22 If we look, first of all, at the windows facing</p> <p>23 south -- and there's two windows there marked in blue on</p> <p>24 the plan --</p> <p>25 A. Yes.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 7</p> |
| <p>1 If I explain, Mr Tekle, this is a plan of the</p> <p>2 4th floor of the tower, but the layout of the flats that</p> <p>3 we see there is replicated as you go up to the higher</p> <p>4 floors. So it would be the same on your floor, the 18th</p> <p>5 floor.</p> <p>6 If we could expand flat 3 in the south-west corner,</p> <p>7 please. So on the 4th floor that was flat 13, on the</p> <p>8 18th floor it would be flat 153. We see that it's two</p> <p>9 bedrooms, each with a window facing south.</p> <p>10 Whilst we have the plan up there, can you confirm,</p> <p>11 was the bedroom that was closest to the lounge the one</p> <p>12 that was used by your children?</p> <p>13 A. Yes.</p> <p>14 Q. And the other bedroom would be next door to flat 152,</p> <p>15 wouldn't it?</p> <p>16 A. Yes.</p> <p>17 Q. So of all the rooms that you used in the flat, would it</p> <p>18 be right to say that the lounge was the furthest room</p> <p>19 from flat 152?</p> <p>20 A. Say again?</p> <p>21 Q. On the image, can we see flat 2 and 3 together, please.</p> <p>22 The next-door flat to you would be flat 152,</p> <p>23 wouldn't it?</p> <p>24 A. Yes, 152.</p> <p>25 Q. The question that I asked was: you can see your</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 6</p> | <p>1 Q. -- again, did you notice a problem with air and draughts</p> <p>2 in those windows?</p> <p>3 A. I remember she used to put a towel in the window near to</p> <p>4 the bedroom. And other one, the handle was not working,</p> <p>5 she was not able to open it. So I'm not sure if there</p> <p>6 was a leak or not, but I remember there was a problem</p> <p>7 with the handle.</p> <p>8 Q. So with the lounge windows, you're not so sure if there</p> <p>9 was a problem with draughts?</p> <p>10 A. No, there is a draught on the one which is close to the</p> <p>11 bedroom.</p> <p>12 Q. Right. So that's the one closest to your sons' bedroom?</p> <p>13 A. Yes, yes.</p> <p>14 Q. Again, with that window -- so just for the record,</p> <p>15 that's the south-facing lounge window closest to the</p> <p>16 bedroom -- where did you notice the air coming in?</p> <p>17 A. Same area like with the bedrooms, the same location.</p> <p>18 She just put, you know, wet towel on the bottom, so</p> <p>19 I think it must be under the window.</p> <p>20 Q. And when you say "she", that's Genet, your partner, who</p> <p>21 was doing that?</p> <p>22 A. Yes, Genet, yes.</p> <p>23 Q. You said -- it might just be the transcription -- Genet</p> <p>24 would put wet towels down.</p> <p>25 A. Yes.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 8</p> |

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| <p>1 Q. Why was that?</p> <p>2 A. When my family moved at that time, it was summer, so we</p> <p>3 didn't notice any problem because it is summer, hot</p> <p>4 weather. But when winter comes, we start noticing the</p> <p>5 leak, the draught comes from the windows.</p> <p>6 Q. But why did she make the towels wet?</p> <p>7 A. I think, you know, wet towel -- I'm not sure, to be</p> <p>8 honest, why she put the wet towel. I don't know.</p> <p>9 I don't know. I may probably say, you know, when I say</p> <p>10 wet towel -- just like putting a towel maybe, but</p> <p>11 I don't know, she used to put -- I don't know what, but</p> <p>12 it's a towel. It may be not wet towel, to be honest,</p> <p>13 I have to say here. I don't know. She's the one who is</p> <p>14 doing it. So I said it's wet towel. It may be like</p> <p>15 it's a common error, you know, saying. But I remember</p> <p>16 I've seen a wet towel -- I have seen a towel, shall</p> <p>17 I put it that way, better? A wet towel, but it's not --</p> <p>18 I don't know is it wet.</p> <p>19 Q. Just so that we can be clear, what you do remember is</p> <p>20 Genet having to put towels at the bedroom windows and at</p> <p>21 that window in the lounge which was closest to the</p> <p>22 bedroom?</p> <p>23 A. Yes, yes, as well as in the west side of the windows as</p> <p>24 well.</p> <p>25 Q. Let's go to the west side.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 9</p> | <p>1 she told me that they were coming to fix it, she report</p> <p>2 to them, but they say, "We'll fix that". I don't think</p> <p>3 they fixed it.</p> <p>4 Q. Could we take the plan back to the original size,</p> <p>5 please, and could we just expand the part of the plan</p> <p>6 that takes in flat 4, flat 3 and the communal area,</p> <p>7 please.</p> <p>8 I hope you can make out, Mr Tekle, from that plan,</p> <p>9 your front door that opens out into the communal lobby</p> <p>10 area. Do you see that?</p> <p>11 A. Yes.</p> <p>12 Q. Can you -- before we leave this plan -- just help us</p> <p>13 with this: what could you see from the front door?</p> <p>14 A. The front door you see a wall, because that wall is the</p> <p>15 lifts -- which takes you to the lifts, so it's a wall.</p> <p>16 There's nothing there.</p> <p>17 Q. So if you wanted to see the lifts themselves, would you</p> <p>18 have to walk out into the lobby area?</p> <p>19 A. Yes.</p> <p>20 Q. But if you were standing at the edge of your front door</p> <p>21 with the front door open, would you have a line of sight</p> <p>22 to the stairwell door?</p> <p>23 A. You will be able to see it if you're standing on the</p> <p>24 lobby, but we haven't noticed, to be honest, that</p> <p>25 there's a staircase there. But hopefully, according to</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 11</p> |
| <p>1 A. Okay.</p> <p>2 Q. We have three windows facing west from the lounge.</p> <p>3 A. Yes, okay.</p> <p>4 Q. Can you tell us which of those windows had draughts and</p> <p>5 air coming through?</p> <p>6 A. The one close to the kitchen, I remember she put -- let</p> <p>7 me call it this time maybe a towel. And the one on the</p> <p>8 corner, I remember the handle -- the two corner windows,</p> <p>9 the handle had a problem, so I'm not sure if she put</p> <p>10 a towel or not.</p> <p>11 Q. So, again, correct me if I'm summarising your evidence</p> <p>12 in the wrong way, but what you remember is a problem</p> <p>13 with draughts in the lounge window that was closest to</p> <p>14 the kitchen --</p> <p>15 A. Yes.</p> <p>16 Q. -- and having to use a towel at that window?</p> <p>17 A. Yes, I remember that, yes.</p> <p>18 Q. Then the other problem that you've alluded to is that</p> <p>19 the two lounge windows in the south-west corner of the</p> <p>20 lounge, there were problems there with the handle and so</p> <p>21 those couldn't open properly.</p> <p>22 A. Yes.</p> <p>23 Q. Was that still a problem for you in June 2017 with those</p> <p>24 handles?</p> <p>25 A. Yes. I don't think they solved the problem. I remember</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 10</p> | <p>1 the plan, when you see, you see it, but no one --</p> <p>2 Q. Do you remember being able to see the door to the</p> <p>3 stairwell from your front door?</p> <p>4 A. I haven't tried it, but it's possible.</p> <p>5 Q. Had you yourself used the stairs before?</p> <p>6 A. Yes, I did try it once.</p> <p>7 Q. But mostly, when you were coming to the flat, did you</p> <p>8 use the lifts?</p> <p>9 A. No, I just -- because, you know, my job is like private</p> <p>10 hire driver, so I've been sitting for a long time, and</p> <p>11 I take it like as an exercise and walk up all the way up</p> <p>12 to the 18th floor. Only once.</p> <p>13 Q. If you used the stairs as exercise, all the way up to</p> <p>14 the 18th floor, do you remember whether the door that</p> <p>15 led from the stairs into the lobby area of the 18th</p> <p>16 floor closed automatically after you used it?</p> <p>17 A. I haven't noticed.</p> <p>18 Q. Before we leave this plan, can I just ask one last</p> <p>19 question, please, and that is about the front door of</p> <p>20 your own flat.</p> <p>21 Do you remember if that closed automatically?</p> <p>22 A. It used to be. To be honest, I don't recall. Better to</p> <p>23 say I don't remember.</p> <p>24 Q. So you can't help us with whether it was closing</p> <p>25 automatically in June 2017?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 12</p> |

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| <p>1 A. I don't know, it's better to say.</p> <p>2 Q. Can I take you to page 3 of your statement, please,</p> <p>3 Mr Tekle.</p> <p>4 A. Okay.</p> <p>5 Q. Just let's take a look at paragraph 9.</p> <p>6 A. Yes.</p> <p>7 Q. In this statement, what you say is that prior to the</p> <p>8 fire you hadn't received any information or advice about</p> <p>9 fire safety in the tower.</p> <p>10 A. Uh-huh.</p> <p>11 Q. Are you okay to see a photographic image?</p> <p>12 A. Yes, of course, yes.</p> <p>13 MR RAWAT: Mr Chairman, it's an image that we've shown</p> <p>14 a number of witnesses now.</p> <p>15 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes, it's not particularly</p> <p>16 disturbing.</p> <p>17 MR RAWAT: It isn't, but if others wish to look away or step</p> <p>18 out, now is the moment whilst I give the reference.</p> <p>19 Can we have, please, BLA00002416.</p> <p>20 Mr Tekle, if I can explain, this is a photograph</p> <p>21 taken by one of the inquiry's experts, and it's</p> <p>22 a photograph of a fire safety notice that was sited at</p> <p>23 the lifts on the 3rd floor.</p> <p>24 Do you remember seeing a notice like this between</p> <p>25 the lifts on the 18th floor?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 13</p> | <p>1 Q. Did you know what kind of alarms those were?</p> <p>2 A. I don't know, but I may go ahead of you, you know,</p> <p>3 I noticed the one close to the kitchen, when we are</p> <p>4 about to leave the flat very late, because the smoke</p> <p>5 came in, and I heard a noise -- it start like alarm but</p> <p>6 it's like very, very -- it's not loud, it's really very</p> <p>7 mute it's not really -- it's like -- put it this way:</p> <p>8 the mobile is more louder than that alarm. I remember</p> <p>9 that when we get out.</p> <p>10 Q. That was on the night itself, was it?</p> <p>11 A. Yes, on the night itself.</p> <p>12 Q. Can I come back to that?</p> <p>13 A. Sorry, I'm not going back to -- yes, because it comes --</p> <p>14 Q. So you've described two alarms and you told us where</p> <p>15 they were.</p> <p>16 Before the night, had you ever heard either alarm go</p> <p>17 off?</p> <p>18 A. No, I don't remember.</p> <p>19 Q. Could we now move on to 13 and 14 June 2017, please, and</p> <p>20 can I take you back to page 3 of your statement.</p> <p>21 If we look at paragraphs 10 down, please.</p> <p>22 In your statement, Mr Tekle, you've explained that</p> <p>23 you collected your son Isaac from Kumon Maths and you</p> <p>24 brought him home, and your partner, Genet, came back</p> <p>25 with your younger son and also the son of the friends</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 15</p> |
| <p>1 A. No, I don't remember. No, I don't remember.</p> <p>2 Q. Do you remember seeing it at all by the lifts on the</p> <p>3 ground floor?</p> <p>4 A. Not at all, I don't remember.</p> <p>5 Q. What you have said in your statement is you had friends</p> <p>6 in the tower, didn't you?</p> <p>7 A. Yes.</p> <p>8 Q. And particularly, as we'll come to in due course, you</p> <p>9 had friends who lived on the 7th floor.</p> <p>10 A. Yes, yes.</p> <p>11 Q. When you were visiting or going to other floors in the</p> <p>12 tower, did you notice a sign like this on any other</p> <p>13 floor?</p> <p>14 A. I only visit their flat once, and I don't notice any of</p> <p>15 these signs. I never been in any other flat apart from</p> <p>16 the 7th and 18th floor during that one-year period.</p> <p>17 Q. Thank you very much.</p> <p>18 Can we just move on to a different topic.</p> <p>19 I just want to ask you, did you have any alarms in</p> <p>20 your flat?</p> <p>21 A. Yes, I noticed there's two alarms: there's one in the</p> <p>22 kitchen and one in the front of the corridor, close to</p> <p>23 the front door. I'm not sure about the one in the --</p> <p>24 where the bedrooms are and the living rooms are, I don't</p> <p>25 remember that, but I remember there's two.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 14</p> | <p>1 who lived on the 7th floor; is that right?</p> <p>2 A. Yes.</p> <p>3 Q. Can you remember, when you came home that night, if the</p> <p>4 lights were working in the lobby area on the 18th floor?</p> <p>5 A. Yes, there was a light, and it's a normal night, you</p> <p>6 know, like every other night. So the lights were there</p> <p>7 because it was able to walk through the lobby to the</p> <p>8 flat. So it may be one or two may not work, I'm not</p> <p>9 sure about that, but definitely there was light and it</p> <p>10 was clear, yes.</p> <p>11 Q. Can I take you back slightly, because obviously if you</p> <p>12 had a flexible work schedule, that meant you came and</p> <p>13 went at different times.</p> <p>14 A. Yes, sometimes, yes.</p> <p>15 Q. When you were either coming back to flat 153 at night --</p> <p>16 and this is before the fire -- or leaving it at night --</p> <p>17 A. Yes.</p> <p>18 Q. -- do you remember whether the lobby lights, the lights</p> <p>19 in the communal area on the 18th floor, were always on?</p> <p>20 A. Yes.</p> <p>21 Q. So was that no matter --</p> <p>22 A. I cannot say always on, but when I'm walking to go to</p> <p>23 use the lift, I don't see any days which the light was</p> <p>24 not on, off.</p> <p>25 Q. So were there times when you would have to leave very</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 16</p> |

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| <p>1 late at night to work?</p> <p>2 A. Yes. Yeah, yeah, there was light.</p> <p>3 Q. And if you were coming back very early in the morning,</p> <p>4 were the lights on?</p> <p>5 A. Yes, there was no issue with the lights as far as I am</p> <p>6 concerned.</p> <p>7 Q. Thank you.</p> <p>8 Could I take you, then, to paragraph 16 of your</p> <p>9 statement, which is on the next page, please. The</p> <p>10 bottom of the page, if that could be expanded.</p> <p>11 As you've explained, both now in your evidence and</p> <p>12 in your statement, you've described it as a normal night</p> <p>13 and you explain how the family went to bed that night.</p> <p>14 What you say in paragraph 16 is that you were woken</p> <p>15 up by voices and noises outside the flat, and you</p> <p>16 mention that you heard at least two women's voices.</p> <p>17 A. Yes.</p> <p>18 Q. Could you hear what was being said?</p> <p>19 A. I don't remember, it was like -- I don't know how I put</p> <p>20 that, really, but they were a panicking voice, can I put</p> <p>21 that way? So I don't know what they said, but "Ah, ah",</p> <p>22 something like that, which --</p> <p>23 Q. Did they sound as if they were having a conversation</p> <p>24 with each other or --</p> <p>25 A. It's both, mix. Mix, you know, panicking. You don't</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 17</p> | <p>1 your door at all?</p> <p>2 A. No.</p> <p>3 Q. If we look now at paragraph 17, which is on the next</p> <p>4 page, please.</p> <p>5 What you say, Mr Tekle, is that you got up to</p> <p>6 investigate and then you opened the front door of the</p> <p>7 flat. If we look at the first line of paragraph 17, you</p> <p>8 say, "We opened the front door of the flat."</p> <p>9 Does that mean that both you and Genet went to the</p> <p>10 front door together?</p> <p>11 A. Yes.</p> <p>12 Q. Before you opened it, did you notice if there was any</p> <p>13 smoke coming through your front door?</p> <p>14 A. To be honest, I didn't notice, but even there was no</p> <p>15 smoke at that stage when we opened.</p> <p>16 Q. What you say is, "There was no light in the lobby area".</p> <p>17 Given what you've told us earlier about your coming and</p> <p>18 going, was that unusual?</p> <p>19 A. Yes, it is unusual. It's full of dark, yes. It is full</p> <p>20 of dark.</p> <p>21 Q. So when you opened your front door, it was completely</p> <p>22 dark in the landing area?</p> <p>23 A. Yes.</p> <p>24 Q. What you describe in this paragraph is seeing your</p> <p>25 neighbour from flat 152.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 19</p> |
| <p>1 pick what they said. They --</p> <p>2 Q. What was it that you remember about the voices that made</p> <p>3 you think they were panicking?</p> <p>4 A. Yeah, the voices is a strange voice, which -- it sounds</p> <p>5 like it's not normal, it's not normal voices, there must</p> <p>6 be some problem.</p> <p>7 Q. You say voices and the noises of people; did you hear</p> <p>8 any other noises?</p> <p>9 A. No, I only gave the attention of the two women, so</p> <p>10 I didn't hear any other voice.</p> <p>11 Q. Do you remember hearing anyone knock on your front door</p> <p>12 at about this time?</p> <p>13 A. No, unfortunately.</p> <p>14 Q. What you've helpfully done is in your statement you've</p> <p>15 exhibited your phone records. We'll come back to this,</p> <p>16 but you refer in this paragraph to calls that were made</p> <p>17 by your partner and yourself at 01.32 and 01.34, and you</p> <p>18 say:</p> <p>19 "... I believe that I was woken at some point</p> <p>20 earlier than this."</p> <p>21 So at any time before you made those calls, did</p> <p>22 anyone knock on your front door?</p> <p>23 A. They told us, but I wish we were awake at that time, but</p> <p>24 no.</p> <p>25 Q. So you don't have a recollection of anybody knocking on</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 18</p> | <p>1 At the time, did you know her name?</p> <p>2 A. No.</p> <p>3 Q. Have you come to know her name since?</p> <p>4 A. Yes. I recently -- I know she's going to be a witness</p> <p>5 this afternoon. Recently I know her name.</p> <p>6 Q. I don't think there's any issue about this, but we</p> <p>7 believe that that's a reference to your neighbour</p> <p>8 Rabia Yahya.</p> <p>9 A. Yes, Rabia, yes.</p> <p>10 Q. Aside from her, could you see any other neighbours at</p> <p>11 this time?</p> <p>12 A. No.</p> <p>13 Q. Could you hear any noise from the other flats?</p> <p>14 A. No.</p> <p>15 Q. Could you see any smoke at all in the lobby area?</p> <p>16 A. I don't notice, but I don't think it was there. Maybe</p> <p>17 on the other side, but I cannot say yes or no, so I'm</p> <p>18 not sure.</p> <p>19 Q. Could you smell anything different?</p> <p>20 A. No. It's normal.</p> <p>21 Q. Could you smell anything that indicated smoke at all?</p> <p>22 A. No.</p> <p>23 Q. At that time, what was the temperature like in the lobby</p> <p>24 area?</p> <p>25 A. It was normal. I don't know ... normal is the same as</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 20</p> |

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| <p>1 like ...</p> <p>2 Q. Did you step out into the lobby area or did you stay at</p> <p>3 your front door?</p> <p>4 A. No, we stepped out of the doorway area to look</p> <p>5 everything, and we went back, but we didn't go far from</p> <p>6 the --</p> <p>7 Q. Just so that we're clear, you stepped out of your front</p> <p>8 door --</p> <p>9 A. Yes.</p> <p>10 Q. -- but you didn't go much further into the lobby area?</p> <p>11 A. Yes, yes.</p> <p>12 Q. And obviously flat 152, the door is in the same --</p> <p>13 A. Yes.</p> <p>14 Q. -- line as yours, isn't it?</p> <p>15 A. Yes, yes.</p> <p>16 Q. If we look at the last sentence, you say that Genet</p> <p>17 spoke to the neighbour from flat 152, who told her that</p> <p>18 there was a fire in the tower.</p> <p>19 Did you hear that conversation yourself?</p> <p>20 A. No, I went back. I think she was talking. But, you</p> <p>21 know, I just pick only a word, like there's fire, but</p> <p>22 she stay a little bit behind, and I went back and try to</p> <p>23 call the neighbours, and I was not sure either before or</p> <p>24 after I call emergency call, yes.</p> <p>25 Q. Can I come back to that, if I may.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 21</p> | <p>1 You've mentioned this before, and I just want to ask</p> <p>2 a couple of questions, and that's your contact with your</p> <p>3 neighbours at this point.</p> <p>4 In this paragraph, what you describe is that</p> <p>5 yourself and Genet made calls at 1.32 am and 1.34 am, to</p> <p>6 Abraham, who was on the 7th floor. Is that</p> <p>7 Abraham Abebe?</p> <p>8 A. Yes, Abraham is the parent or the dad of [redacted],</p> <p>9 yes, yes.</p> <p>10 Q. Did he live in flat 44 on the 7th floor?</p> <p>11 A. Yes, 7th floor, yes.</p> <p>12 Q. But he didn't answer those calls, did he?</p> <p>13 A. No, he didn't.</p> <p>14 Q. But then he did call you back, and what you say in your</p> <p>15 statement is:</p> <p>16 "I told them there was a fire in the Tower and to</p> <p>17 wake up his family and to take action."</p> <p>18 What action did you want him to take?</p> <p>19 A. Obviously when I say to take action, it means to find</p> <p>20 out what is going on and, if necessary, to take action</p> <p>21 to escape, if it is serious, and to find out what was</p> <p>22 going on on the floor, because this must be serious.</p> <p>23 That's why I called him on that time. Normally I don't</p> <p>24 call people very late that time, but I found it was very</p> <p>25 serious, and that's it, really.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 23</p> |
| <p>1 A. Okay.</p> <p>2 Q. Did Genet come back into the flat and tell you what</p> <p>3 she'd learnt from the neighbour?</p> <p>4 A. Yes, yes, she told me as well. I already know when</p> <p>5 I went back, but she already told me.</p> <p>6 Q. Do you remember if the neighbour from flat 152 told</p> <p>7 Genet where in the building the fire was?</p> <p>8 A. No.</p> <p>9 Q. Did you see what the neighbour from 152 did then, after</p> <p>10 having spoken to Genet, or were you already back in your</p> <p>11 flat?</p> <p>12 A. I was already back in the flat.</p> <p>13 Q. So the information you had at this time was that there</p> <p>14 was a fire in the tower.</p> <p>15 A. Yes.</p> <p>16 Q. Did you make a check to try and see where the fire might</p> <p>17 be?</p> <p>18 A. To be honest, no. The only option I was taking was to</p> <p>19 call to the neighbours and to see what was happening on</p> <p>20 their floor, if they know anything, if they woke up.</p> <p>21 Q. So you don't remember at that time, for example, looking</p> <p>22 out from the windows of your flat?</p> <p>23 A. I may -- probably did it, but I don't recall.</p> <p>24 Q. Can we look at paragraph 19, please, bottom of the same</p> <p>25 page.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 22</p> | <p>1 Q. You said that one of the things that you had in mind was</p> <p>2 that, if necessary, Abraham might need to escape. Did</p> <p>3 you think at that time yourself that you might need to</p> <p>4 leave your flat?</p> <p>5 A. Yes, but at that time, to be honest, there was not any</p> <p>6 sign of fire in our floor, and the same in his floor,</p> <p>7 when we have a conversation. But later on we find out</p> <p>8 it was serious after he left the flat. So the only</p> <p>9 thing different I saw at that time is the lobby is full</p> <p>10 of dark, and --</p> <p>11 Q. So there wasn't anything about the fact -- did you have</p> <p>12 any information that made you think that if someone was</p> <p>13 on a lower floor, it may be more serious for them?</p> <p>14 A. Yes, yes.</p> <p>15 Q. What was the information that you had that made you</p> <p>16 think it's more serious for someone on a lower floor?</p> <p>17 A. It's not like more serious on the lower floor, just at</p> <p>18 that stage we don't know which floor -- what was</p> <p>19 happening. So to find out what was going on. If I know</p> <p>20 more people, I could have called. Genet did the same,</p> <p>21 called on 22nd floor to Hashim's family.</p> <p>22 Q. Can I ask you about that.</p> <p>23 A. Okay.</p> <p>24 Q. Because you've just explained, and you say this in your</p> <p>25 statement, Genet rang the Hashim Kedir family and</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 24</p> |

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| <p>1 Hashim Kedir told her that he had spoken to the Fire 2 Brigade. 3 Did Genet tell you what advice Mr Kedir had received 4 from the Fire Brigade? 5 A. Yes. Obviously she told me that he contact the Fire 6 Brigade and they're going to come and rescue them. Even 7 he mentioned about to sit down on the floor of the flat 8 and waiting to be rescued. She told me that. Even she 9 mentioned about the helicopter. 10 Q. Last question on this topic. 11 That is the information you've now got through Genet 12 from Mr Kedir. 13 A. Yes. 14 Q. Did that influence your decision about what to do at 15 that time at all? 16 A. Yes. Obviously we were hoping, you know -- there is not 17 any doubt that we are going to be stay that long on that 18 night if the fire is very serious. So I didn't even 19 thought for a minute or seconds that it's going to cause 20 all this disaster. So my hope is there is not any issue 21 of this. This is United Kingdom, so they know what's 22 going on. This is easy, you know, for firefighters to 23 control. If not, we believe they're going to rescue us. 24 That was what I believe. 25 MR RAWAT: Mr Chairman, we've been going for 45 minutes.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 25</p> | <p>1 only light. So there is not any difference from the 2 previous one. 3 Q. So the lights were on in your hallway at that time? 4 A. Yes. Yes, yes. 5 Q. This is the second occasion you've opened your front 6 door. 7 A. Yes. 8 Q. Did you notice any smoke on this occasion? 9 A. No, I don't remember, no. 10 Q. Did you notice anything that indicated a fire? 11 A. I think before that, you know, before I opened the 12 second time the door, we dressed up the children, and 13 that's it. 14 Q. So you had woken your children by then, had you? 15 A. Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. Yes. 16 Q. But, again, when you opened that door and you're looking 17 out into that lobby -- 18 A. Yes. 19 Q. -- you've told us that you didn't see any smoke, but did 20 you smell anything that might have suggested to you that 21 there was a fire? 22 A. No, I didn't smell any smell. 23 Q. If we focus on paragraph 21, you describe seeing there 24 a man that you later learnt was called Yehualashet 25 Enyew. He was in the lobby, you say, by the lift.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 27</p> |
| <p>1 I wonder if this might be a good time -- 2 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: We haven't, actually, because we 3 started at 10.10. 4 MR RAWAT: Then I shall continue on. 5 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Do you feel you would like a break 6 at this stage or are you happy to keep going? 7 THE WITNESS: I'll be fine. I can keep going. I may need 8 more breaks in the future. 9 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: I think if we go for another quarter 10 of an hour, then you deserve a break. All right? 11 THE WITNESS: Okay. 12 MR RAWAT: Thank you, Mr Chairman. 13 Can I go, please, Mr Tekle, to paragraph 20 in your 14 statement, which is on page 6. Paragraph 20 and 21, 15 that's very helpful. Thank you very much, Ralph. 16 What I want to ask you now in terms of the topic is 17 the topic of the neighbour coming into your flat. 18 A. Yes. 19 Q. What you say in these two paragraphs is that you opened 20 the door to see what was happening outside. 21 A. Yes. 22 Q. Again, when you opened that door, was there any change 23 in the lighting in the lobby area? 24 A. It's already dark, so there is no light at all. We're 25 using the light that comes from the flat, that was the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 26</p> | <p>1 Could you see him from your front door? 2 A. Yes, when we got out, yes, he was standing right in 3 front of the lift. So when he saw us opening the door, 4 he come towards us and ask us if he want to stay with 5 us, and we let him in. 6 Q. Just so that we can be clear about what was happening, 7 you open your front door and do you then see Mr Enyew 8 coming towards you? 9 A. Yes. 10 Q. You've told us that the lights were off and it was dark. 11 A. Yes. 12 Q. How easy was it to see him? 13 A. No, because, as I say before, the light comes from our 14 flat, we'd be able to see. 15 Q. So the light from your flat illuminated the lobby area? 16 A. Yes, yes. 17 Q. I follow, thank you. 18 Because you've got light coming out of your flat 19 into the lobby area, were you able to see the doors of 20 any other flats? 21 A. I don't remember. 22 Q. Do you remember hearing any noises from other flats 23 nearby? 24 A. Not at all. 25 Q. You may have answered this already, but when you saw</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 28</p> |

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| <p>1 him, what was Mr Enyew doing?</p> <p>2 A. I think he was standing there. Then when we opened the</p> <p>3 door, he told us that he was standing, so he was</p> <p>4 standing in front of the lift.</p> <p>5 Q. And is it right it was Genet who recognised him? Had</p> <p>6 you seen him before, yourself?</p> <p>7 A. I've never seen him before, not at all. I don't --</p> <p>8 Q. Then he, as you explained, asked to come into the flat;</p> <p>9 is that right?</p> <p>10 A. Yes.</p> <p>11 Q. So even though you'd not seen him before, did you know</p> <p>12 before that night that Mr Enyew was living in flat 155?</p> <p>13 A. I've never seen him. I never know who is living in the</p> <p>14 flat, no.</p> <p>15 Q. Did you know who lived in flat 155?</p> <p>16 A. I see 12-year-old and a mother. We met sometimes in the</p> <p>17 lift. I see them occasional, like a few times.</p> <p>18 I try --</p> <p>19 Q. When he came into your flat, did Mr Enyew mention</p> <p>20 flat 155 at all?</p> <p>21 A. Yes, he mentioned -- not number 155, but he mentioned</p> <p>22 he's in Berkti and Biruk, that's where he lived. He</p> <p>23 said, I remember.</p> <p>24 Q. Did he say what had happened to them?</p> <p>25 A. No, he said, "They went out before me".</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 29</p> | <p>1 front of my front door.</p> <p>2 Q. Just to go back to your conversation with Mr Enyew, what</p> <p>3 language was that conversation in?</p> <p>4 A. We speak the same language, and because he knows Genet,</p> <p>5 he saw them few occasion in the lift, so we were talking</p> <p>6 in our language, which is Amharic, Ethiopian national</p> <p>7 language.</p> <p>8 Q. Thank you.</p> <p>9 Can I go to paragraph 22, please, on page 6 again.</p> <p>10 This is now the second time that you have contact</p> <p>11 with your friend Abraham Abebe.</p> <p>12 A. Yes.</p> <p>13 Q. You say that you received a call from him that you're</p> <p>14 able to time at 01.49. By then, he had left the tower</p> <p>15 with his family.</p> <p>16 A. Yes.</p> <p>17 Q. Did he tell you anything about how he got out of the</p> <p>18 tower?</p> <p>19 A. Yes, he did told me. First he tried to escape the fire.</p> <p>20 He hold his son with his wife, but the smoke -- after he</p> <p>21 went a certain floor, he went back because of the smoke,</p> <p>22 he said. And later on the fireman came, they knocked</p> <p>23 the door and they told them to leave. And at that time,</p> <p>24 after he escaped the fire, he told me, "They come and</p> <p>25 knock our door and we escaped". He said there was no</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 31</p> |
| <p>1 Q. So he explained to you -- and this is Berkti Haftom and</p> <p>2 her son -- that they had left the flat before him?</p> <p>3 A. That's what he was saying, yes.</p> <p>4 Q. Did he tell you where they went?</p> <p>5 A. No, he didn't told me where they went, but he told me</p> <p>6 that they were not in his flat at that time.</p> <p>7 Q. Did he tell you why he wanted to come into your flat?</p> <p>8 A. No, when he came, he say that there's a fire and he say</p> <p>9 the smoke is coming -- smoke is in the flat. That's why</p> <p>10 he said he's coming to our flat.</p> <p>11 Q. If I could just ask you, if you can remember any more</p> <p>12 detail about this conversation, it would be helpful.</p> <p>13 So he tells you that's there's smoke coming into the</p> <p>14 flat. Is that the flat where he was staying?</p> <p>15 A. Yes.</p> <p>16 Q. Did he say anything else about smoke?</p> <p>17 A. To be honest, I don't remember what he said apart from</p> <p>18 that. The main reason why he was not staying in his</p> <p>19 flat is because of the smoke coming in his flat.</p> <p>20 Q. Did he tell you whether there was any fire in his flat?</p> <p>21 A. No, I don't remember he say that.</p> <p>22 Q. At that time -- this is, as we've said, the second time</p> <p>23 that you've opened your flat door -- did you go out into</p> <p>24 the lobby area at all at this time?</p> <p>25 A. No, I didn't go anywhere out, apart from the area in</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 30</p> | <p>1 advice about wet towel, he said they just -- "You have</p> <p>2 to get out". And he said it was very difficult to get</p> <p>3 down, especially on the floor because of the smoke.</p> <p>4 And when he told me that as well, I was hoping that</p> <p>5 they're going to come and knock our door, as they did to</p> <p>6 him.</p> <p>7 Q. What Mr Abebe explained to you was that they tried to</p> <p>8 get out once before firefighters came.</p> <p>9 A. Yes.</p> <p>10 Q. Did he tell you anything else about why he had decided</p> <p>11 to leave with his family before any firefighters came to</p> <p>12 his flat?</p> <p>13 A. I think we haven't discussed about that because we were</p> <p>14 more interested how he escaped, so I didn't ask him why</p> <p>15 and about that.</p> <p>16 Q. What you also say in your statement is that Mr Abebe</p> <p>17 told you to get out.</p> <p>18 So at that time -- and you've now opened your flat</p> <p>19 door twice, Mr Enyew has come into your flat and you've</p> <p>20 had two contacts with Mr Abebe -- what were your</p> <p>21 thoughts about leaving your flat at that time?</p> <p>22 A. My thought was I think they are start evacuating people</p> <p>23 because they knocked his flat and advised them to leave.</p> <p>24 So I thought they may other firefighters send to our</p> <p>25 floor. That was our hope. And I haven't even thought</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 32</p> |

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| <p>1 that we'd be stuck there, you know, for long.</p> <p>2 Q. Could I just take you now to paragraph 23 on page 7.</p> <p>3 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: It looks as though we're going to</p> <p>4 a new topic.</p> <p>5 MR RAWAT: We are going to a new topic and, actually,</p> <p>6 looking at my questions, it's a topic that may take</p> <p>7 a bit of time.</p> <p>8 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: That's what I thought.</p> <p>9 I think we might all have a break now, Mr Tekle.</p> <p>10 I'm going to ask you not to talk to anyone about your</p> <p>11 evidence while you're out of the room. We'll come back</p> <p>12 at 11.10.</p> <p>13 If you would like to go with the usher now, she'll</p> <p>14 look after you. All right?</p> <p>15 THE WITNESS: Okay, okay.</p> <p>16 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Thank you very much.</p> <p>17 All right, 11.10, then, please.</p> <p>18 (11.00 am)</p> <p>19 (A short break)</p> <p>20 (11.10 am)</p> <p>21 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: All right, Mr Tekle?</p> <p>22 THE WITNESS: Yes, I'm okay, thanks.</p> <p>23 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Happy to carry on?</p> <p>24 THE WITNESS: Okay.</p> <p>25 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Thank you very much.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 33</p> | <p>1 A. He already say that his flat is full of smoke, that's</p> <p>2 why he left his flat.</p> <p>3 Q. Can I show you an image, please. It's IWS00001001, and</p> <p>4 that's page 5.</p> <p>5 Before I ask you questions about this image, if</p> <p>6 I explain, please, Mr Tekle, it shows a different floor</p> <p>7 to yours. We can see flat 111, and closest to the</p> <p>8 camera is the front door of flat 112.</p> <p>9 But if we were to move that up to your floor, it</p> <p>10 would be what you could see from your flat door, isn't</p> <p>11 it? You could see flat 152 and 151, couldn't you?</p> <p>12 Can you see that in that photograph we can see that</p> <p>13 there's a light fixture on the wall between the two flat</p> <p>14 doors; do you see that?</p> <p>15 A. Yes.</p> <p>16 Q. Was there something like that in your floor?</p> <p>17 A. I don't notice.</p> <p>18 Q. So is your evidence, then, if we go back to page 6 of</p> <p>19 your statement, that on both occasions that you opened</p> <p>20 the door, the lobby was dark, and was that because there</p> <p>21 was no lighting?</p> <p>22 A. Yes, there was no light at all.</p> <p>23 Q. And the reference in paragraph 20 to smoke is</p> <p>24 a reference to information that Mr Enyew gave you?</p> <p>25 A. Yes.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 35</p> |
| <p>1 Yes, Mr Rawat.</p> <p>2 MR RAWAT: Mr Tekle, thank you very much for coming back.</p> <p>3 Can I take you back to just one point that I should</p> <p>4 have covered with you, and that relates to the time when</p> <p>5 Mr Enyew came into your flat. So could we please have</p> <p>6 page 6 of your statement, so IWS00001051, page 6.</p> <p>7 If we look at paragraph 20 of the statement,</p> <p>8 Mr Tekle, your evidence earlier when I was asking you</p> <p>9 questions about the arrival of Mr Enyew was that you</p> <p>10 could not remember seeing smoke in the lobby area at the</p> <p>11 time, but if we see there's a sentence in the middle of</p> <p>12 the paragraph, six lines down, which reads:</p> <p>13 "I opened the door to see what was happening</p> <p>14 outside. The lobby was dark and there was some smoke."</p> <p>15 My question to you is: taking you back to opening</p> <p>16 that door, and this is the second time you've done it,</p> <p>17 can you remember what was making the lobby dark?</p> <p>18 A. It was already dark from when you open the first time,</p> <p>19 so it was the same.</p> <p>20 The one I mentioned, this one, it was not on our</p> <p>21 side. I think the smoke what we're talking about is the</p> <p>22 other flat, so opposite, the other side.</p> <p>23 Q. On the other side of the floor?</p> <p>24 A. Yes.</p> <p>25 Q. Where did that information come from, then?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 34</p> | <p>1 Q. Can we go now to page 7 and paragraph 23, please.</p> <p>2 The beginning of this paragraph, you describe</p> <p>3 a knock at the door at around 2.00 am, and you say that</p> <p>4 Mr Enyew went to open the door and you followed him, and</p> <p>5 you then saw a firefighter.</p> <p>6 Can you remember where Genet was at the time?</p> <p>7 A. I don't remember because I was on the ledge of the</p> <p>8 window to see what's happening, so sitting there, so</p> <p>9 that's why the man, Mr Enyew, went and opened the door.</p> <p>10 So we were -- have a conversation, arguing each other,</p> <p>11 with Genet, "Get off from the ledge of the window".</p> <p>12 That was the conversation we did.</p> <p>13 Q. Well, can I just pause you there because I would like to</p> <p>14 try to take things in order.</p> <p>15 A. Yes.</p> <p>16 Q. You just mentioned being on the ledge of the window.</p> <p>17 A. Yes.</p> <p>18 Q. So was this the first time that you climbed out onto the</p> <p>19 ledge of the window?</p> <p>20 A. Yes, that's the first time.</p> <p>21 Q. Which window did you climb out on?</p> <p>22 A. The one close to the kitchen.</p> <p>23 Q. A lounge window?</p> <p>24 A. Yes, facing west.</p> <p>25 Q. How far out onto the ledge did you climb out?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 36</p> |

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| <p>1 A. I just sit the way I sit now.</p> <p>2 Q. Just for the record, were you sitting on the ledge of</p> <p>3 the window with your legs outside?</p> <p>4 A. Yes, the legs outside, but she was worried, Genet was</p> <p>5 worried, and I thought maybe to see what was going on</p> <p>6 because -- and the previous conversation with Hashim,</p> <p>7 there was a hope that the helicopter may come and rescue</p> <p>8 us. So it's a part of that, you know, to test what is</p> <p>9 going on. And to see, you know, if it is possible to</p> <p>10 jump from there, holding one of my sons. And the other</p> <p>11 thing, to get attention, how we were suffering inside,</p> <p>12 to get out. That's all.</p> <p>13 Q. Can I ask you this, please.</p> <p>14 A. Yes.</p> <p>15 Q. And I appreciate that giving estimates of time can be</p> <p>16 difficult, but you told us earlier that you had</p> <p>17 a telephone conversation with Mr Abebe which began at</p> <p>18 01.49.</p> <p>19 A. Yes.</p> <p>20 Q. In your statement, you say it lasts for about 8 minutes.</p> <p>21 A. Yes.</p> <p>22 Q. In this paragraph, you say that you think it was around</p> <p>23 2.00 am when there was the knock on the door.</p> <p>24 A. Yes.</p> <p>25 Q. Do those two times help you to say how soon after the</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 37</p> | <p>1 a policeman.</p> <p>2 A. Yes.</p> <p>3 Q. While you were on the phone with him, did you hear him</p> <p>4 speaking to a firefighter or a policeman?</p> <p>5 A. I don't remember anything, because he was holding for</p> <p>6 a while, looking to get -- he was saying, "Hold on, hold</p> <p>7 on" and tried to get -- I think they'd been pushed out</p> <p>8 from where they were at that time.</p> <p>9 Q. And you think that it was about 45 minutes after that</p> <p>10 call that you then went onto the ledge?</p> <p>11 A. Yes, that is -- yes, that's obviously -- you cannot be</p> <p>12 sure, but it's approximate time.</p> <p>13 Q. Of course.</p> <p>14 A. Yes.</p> <p>15 Q. I apologise for taking you through the detail, but it is</p> <p>16 important to get the sequence right.</p> <p>17 A. I want to go through, yes.</p> <p>18 Q. And that was the first time that you went onto the</p> <p>19 ledge?</p> <p>20 A. Yes.</p> <p>21 Q. And it was before any firefighter came to your door?</p> <p>22 A. Yes.</p> <p>23 Q. So, again, it's just so that we can make sure that we've</p> <p>24 understood your evidence, but the reason that you</p> <p>25 climbed out onto that ledge was, you told us, to get</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 39</p> |
| <p>1 call with Mr Abebe you climbed out onto the ledge?</p> <p>2 A. I was saying even in my statement to the police, I said</p> <p>3 45 minutes later, that's what I said. So this is like</p> <p>4 approximate.</p> <p>5 The reason why me and Abraham are having</p> <p>6 a conversation for 8 minutes is because he's trying to</p> <p>7 find a firefighter or a police officer to tell where we</p> <p>8 are. He was very worried about us because the fire is</p> <p>9 fast spread all the way to the top at that stage. So</p> <p>10 what he was saying to me is to get out as soon as</p> <p>11 possible.</p> <p>12 And I see other way of getting out, in case if we</p> <p>13 not being rescued. So at that stage I was thinking that</p> <p>14 that was one of the option to get out.</p> <p>15 Plus, when I see sitting there, there was a children</p> <p>16 playground, so I may be fool saying that, but I was</p> <p>17 thinking ...</p> <p>18 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Just take a moment.</p> <p>19 (Pause)</p> <p>20 A. Yes, I can go.</p> <p>21 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: All right? Well done.</p> <p>22 MR RAWAT: So can I just take you back to the telephone</p> <p>23 conversation with Mr Abebe first of all.</p> <p>24 You said that the conversation lasted as long as it</p> <p>25 did because he was trying to find a firefighter or</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 38</p> | <p>1 attention.</p> <p>2 A. It's, you know, to do everything. To try if that is one</p> <p>3 of the option to escape the fire. The second thing,</p> <p>4 obviously to get attention. You know, anything, at that</p> <p>5 time, you could think to get out of your way to that</p> <p>6 place. So it's not particularly to get attention. All</p> <p>7 of them, everything, you know. I cannot describe what,</p> <p>8 all of them.</p> <p>9 Q. Was one of the things in your mind at that time,</p> <p>10 Mr Tekle, sitting on that ledge on the 18th floor, that</p> <p>11 you might need to jump from that floor?</p> <p>12 A. Yes.</p> <p>13 Q. Now --</p> <p>14 A. Not by myself; holding one of my sons.</p> <p>15 Q. You've told us what you noticed when you opened your</p> <p>16 front door about the lobby area, and you've told us</p> <p>17 about the conversation that you had with Mr Abebe.</p> <p>18 A. Yes.</p> <p>19 Q. Did you have any other information about the progress of</p> <p>20 the fire at that time?</p> <p>21 A. Obviously he told me that it goes all the way up. His</p> <p>22 advice continuously was to get out. So Genet was making</p> <p>23 a call with the other family, even her friends from 19th</p> <p>24 floor, Meron, she had a conversation with Meron, Hiwot,</p> <p>25 and their partner, so there is a lot of things going on.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 40</p> |

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| <p>1 But I cannot tell you step by step what was going on.</p> <p>2 But all of them, they were saying to get out. And</p> <p>3 that's it, really.</p> <p>4 Q. Did you go back to the front door to try and find out</p> <p>5 what the conditions were like in the lobby area?</p> <p>6 A. Not at all. Not at all to go that way because it has</p> <p>7 been really -- the darkness of the lobby, and the hope</p> <p>8 that we get from our friend that has been rescued by</p> <p>9 a firefighter from 7th floor, all that hope makes us not</p> <p>10 open the door. And ...</p> <p>11 Q. At the time that you were on the ledge --</p> <p>12 A. Yes.</p> <p>13 Q. -- what were the conditions like in your flat?</p> <p>14 A. No smoke. No nothing. There's no smoke. There is not</p> <p>15 any smoke or any fire. It's normal.</p> <p>16 Q. From where you were sitting on that ledge, were you able</p> <p>17 to see anything of the progress of the fire?</p> <p>18 A. No. It was not reached in our area at that stage, it</p> <p>19 was on the other side, clearly. After that you see,</p> <p>20 yes.</p> <p>21 Q. So was your information coming from the phone calls that</p> <p>22 you were getting with people --</p> <p>23 A. Yes, yes.</p> <p>24 Q. Could we go back, then, to the contact with the</p> <p>25 firefighter.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 41</p> | <p>1 Q. Did you hear a voice or voices outside the flat at this</p> <p>2 time?</p> <p>3 A. No, it's only a knock, so that's why we ran. We ran to</p> <p>4 the front door straight away, get off from the window</p> <p>5 and (Whistles) straight away.</p> <p>6 Q. Was Mr Enyew ahead of you to the door?</p> <p>7 A. Yes, he's the one who opened the door.</p> <p>8 Q. You would have had to climb off the ledge, back into the</p> <p>9 lounge.</p> <p>10 A. Yes, yes, yes.</p> <p>11 Q. By the time that you got to the front door, was it</p> <p>12 already open?</p> <p>13 A. Yes, yes, it was open, but it's not wide, you know. He</p> <p>14 may probably talking with him, he's halfway, but when</p> <p>15 I come, widely open.</p> <p>16 Q. Let's break that down a little bit.</p> <p>17 A. Yes.</p> <p>18 Q. So when you got to the front door --</p> <p>19 A. Yes.</p> <p>20 Q. -- Mr Enyew was already there.</p> <p>21 A. Yes.</p> <p>22 Q. He'd opened the front door.</p> <p>23 A. Yes.</p> <p>24 Q. Can you tell us how far he'd opened the front door?</p> <p>25 A. It's like, you know, talking someone like this</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 43</p> |
| <p>1 A. Yes.</p> <p>2 Q. So when you heard the knock on the door --</p> <p>3 A. Yes.</p> <p>4 Q. -- were you still on the ledge at that time?</p> <p>5 A. Yes, the knock was really very loud. It's very loud.</p> <p>6 So we ran away, because the man was very desperate, so</p> <p>7 he ran, and that make me to get off from the ledge of</p> <p>8 the window. I think that's how I went.</p> <p>9 And the helicopters as well spotted me sitting down</p> <p>10 there, but it's not allowed to be watched here, so it</p> <p>11 was clearly seen that -- even the pilot said, "153,</p> <p>12 153", and he was also reported. So we were desperate at</p> <p>13 that stage to go.</p> <p>14 So I was able to see the footage of the helicopter</p> <p>15 last week, while I was sitting on the ledge of the</p> <p>16 window.</p> <p>17 Q. Just so that we can be clear, before coming to give</p> <p>18 evidence today, you have watched helicopter footage that</p> <p>19 shows you sitting on the ledge?</p> <p>20 A. Yes, he did show me -- yes, I did watch last week the</p> <p>21 footage, and I saw a pilot saying, "153, 153", and that</p> <p>22 was very stressing, you know, watching that, yes.</p> <p>23 Q. A few moments ago you said that the noise of the</p> <p>24 knocking was very loud.</p> <p>25 A. Yes.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 42</p> | <p>1 (Indicates), and when I come obviously you cannot talk</p> <p>2 together two of us with a little open, so we make it</p> <p>3 widely open and start a conversation with the</p> <p>4 firefighter.</p> <p>5 Q. I'll come back to the conversation in a moment.</p> <p>6 A. Yes.</p> <p>7 Q. When you opened the front door wide open --</p> <p>8 A. Yes.</p> <p>9 Q. -- did you notice what the conditions were like in the</p> <p>10 lobby?</p> <p>11 A. I was really desperate to leave. I don't notice</p> <p>12 anything. We had a conversation with the firefighter,</p> <p>13 so there was not any show of smoke or smell at that</p> <p>14 stage, as far as I remember.</p> <p>15 Q. So was it still dark in the lobby?</p> <p>16 A. Yes. It's dark all the time, yes. It was dark.</p> <p>17 Q. Were your hallway lights still on?</p> <p>18 A. Yes. Yes.</p> <p>19 Q. Did any smoke come into your flat through the open door?</p> <p>20 A. I'm not sure about that but I don't think so, because</p> <p>21 there was not any frighten about the smoke, because we</p> <p>22 had a good conversation, so there was not any show of</p> <p>23 smoke because it was fine. But even -- I don't know, he</p> <p>24 said, "It's not your side", because obviously there was</p> <p>25 no smoke at that time.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 44</p> |

1 Q. So aside from it being dark, what were the conditions
2 like in the lobby area as far as you could tell?
3 **A. I cannot tell anything about the lobby area because**
4 **I was standing in the front of the door. So at that**
5 **time, there's one firefighter in front of me and talking**
6 **to him. That's what I remember at that stage.**
7 Q. That's a fair point. But in the area around where the
8 firefighter was, did you have any sense of the
9 conditions?
10 **A. It's the same. Like the area where we were and where he**
11 **was, it's the same. It's not any difference.**
12 Q. Aside from that one firefighter, were you aware of any
13 other person being in the lobby area?
14 **A. Not at all. Can I explain here? Because the door is**
15 **open from left to right. Yes? Obviously there is not**
16 **any flat, there is a wall on the left-hand side when you**
17 **go to the lobby. Yes? So when I open the door, I see**
18 **a firefighter, but on the statement -- on the witness**
19 **she gave, she says she's on the left-hand side of him.**
20 **But obviously when I opened the door from left to right,**
21 **if she was there, I could able to see her, but I didn't**
22 **see anybody.**
23 Q. Mr Tekle, what's important is that we get from you what
24 you saw and heard. So you've told us your door opens
25 left-right, and when you were looking out, you didn't

Page 45

1 see anybody else at all other than that one firefighter?
2 **A. I never seen anybody at all.**
3 Q. Did you hear any other voices apart from that
4 firefighter's voice?
5 **A. Not at all.**
6 Q. Did you go any further than your front door?
7 **A. No, we been stopped there already because the**
8 **firefighter is in the lobby, we are on our flat, so it's**
9 **a conversation, so there is no point me to go out.**
10 Q. Did the firefighter come into your flat at all?
11 **A. No, he didn't.**
12 Q. Do you remember if the firefighter had a torch?
13 **A. I don't remember, to be honest, what he had in his hand.**
14 Q. In your statement you've described the firefighter who
15 was at your door as "him". Do you remember if this
16 firefighter was wearing a mask?
17 **A. No, no, his face -- I can identify him as a male**
18 **firefighter because there was no mask on his face,**
19 **because there was no smoke on the lobby, so no --**
20 **identify what he look like even.**
21 Q. So there was nothing covering his face at all?
22 **A. No, no.**
23 Q. Did he have a mask that was pulled down at all?
24 **A. I don't remember if he has got the mask pulled down or**
25 **not, but I remember his face, but he's got a helmet.**

Page 46

1 Q. And could you see him clearly?
2 **A. Yes. Someone like anywhere with helmet.**
3 Q. So was it easy to hear what the firefighter had to say
4 to you?
5 **A. Of course. We are very close. He's right in front of**
6 **my front door, so we have really good conversation.**
7 Q. Did the firefighter appear to understand what you were
8 saying to him?
9 **A. Yes, we have a good communication.**
10 Q. You've said that there was a good conversation; was that
11 conversation just between you and the firefighter or was
12 Mr Enyew involved in the conversation?
13 **A. To be honest, he may probably have a conversation with**
14 **him before I arrive there. It's a matter of seconds,**
15 **it's not really that long. But my one, I remember my**
16 **one, the conversation, because at that time I was**
17 **excited, when I get the knock from the door, because we**
18 **are believing that we are going to be rescued.**
19 Q. After you had arrived at the door, do you have a memory
20 of Mr Enyew saying anything to the firefighter?
21 **A. I don't remember, but I've seen his statement, what he**
22 **said, but I'm not referring that. I don't remember,**
23 **personal.**
24 Q. Do you remember if the firefighter asked you for any
25 information?

Page 47

1 **A. No, I've already said, you know, I don't remember, but**
2 **I was saying that how many of us are, we are five, there**
3 **are two children, and I hope he listened that and he**
4 **understand. Our conversation was really no issue of**
5 **communication language, so we were communicating without**
6 **any problem. Even we are trying to explain -- I thought**
7 **he's going to rescue us, to be honest, at that stage.**
8 **And -- yes. Shall I continue?**
9 Q. I just want to ask you if you could just keep your voice
10 up a little bit, please.
11 **A. Okay.**
12 Q. Just to break down the detail of the conversation with
13 this firefighter, please.
14 You mentioned telling him how many people were in
15 the flat.
16 **A. Yes, I do. I did.**
17 Q. Did you specifically mention children?
18 **A. Of course. Not one times, many times.**
19 Q. Well, how many times do you remember telling this
20 firefighter about children?
21 **A. I can't remember how many times, but many times.**
22 **I can't say two or three times, but many times**
23 **I mentioned about my children. Even after he left,**
24 **I was thinking ...**
25 Q. Well, can we --

Page 48

12 (Pages 45 to 48)

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| <p>1 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Are you all right?</p> <p>2 A. (Nodded assent)</p> <p>3 MR RAWAT: Did you specifically say that there were two</p> <p>4 children in the flat?</p> <p>5 A. Yes, yes, many times.</p> <p>6 Q. Did you tell the firefighter that you were safe in your</p> <p>7 flat?</p> <p>8 A. That's a joke, I'm sorry.</p> <p>9 Q. Did you hear Mr Enyew say anything like that to the</p> <p>10 firefighter?</p> <p>11 A. Not at all. How can someone coming from the ledge of</p> <p>12 the window and desperate to leave say these words with</p> <p>13 that condition? I've already been told by my friend</p> <p>14 Abraham what the condition is and he's been advising me</p> <p>15 to leave. And how come I was going to say him that?</p> <p>16 I didn't say this. There's no way in a million years</p> <p>17 I'm going to say because I was desperate to leave.</p> <p>18 Q. Did the firefighter give you any advice?</p> <p>19 A. Yes, it's normal advice to cover up the blanket by</p> <p>20 showing -- by showing in his body, just cover up hole,</p> <p>21 leaks, you know, to block the smoke coming in.</p> <p>22 And I say the word, you know -- I thought they were</p> <p>23 controlling the fire because the word he said that, "You</p> <p>24 are safe", you know. He say that, I remember. And</p> <p>25 I tried to talk to him as much as possible, you know, to</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 49</p> | <p>1 A. No, I didn't ask the progress of the fire, because he</p> <p>2 already say to me, "You are safe". That word is --</p> <p>3 yeah. "You are safe, it's not your side, the fire is on</p> <p>4 the other side."</p> <p>5 Q. When he was saying to you the fire is on the other</p> <p>6 side --</p> <p>7 A. Yes.</p> <p>8 Q. -- what did you understand that to mean?</p> <p>9 A. My understand is that there is not going to be any</p> <p>10 problem in our side, and obviously the Fire Brigade are</p> <p>11 controlling the fire. And even after that conversation,</p> <p>12 when I spoke to Abraham and I told him that, he told us</p> <p>13 "Oh, did he say that?" he was saying. He was a bit</p> <p>14 reluctant. He said, "Okay, if he say that, they are</p> <p>15 professional, so there is not anything you can say</p> <p>16 because there is hope already."</p> <p>17 Q. Did the firefighter tell you anything about what the</p> <p>18 conditions in the stairwell were like at this time?</p> <p>19 A. No, we haven't been discussing about the staircase. The</p> <p>20 only thing we discuss is how to block the front door and</p> <p>21 to cover the letterbox, and his advice to us, we are</p> <p>22 safe. And that's it, really.</p> <p>23 Q. Then the firefighter left. Did the firefighter say</p> <p>24 anything about whether he would return?</p> <p>25 A. No, he didn't say he's going to return or anything. He</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 51</p> |
| <p>1 rescue us, and at that time obviously we are not</p> <p>2 disabled. If we are getting advice like other to get</p> <p>3 a wet towel, it's a simple equipment maybe for us at</p> <p>4 that time. That is -- if we get that, with that stage,</p> <p>5 no matter the circumstance of the smoke on the stairs</p> <p>6 are bad, as we did manage to escape earlier, we could</p> <p>7 have a very good chance --</p> <p>8 Q. You say --</p> <p>9 A. -- to escape the fire.</p> <p>10 Q. -- the firefighter told you to cover up and to block</p> <p>11 against leaks. Was he indicating any particular part of</p> <p>12 the flat that you should cover up?</p> <p>13 A. No, he just say anywhere is there smoke coming, just try</p> <p>14 to cover up with blanket, and you are safe. He was</p> <p>15 a bit relaxed even when he say that. I thought he's</p> <p>16 controlling the fire.</p> <p>17 Q. Did he tell you anything about where the fire was?</p> <p>18 A. No, there is not any conversation about where the fire</p> <p>19 was. He just told me just, "You are safe", and then</p> <p>20 they said go, and after describing with his body to</p> <p>21 cover with blankets, and all that. But I try to talk to</p> <p>22 him many times, like "Children, children". It's like --</p> <p>23 I'm not really begging, but it's kind of begging.</p> <p>24 Q. Did you ask the firefighter anything about the progress</p> <p>25 of the fire or where the fire was?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 50</p> | <p>1 was relaxed, and just went. Even when he went, it was</p> <p>2 in my mind -- I was about to talk to him that can he</p> <p>3 take one of my child, but I didn't use that. But it's</p> <p>4 like a mistime, after he left, I thought that, and I was</p> <p>5 thinking -- I was asking that, but it's already gone by</p> <p>6 that time. But that was in my mind at that time.</p> <p>7 Q. Did the firefighter say whether any other firefighters</p> <p>8 would come back to your flat?</p> <p>9 A. No, there was no discussion about any other firefighter.</p> <p>10 Q. Again, I know it's difficult to estimate time, but doing</p> <p>11 the best you can, how long did this conversation with</p> <p>12 the firefighter last?</p> <p>13 A. Approximately 3 minutes. It could be more or less. But</p> <p>14 at least it's not 20 seconds. Because of our English,</p> <p>15 we're not really quick. It's not our first language,</p> <p>16 English, how come we complete a conversation within</p> <p>17 20 seconds? That's not true.</p> <p>18 Q. Once the front door had been closed, could you hear any</p> <p>19 noises from outside, from the lobby area?</p> <p>20 A. No.</p> <p>21 Q. So did you hear any voices, for example?</p> <p>22 A. No voice, no -- I didn't give any attention about the</p> <p>23 lobby area after that conversation. We shut the front</p> <p>24 door and we start focusing to cover the blanket to avoid</p> <p>25 the smoke coming to the flat.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 52</p> |

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| <p>1 Q. Can I take you to paragraph 27 of your statement, which 2 is on page 8.</p> <p>3 In this paragraph, Mr Tekle, you're referring to 4 further calls that you had with Abraham Abebe, and you 5 give times for them at 02.05, 02.11 and 02.30.</p> <p>6 Just so we can have some help with you with the 7 time, did your contact with the firefighter happen 8 before these calls with Mr Abebe?</p> <p>9 A. We already start talking with Mr Abebe from early, after 10 he escape the fire, so I cannot say this time I did talk 11 to him, that time I did talk to him. But what 12 I remember, after we finish talking with and taking 13 advice from the firefighter, I did talk to him, and 14 I say to him what he told us. I hope he remember that.</p> <p>15 Q. So you had a call with Mr Abebe at 01.49, which was the 16 call when he had left the tower.</p> <p>17 What you've put in this paragraph are three more 18 calls and you've given times for them.</p> <p>19 I am just wondering -- if you can't help, please 20 tell me -- whether you can use those times to say 21 whether it was before a particular call that you had the 22 conversation with the firefighter?</p> <p>23 A. You know, at that time it's very difficult to say after 24 or before. It's very hard and worried about our life, 25 so I cannot say this or that.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 53</p> | <p>1 A. No, the second time was when the neighbours came from 2 152.</p> <p>3 Q. Well, can I pause it then and I'll come back to you and 4 ask you.</p> <p>5 A. Okay.</p> <p>6 Q. So is this paragraph, paragraph 29, referring to that 7 first time that you climbed out onto the ledge, just 8 before the knock on the door?</p> <p>9 A. Yes, that's the one, before the knock of the door.</p> <p>10 Q. Well, can we deal with the arrival of the neighbour from 11 flat 152, please, and that's at paragraph 32 of your 12 statement.</p> <p>13 So if we could have 31 and 32 on the same page, 14 please.</p> <p>15 If we look at paragraph 31, you say that there was 16 another knock on the door:</p> <p>17 "This time it was our neighbour from flat 152 with 18 her three children. She asked to come in and we let her 19 in. She told us that the fire had now got into her 20 kitchen. She was shaking."</p> <p>21 Who let your neighbour into your flat?</p> <p>22 A. Genet.</p> <p>23 Q. Where were you at the time that they came in?</p> <p>24 A. I think we may probably have been in the living room, 25 but I'm not 100 per cent sure. We all have been in the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 55</p> |
| <p>1 Q. Doing the best you can, though, do you think you had 2 conversations with Mr Abebe after you'd spoken to the 3 firefighter?</p> <p>4 A. I am 100 per cent sure I did have a conversation after 5 I spoke to the firefighter, because I remember I told 6 him what he told us.</p> <p>7 Q. What you also say in this paragraph is that Mr Abebe 8 told you that you needed to get out.</p> <p>9 Did he give you any other information about the 10 progress of the fire?</p> <p>11 A. He was always updating me, "The fire is going all the 12 way up, I'm just telling you". Even I say to him "You 13 need to tell me, you may not worried" -- because 14 sometimes he may worried and he would not able to tell 15 me what was happening, but he was clearly explain to me 16 how the fire spread all the way up and how it was 17 dangerous.</p> <p>18 Q. Could we go to page 9, please, and paragraph 29.</p> <p>19 I won't read all of this out, but this, again, is 20 just so we can get the sequence of events right, because 21 in this paragraph you are describing that, in your 22 desperation, you climbed out and sat on the window ledge 23 in the lounge.</p> <p>24 Was this the second time that you went out onto the 25 ledge?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 54</p> | <p>1 living room at all times, so we may follow her in the 2 corridor that the male firefighter came, along that 3 area, but I cannot assure you where I was, but along 4 those places I was.</p> <p>5 Q. You've mentioned that she told you that the fire had got 6 into the kitchen. Did she tell you anything else about 7 the fire?</p> <p>8 A. No, she say to me just a fire get to her kitchen. 9 That's all I remember she said.</p> <p>10 Q. Do you remember her mentioning the conditions in the 11 lobby area at all?</p> <p>12 A. We haven't discussed anything, we just spoke about her 13 kitchen, and we start calling and looking a way of 14 escaping, how, and what to do. We not really any 15 discussion about lobby or anything. I don't remember -- 16 maybe discussion, but I don't remember.</p> <p>17 Q. Genet went and opened the door to let your neighbour in. 18 Did Genet tell you whether she'd noticed anything 19 about conditions in the lobby area?</p> <p>20 A. I don't remember.</p> <p>21 Q. Did your neighbour from flat 152 tell you if she'd had 22 any contact with firefighters or a firefighter?</p> <p>23 A. No, that was really -- we may talk, we may not talk, so 24 I better to say I don't remember.</p> <p>25 Q. In paragraph 32 you mention a call that you made at</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 56</p> |

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| <p>1 02.32 to 999. I want to show you the transcript of</p> <p>2 that. Are you okay to look at the transcript?</p> <p>3 A. Yes, I'm okay.</p> <p>4 Q. What I want to do, if I may, is just to take you to</p> <p>5 different parts of the transcript in order to ask you</p> <p>6 some additional questions.</p> <p>7 A. Okay.</p> <p>8 Q. If we could please go to IWS00001051, page 25, please.</p> <p>9 Could we look at page 24, first of all, so I could</p> <p>10 just set the context for Mr Tekle.</p> <p>11 A. Yes, yes, I'm fine.</p> <p>12 Q. This is the first page of a transcript of that call</p> <p>13 which is annexed or exhibited to your statement.</p> <p>14 Just so that we can see, do you see at the top where</p> <p>15 it says "Event"?</p> <p>16 A. Yes, yes.</p> <p>17 Q. The last but one set of numbers that we see, which is</p> <p>18 023230, gives us our time. So that tells us the call</p> <p>19 was made at 02.32.</p> <p>20 A. Yes.</p> <p>21 Q. Can I take you to page 25 now. If we could expand the</p> <p>22 top half of the page.</p> <p>23 A. Yes.</p> <p>24 Q. Do you see that second line down, the operator asks you,</p> <p>25 Mr Tekle:</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 57</p> | <p>1 "OPERATOR: Full of smoke, is it? All right. We'll</p> <p>2 let them know, but the fire's coming inside your flat,</p> <p>3 yeah?"</p> <p>4 When you mentioned a balcony there or the reference</p> <p>5 to balcony, do you know what you were saying, because</p> <p>6 your answer is "balcony is (inaudible) smoke"? What</p> <p>7 were you referring to when you used the word "balcony"?</p> <p>8 A. To be honest, at that time, we were all panicked. Even</p> <p>9 I remember when I listened the audio of this, there was</p> <p>10 screaming and I was saying "Oh, oh", so I don't remember</p> <p>11 what I tried to say, but I try to put more important</p> <p>12 what is -- like I know there are kids and how many we</p> <p>13 are. So I may think that when I say balcony, maybe my</p> <p>14 window, you know, where I sit. This is maybe related</p> <p>15 with that. But I'm not sure what I said. But it looks</p> <p>16 like that, maybe. You see, I can't say yes or no.</p> <p>17 Q. So you think it's possibly a reference to the outside?</p> <p>18 A. Yes. Yes.</p> <p>19 Q. And that where you're referring to balcony, it was the</p> <p>20 window ledge where you had sat?</p> <p>21 A. Yes.</p> <p>22 Q. But do you have a memory, when you're sat at the window</p> <p>23 ledge, of smoke?</p> <p>24 A. No, I only remember there was debris coming down from</p> <p>25 other side, you know, the window brought it, that's what</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 59</p> |
| <p>1 "OPERATOR: Right. How many of you are there in</p> <p>2 there? How many adults?</p> <p>3 "CALLER: (inaudible) my neighbour come in as well,</p> <p>4 he is now (inaudible) five kids and, and four adults."</p> <p>5 So if my maths is right, that means that by the time</p> <p>6 you made this call, there was yourself and your partner,</p> <p>7 Mr Enyew and the neighbour from flat 152 in your flat,</p> <p>8 wasn't there?</p> <p>9 A. Yes, including my children, yes.</p> <p>10 Q. And then your children and her three children?</p> <p>11 A. Yes. By the way, before this, I did call at 02.07. The</p> <p>12 call is missed.</p> <p>13 Q. Sorry to interrupt you, but what I'll do is go back to</p> <p>14 the 02.07 call in a moment, if I may.</p> <p>15 A. Okay, okay.</p> <p>16 Q. Again, if we could have perhaps the whole page or just</p> <p>17 scroll down a little bit on the page.</p> <p>18 Pause there.</p> <p>19 What the operator asks you is:</p> <p>20 "OPERATOR: (inaudible) Can you get out at all?</p> <p>21 "CALLER: (inaudible)</p> <p>22 "OPERATOR: Can you get out onto the landing?</p> <p>23 "CALLER: No, we cannot get out.</p> <p>24 "OPERATOR: Have you got a balcony? No?</p> <p>25 "CALLER: The balcony is (inaudible) smoke.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 58</p> | <p>1 I remember. That was -- are you talking about the</p> <p>2 second time or the first time?</p> <p>3 Q. Well, let's take it on the first time. So if the</p> <p>4 balcony is a reference to the window ledge, do you</p> <p>5 remember seeing smoke when you were sitting on the</p> <p>6 window ledge for the first time?</p> <p>7 A. No, the first time there was no smoke or anything,</p> <p>8 I don't think.</p> <p>9 Q. I'll come back to the second time, but I'll make sure to</p> <p>10 ask you about what you saw at the time then.</p> <p>11 If we scroll down again on the page, you've already</p> <p>12 mentioned this, but you can see there where the operator</p> <p>13 says:</p> <p>14 "OPERATOR: Get yourselves into a room that has not</p> <p>15 got — the safest room that you can go to.</p> <p>16 "CALLER: (overspeaking) debris is coming down."</p> <p>17 Where were you seeing that from?</p> <p>18 A. Through the window.</p> <p>19 Q. But the window of which room was it?</p> <p>20 A. I think you can see from all the window side where we</p> <p>21 are in the living room. All four --</p> <p>22 Q. So the windows on the south and the windows on the west?</p> <p>23 A. Yes, but I remember it is the one in the west.</p> <p>24 Q. Can you describe the debris that you were seeing coming</p> <p>25 down?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 60</p> |

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| <p>1 A. Different size of debris. Small kind of -- medium, all 2 kinds of debris. 3 Q. Was there anything about it that you noticed other than 4 its size? 5 A. It's like blackish. I can't remember. Something -- 6 I don't -- that's all, really. I can't really say 7 anything. 8 Q. Can we now just put side by side, then, pages 24 and 25, 9 please. 10 If I take it -- I think it's 14 lines down, but on 11 page 24 there is a point where you've just told the 12 operator your flat number and your floor, and the 13 operator says: 14 "OPERATOR: 18 floor, 153. And what is happening? 15 "CALLER: (inaudible) the smoke is coming out on the 16 other side (inaudible). 17 "OPERATOR: Is it coming into your flat? 18 "CALLER: Yeah, but with the window, I can see the 19 window. 20 "OPERATOR: So is it coming in the window, did you 21 say? 22 "CALLER: Yeah. 23 "OPERATOR: Okay. Can you — have you got the window 24 shut? 25 "CALLER: (crying) (inaudible)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 61</p> | <p>1 but if I try, keeping that all in mind, just to ask you 2 some questions about what you remember of what was going 3 on at the time. 4 A. Yes. 5 Q. At that time that you made this call, which is 02.32, 6 can you remember smoke actually coming into your flat? 7 A. No, at that time our neighbour moved to our flat. 8 Obviously I say there are five kids and four adults. 9 And the conversation we made with her that there is the 10 smoke coming to the kitchen. And later on, when we see 11 outside the window through the door -- through the 12 window of the one -- through the window of the bedroom 13 close to the 152. 14 By the way, 154 is -- I done it by mistake. I now 15 know that is 152. But what I try to say is, like, 152 16 was 153 and referring 152 -- I know that's what I tried 17 to say. 18 So when I see on the bedroom, and a fire is like 19 coming to us, so that's what I was trying to refer. But 20 sometimes, if you listen the voice, there were on the 21 ground a lot of things going on, so all the conversation 22 we made is like that. So any -- yes. 23 Q. That's very helpful. 24 Could I, again, just try and break it down a little 25 bit. I'll ask you about 152 in a moment.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 63</p> |
| <p>1 "OPERATOR: Have you got the window shut? Have you 2 got the window shut? 3 "CALLER: No, the window didn't shut (inaudible) 4 "OPERATOR: Okay. Is it just smoke coming in? 5 Hello? 6 "CALLER: (Inaudible) hello. (overspeaking) 7 "OPERATOR: Is it just — is there any fire coming in? 8 "CALLER: Yes, there's fire next door (inaudible) 9 coming for us now. 10 "OPERATOR: No, is there any fire in your flat? Is 11 there a fire in your flat? 12 "CALLER: Yes, yes, in our flat, yes. 13 OPERATOR: What? A fire or smoke? 14 "CALLER: Yes, fire. It's fire (inaudible)." 15 If we go a little further down at the bottom of 16 page 25, the operator later in the call asks you: 17 "OPERATOR: Where is the fire in your flat? 18 "CALLER: The fire is in the bedroom. 19 "OPERATOR: Where is it? 20 "CALLER: It is, you know what, it (inaudible) 21 154 ... 22 "OPERATOR: And 153, in you flat, that on fire now? 23 "CALLER: No, no, it's 154 is (inaudible) they come 24 to us." 25 That's quite a big chunk of reading I've done there,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 62</p> | <p>1 A. Yes. 2 Q. Was there any smoke actually coming into your flat at 3 this point? 4 A. No, I don't remember smoke. 5 Q. Do you remember any flames coming into your flat at this 6 point? 7 A. The flame is not our flat but is close to -- I saw while 8 I was watching -- opening the -- while I see through the 9 bedroom window, I saw a flame coming from the 152. 10 Q. So you went to a bedroom window -- and we can look at 11 the plan again if you want to, but was that the bedroom 12 that was closest to 152? 13 A. Yes. 14 Q. You looked out of that window. What did you see was 15 going on in 152? 16 A. You know, there's a flame, orange flame is coming. 17 Q. Could you see smoke? 18 A. To be honest, smoke, I don't remember the smoke -- yeah, 19 there's a little bit smoke maybe. I can't say yes or 20 no, so I'm not sure is better. 21 Q. And -- 22 A. Or I don't recall is better to say. 23 Q. What could you see of the flames? What colour were 24 they? 25 A. Orange. It's really -- it's still in my mind the shape</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 64</p> |

1 of this. Flame is pure flame with orange, you know?
 2 Proper orange colour. It's in my mind. But I may
 3 not ...
 4 Q. When you're referring there -- we can still see it at
 5 the bottom of page 25 -- that the fire is in the
 6 bedroom --
 7 A. Yes.
 8 Q. -- were you referring there to a fire coming towards the
 9 bedroom --
 10 A. Yes, yes.
 11 Q. -- in your flat, or to a location in flat 152?
 12 A. Yes, the location to the fire flat 152, which is getting
 13 to us anyway, basically, so that's what I'm referring,
 14 I think. But at that time, the conversation, with
 15 panic, you know, you say anything what you want. But
 16 obviously we are trying to put the point, you know.
 17 So -- mm.
 18 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Mr Rawat, forgive me interrupting,
 19 but I take it you have a few more questions.
 20 MR RAWAT: I do.
 21 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: I am just wondering whether Mr Tekle
 22 should have a break.
 23 MR RAWAT: We can do it now, that's not a problem.
 24 THE WITNESS: You can continue -- okay.
 25 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Would you like a break now?

Page 65

1 THE WITNESS: If you want to have a few more questions,
 2 I don't mind. If you want you can, it's up to you.
 3 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: The trouble is it can sometimes take
 4 rather longer than one might expect.
 5 MR RAWAT: I'm coming to what will be I think a convenient
 6 break, so if I could just ask a couple more questions,
 7 that should be, I hope ...
 8 Let me take you to page 26, which is the last page
 9 of this transcript.
 10 If you see four lines down where the operator says:
 11 "OPERATOR: Okay. It's just coming now. Okay then.
 12 We will get someone to you as soon as possible, okay?
 13 All right? Okay. We'll get to you as soon as
 14 possible."
 15 "OPERATOR: Okay. Ring us back if it gets worse."
 16 Further down:
 17 "OPERATOR: Get, get yourself in a room that -- where
 18 the least smoke is.
 19 "CALLER: Okay.
 20 "OPERATOR: Okay? Get to a room where the least
 21 smoke is."
 22 That was advice you were being given at the end of
 23 that call.
 24 What did you do in response to that advice?
 25 A. I don't remember even I've been advised that, at that

Page 66

1 time.
 2 Q. You just told us you'd gone to your bedroom to look out.
 3 A. Yes.
 4 Q. After you made this call, did you move anywhere else
 5 within the flat?
 6 A. No, we all was in the living room, just we were in there
 7 to the south, because -- to see a fire coming from that
 8 side, the south, so we were on -- the furthest from the
 9 fire was the living room, so that's where we all are,
 10 were there.
 11 Q. What I hope might be the last question on this topic.
 12 A. Yes.
 13 Q. But when you looked out of the bedroom window --
 14 A. Yes.
 15 Q. -- which was the bedroom next door to flat 152, could
 16 you have a view of the window of the next bedroom, the
 17 bedroom in 152 itself?
 18 A. I don't remember. But -- because -- I don't remember,
 19 but I remember we shut the window of the bedroom, but
 20 I don't know which stage. But we managed to shut the
 21 window, but I don't remember.
 22 Q. When you were looking out, could you tell which part of
 23 152 the flames might be coming from?
 24 A. The only thing I saw is the orange flame coming.
 25 MR RAWAT: Mr Chairman, that is the convenient point.

Page 67

1 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Is that a convenient point?
 2 MR RAWAT: Yes.
 3 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Mr Tekle, I think we'll have a short
 4 break now. As I said to you last time, please don't
 5 talk to anyone about your evidence.
 6 If you'd like to go with the usher now, we'll come
 7 back and resume at 12.10, if that's all right. Thank
 8 you very much.
 9 All right, 12.10, then, please.
 10 (12.05 pm)
 11 (A short break)
 12 (12.10 pm)
 13 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: All right, Mr Tekle?
 14 THE WITNESS: Yes, I'm fine.
 15 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Happy to carry on?
 16 THE WITNESS: Yes.
 17 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Thank you very much.
 18 Yes, Mr Rawat.
 19 MR RAWAT: Thank you, Mr Chairman.
 20 And thank you, Mr Tekle, for coming back.
 21 A. Thank you, too.
 22 Q. You referred earlier in your evidence to the 02.07 call
 23 that you made and, in fairness to you, I said I would
 24 come back to it, and let's do it now.
 25 A. Okay.

Page 68

17 (Pages 65 to 68)

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| <p>1 Q. Can we have, please, page 5 of your statement and we 2 look at paragraph 18, please. 3 This is a call that was made to 999 but for which 4 there isn't an audio recording and therefore there isn't 5 a transcript, but you've been able to give a time for it 6 because it was made from Genet's phone; is that right? 7 A. Yes. 8 Q. If we look at the bottom, you say -- this was the first 9 call that you recall making to 999, wasn't it? 10 A. No. What I try to say there is depend on if I have 11 a chance to listen that call, I could have been known if 12 I make a call earlier than this or not. But 13 unfortunately this call has not been -- I've been told 14 it has not been connected to Fire Brigade. I wonder 15 why. It has a duration of 3 minutes and 49 seconds, 16 it's quite long, and I've been told that BT has only 17 kept the record for 90 days on this disaster. I don't 18 know why the police not kept this. 19 And I also remember when I had a meeting in Olympia 20 with Senior Police Investigator Matt Bourne and the 21 Commander Cunde(?), I remembered saying that there has 22 been over 600 call, and they say that all calls have 23 been heard, but I don't know this call have been 24 included on that or not. 25 Q. Can I just focus on this call, please.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 69</p> | <p>1 was told that the London Fire Brigade 'were dealing' 2 with the fire at Grenfell Tower and for us to stay where 3 we were. I have a clear memory that the English words 4 'were dealing' were used as I was speaking to the 5 Emergency services in English throughout my dealings 6 with them." 7 Firstly, is it your recollection and your evidence 8 that you spoke to someone from the Fire Brigade? 9 A. It could be Fire Brigade, it could be BT, I don't know 10 anything, but I remember I was talking about the fire 11 and I've been say that "we're dealing". 12 I don't know before that BT is connecting to the 13 Fire Brigade. As far as I know, when we call 999, you 14 ask "Fire Brigade", you connect straight away. So 15 I don't know it's by Fire Brigade, I can't say to you 16 which one, but only thing I remember is: "we're 17 dealing". 18 Q. You say there that you were told "for us to stay where 19 we were". 20 Can you remember what advice specifically you were 21 given? 22 A. The Fire Brigades are dealing with it. That's all 23 I remember. 24 Q. Were you told to block up any windows? 25 A. To be honest with you, even on previously when we talk</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 71</p> |
| <p>1 A. Okay. 2 Q. What you've been told about the audio or this call, the 3 information you've been given -- I'm going to ask you 4 what you remember about the call in a moment, but just 5 to be clear -- the information that you have been given 6 is that the call was one that did not connect to the 7 Fire Brigade. 8 A. That's what I've been told, but I have a good memory of 9 a conversation saying that we are dealing with it. And 10 all the conversation -- the reason why I say that, 11 before or after, I have already been spoken with not 12 anyone apart from this call in English. So when I was 13 talking to Abraham over the phone, it was all in 14 Amharic. So that conversation, I remember it has been 15 said that. 16 But I don't know why, with this disaster, the police 17 and BT hasn't kept it for that long. 18 Q. I will ask you, as I said, just about what your 19 recollection of the conversation was, and what you've 20 been told is that the audio recording wasn't retained; 21 is that right? 22 A. Yes. 23 Q. Well, let's go, then, to your recollection of this call. 24 You've set out some of that. You say: 25 "My memory of the first call that I made was that I</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 70</p> | <p>1 about the previous call, some of the things I'm not 2 sure, so I don't say that or this. The only thing that 3 I remember is "we're dealing". 4 Q. Again, if we can try and fix this call in the sequence 5 of events that happened in your flat, was this before 6 you climbed out onto the ledge for the first time that 7 you made this call? 8 A. Yes, I was thinking even myself when I read my 9 statement: is it before or after? So I cannot assure 10 you either before or after, but the only thing I will 11 say, maybe before. But I'm not 100 per cent sure or 12 after. So I would say I'm not sure. 13 Q. Can you help us with whether it was before or after that 14 firefighter came to your door? 15 A. It must be before. I don't know. To be honest, I try 16 to figure out that, because the sequence -- it must be 17 before, but obviously I can't say 100 per cent, but it 18 sounds like before. I'm not 100 per cent sure. 19 Q. Can we move on to another topic, and that's the exchange 20 of calls that you had with Essex Fire and Rescue. 21 In your statement you have gone through the exchange 22 of calls with that fire service. 23 I would like, again, to just look at some of the 24 transcripts of those calls to just ask you some 25 additional questions.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 72</p> |

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| <p>1 Could we go first to page 27 in your statement, so 2 IWS00001051, page 27. 3 This is the first page, Mr Tekle, and just to help 4 everyone in the room, the reference at the top gives us 5 the time of the call. So just before the word "Essex" 6 in that reference, there is the number 025100, so that 7 tells us it's a call made at 02.51. 8 But if I ask you, please, just to go to the next 9 page. If we could just expand the top part of it. 10 When the operator answers, you tell them that you're 11 in flat 153. 12 A. Yes. 13 Q. Do you see that? Then the operator says: 14 "OPERATOR: Hello there, you're in 153?" 15 "CALLER: Yes, Grenfell Tower. The fire is all over 16 our house (several inaudible words)." 17 What did you mean by saying "Fire is all over our 18 house"? 19 A. Obviously when I say that, it means it has been really 20 very late for us. Well, at that time I was thinking. 21 And we've been surrounded by fire, all our flat. So 22 I try to explain to him the situation. And that's it, 23 really. 24 Q. Do you remember at the time that you made this call 25 whether there was any fire actually coming into your</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 73</p> | <p>1 Q. What information did you have that the emergency exit 2 was full of smoke? 3 A. I think that may be one of the conversation we make with 4 Rabia, I'm not 100 per cent sure. You see, everything 5 was mess. But I must get that information somewhere. 6 So ... 7 Q. So you don't have a recollection at about this time of 8 anyone having gone out and opened your front door to 9 look at what was going on outside? 10 A. I don't know, to be honest, but maybe someone did it. 11 But I remember I didn't. 12 Q. You didn't? 13 A. No, I didn't open the door. I was only focusing how 14 I escape by the window. 15 Q. Do you remember -- 16 A. Because my belief was -- 17 Q. Sorry to interrupt. Carry on. 18 A. My belief was that's impossible to get out by the lobby. 19 So -- 20 Q. What was it that made you believe it was impossible to 21 get out by the lobby? 22 A. Obviously because of the smoke. Because the lady 23 comes -- because of next flat was on fire. The next 24 flat was on fire. Anyway I'm passing through that to 25 the fire exit.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 75</p> |
| <p>1 flat? 2 A. The only thing I remember is, like I say to you earlier, 3 the fire -- orange flame comes from the 152. 4 Q. The operator then asks you: 5 "OPERATOR: Okay. Are you able to get to an 6 emergency exit? 7 "CALLER: No, there's no — it's full of smoke, 8 there's a fire." 9 You seem to be giving that answer in response to 10 a question as to an emergency exit. 11 Were you referring to an emergency exit in your 12 answer? 13 A. Obviously the emergency exit is -- it's the fire exit. 14 Q. Is that the stairwell? 15 A. Yes. 16 Q. And -- 17 A. But at that time, when I say this emergency exit, it 18 could be my front door, but commonsensely, when you say 19 emergency exit ... 20 Q. As you pointed out, it's later in time. It's now 02.51. 21 A. Yes. 22 Q. Had you at any time gone to look to see what the 23 conditions were like in the lobby? 24 A. No, I haven't opened -- I don't remember opening the 25 door.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 74</p> | <p>1 Q. If we go down to the bottom of that page, the operator 2 asks you: 3 "OPERATOR: ... have you got anything you can put in 4 front of the door like a blanket or anything to stop the 5 smoke coming in? 6 "CALLER: Yeah, yeah (inaudible) but the smoke is 7 coming from the outside." 8 What was that a reference to? 9 A. Yes, I think at that stage I remember Genet went to the 10 kitchen, and she told us that the smoke coming from the 11 kitchen. I remember that. But I don't know which 12 stage, but I think it must be that one. 13 Q. Did Genet tell you the smoke was actually getting into 14 your kitchen? 15 A. Yes, that's what she say to me. 16 Q. How was it getting into your kitchen? 17 A. You see, we are surrounded by fire. Both sides comes, 18 one from south, and from the other side. 19 Q. As far as you were aware, was any smoke coming in 20 through your closed front door? 21 A. I think we all were in the living room. 22 Q. Well, if we go, please, to the next page, 29, and if we 23 expand the sort of bottom two-thirds of it. 24 Can you see, Mr Tekle, that there's a point where 25 the operator says:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 76</p> |

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| <p>1 "OPERATOR: ... And the smoke is coming from the 2 windows outside is it? 3 "CALLER: Yes, yes but the (inaudible) next flat is 4 full of smoke." 5 Which flat were you referring to there? 6 A. 152. 7 Q. A little further down the operator says: 8 "OPERATOR: ... If there's smoke coming from the 9 window then obviously don't open that window. And your 10 front door, you're unable to get out of there are you? 11 "CALLER: No, no, not at all, not at all." 12 So we can be clear, what was it about the front door 13 that led you to think that you couldn't get out through 14 the front door? 15 A. Obviously if the neighbour who comes to our flat, 16 because her flat is on fire, so when we go -- if we are 17 trying to go to the fire exit, we have to pass her flat. 18 I think that is one of the reason. 19 Q. I won't put it up, but what the operator from Essex Fire 20 and Rescue says at the end of the call is that they'll 21 past it through to London. 22 Can I just, so we get the sequence, take you to 23 page 31 in your statement. 24 This is a transcript of a voice message left on your 25 phone by Essex Fire and Rescue.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 77</p> | <p>1 the next page, if we look at the top of page 34, the 2 operator says: 3 "OPERATOR: Hello, it's the fire service here. 4 Right, I've spoke to London Fire ..." 5 So it would make sense that it was after they had 6 first spoken to you, wouldn't it? 7 A. Yes, yes, it makes sense, yes. 8 Q. The reason for us putting these two pages up on the 9 screen is just to ask you again some additional 10 questions. 11 If we look at the bottom, the operator has asked you 12 how many people are with you and you say about four 13 adults and five children. 14 So everybody is still in the flat, aren't they? 15 A. Yes. 16 Q. Where were you all at the time of this call, can you 17 remember? 18 A. Which one? You mean the first one? 19 Q. This call at 02.56. 20 A. We are all in the living room. 21 After we get advice, "Make your way to the fire 22 exit, get a wet towel", at that time we moved to the 23 corridor, close to the front door, to get a wet towel. 24 Q. Again, just so that we can be clear, at the bottom the 25 operator asks you -- the bottom of page 2, or page 34</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 79</p> |
| <p>1 A. Yes. 2 Q. You're able to give a time for that call at 02.54. If 3 we go to the next page, we can see what message is left. 4 A. Yes. 5 Q. If we just expand the bottom, please. 6 In summary, Essex Fire Service say they spoke to you 7 earlier, have spoken to London and you should make every 8 effort possible to get out of the building and go to 9 your nearest fire exit. 10 But is it right, Mr Tekle, that you didn't listen to 11 that voice message until after you'd left the tower? 12 A. Yes. If you see on previous one, I got his missing call 13 number, 016, and I called that number, and that's how -- 14 I haven't had the time to listen this voicemail, voice 15 message. 16 Q. Can I take you, then, to page 33, which is the next time 17 that you speak to someone from Essex Fire and Rescue 18 service. 19 On that, there is a time given of it of 02.13.12, 20 but in your statement you have explained that it's at 21 02.56, that your belief is it's at 02.56; is that right? 22 A. Yes, I think this is wrong from the transcript when they 23 did. So the time is corrected. So I just take what 24 I've been told with ... 25 Q. Well, you must be right in that, because if we look at</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 78</p> | <p>1 for the record: 2 "OPERATOR: ... has the fire calmed down at all or is 3 it still entering your property? 4 "CALLER: Yeah, it's very close now, yeah, my 5 neighbour is looking for us." 6 Again, at that time, was there any smoke coming into 7 your flat? 8 A. I mentioned it before, the smoke according to Genet told 9 me, from the kitchen, so we already moved to the 10 corridor, try to get out and get ready ourselves. So 11 I would say the smoke was coming earlier from the 12 kitchen. 13 Q. Was there any smoke coming into the bedrooms? 14 A. From the bedroom, like I said, is orange flame, 15 I remember. I think that's all what I remember. 16 Q. And no flames coming into your flat at this time? 17 A. Yes, I'm not sure about that, I remember. I'm not sure 18 now, to be honest. 19 Q. On page 35, what the operator tells you is: 20 "OPERATOR: If you can get out of the building then 21 we would advise you to do so, so if you can get everyone 22 together, stay together and just check outside your 23 front door at first just to make sure you're not putting 24 yourself — 25 "CALLER: Yeah (several inaudible words).</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 80</p> |

20 (Pages 77 to 80)

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| <p>1 "OPERATOR: Sorry, you don't know what, sorry?"</p> <p>2 "CALLER: No, no the front door we have (inaudible),</p> <p>3 it's full of smoke and fire."</p> <p>4 Aside from what you told us earlier about the</p> <p>5 information you think you might have got from</p> <p>6 Rabia Yahya, at about this time, had you checked</p> <p>7 yourself to see what the conditions were like outside</p> <p>8 your flat in the lobby area?</p> <p>9 A. At that time, no. We all panic, so I cannot recall</p> <p>10 anything. Even I was not sure, like I said before,</p> <p>11 talking with Rabia, that that information comes from</p> <p>12 her. But I'm not sure, to be honest. But it must be</p> <p>13 somewhere because it's done.</p> <p>14 Q. At the very bottom of the page, Mr Tekle, you ask:</p> <p>15 "CALLER: Okay, but it's (inaudible) can jump.</p> <p>16 "OPERATOR: Yeah, you won't be able to jump from the</p> <p>17 floor you're — you're on the 18th floor aren't you?</p> <p>18 "CALLER: Yeah, yeah, there is no chance, no?</p> <p>19 "OPERATOR: Yeah. So, yeah, do not jump from the 18th</p> <p>20 floor, okay. We will try and get them to you as soon as</p> <p>21 possible, okay."</p> <p>22 You told us you had climbed onto the ledge once</p> <p>23 already, and you are asking here about jumping from the</p> <p>24 18th floor.</p> <p>25 Did you go out onto the ledge a second time?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 81</p> | <p>1 Mr Abebe says:</p> <p>2 "23. I spoke by telephone again to my friend Paulos</p> <p>3 who was stuck on the 18th floor. He told me that his</p> <p>4 neighbours had come into his flat. He told me that he</p> <p>5 was going to jump from the Tower with Isaac in his arms.</p> <p>6 I begged him not to jump. I pleaded with him. He told</p> <p>7 me that the fire was coming from all sides, and</p> <p>8 basically that their predicament was hopeless. I could</p> <p>9 see at this time that the fire had spread around and</p> <p>10 down the sides of the Tower. Paulos hung-up the</p> <p>11 telephone. I now understand from Paulos' wife that he</p> <p>12 was standing on the window ledge of his flat, preparing</p> <p>13 to jump, when a fire fighter knocked on the door of the</p> <p>14 flat."</p> <p>15 So, Mr Abebe recalls two calls with you. The first</p> <p>16 one is when you've told him that you've spoken to</p> <p>17 a firefighter who has told you to stay in the flat, and</p> <p>18 the second one refers to you being on the ledge and</p> <p>19 preparing to jump when a firefighter knocked on the door</p> <p>20 of the flat.</p> <p>21 Does that help you at all in, firstly, saying how</p> <p>22 many times you sat on the ledge? How many times do you</p> <p>23 remember climbing onto the ledge?</p> <p>24 A. Two times.</p> <p>25 Q. And you've already told us about the first time.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 83</p> |
| <p>1 A. Not at that stage when I was talking. I think before</p> <p>2 when I spoke to Essex Fire Brigade, I was on the --</p> <p>3 second time was before that.</p> <p>4 Q. Could I have, please, up on the screen IWS00000847,</p> <p>5 page 8.</p> <p>6 (Pause)</p> <p>7 Mr Tekle, if I just explain that this is a page from</p> <p>8 the inquiry witness statement of Abraham Abebe, and that</p> <p>9 statement has already been read into the record.</p> <p>10 Paragraph 22 is the first paragraph I want to draw</p> <p>11 your attention to. In there, Mr Abebe is talking about</p> <p>12 his telephone contact with you.</p> <p>13 If we pick it up from the bit where he says:</p> <p>14 "I implored Paulos to find a fire fighter, assuming</p> <p>15 that there must be some fire fighters by now on the 18th</p> <p>16 floor. Paulos hung up, telling me that he would try and</p> <p>17 find a fire fighter. He phoned me back shortly</p> <p>18 afterwards and said that he had spoken to a fire</p> <p>19 fighter, and that the fire fighter told him to remain in</p> <p>20 their flat, in other words to stay put."</p> <p>21 So it would seem that you had that call after that</p> <p>22 first contact with the firefighter that I've asked you</p> <p>23 about, doesn't it?</p> <p>24 A. Yes.</p> <p>25 Q. But if we go down to the next paragraph, please, here</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 82</p> | <p>1 A. Yes.</p> <p>2 Q. So, again, looking at that paragraph, does that help you</p> <p>3 to say when the second time was?</p> <p>4 A. Yes, as I said, the second time when the family from 152</p> <p>5 moved to our flat.</p> <p>6 Q. So is Mr Abebe wrong about the reference that you were</p> <p>7 on the window ledge when a firefighter knocked on the</p> <p>8 door of the flat?</p> <p>9 A. I think he's mentioning about the first one.</p> <p>10 Q. If we go back then to the --</p> <p>11 A. Can I mention something here?</p> <p>12 Q. Of course.</p> <p>13 A. You see, around 2 o'clock, when we've been told to stay,</p> <p>14 the same time, the floor above us, 19th floor, they've</p> <p>15 been told the same time, you know, while we are being</p> <p>16 advised to stay, the other flat above us, they've been</p> <p>17 rescued, and I think -- I don't know why that happened.</p> <p>18 I feel like that is a pick and choose.</p> <p>19 Q. Was that something that you learnt about afterwards?</p> <p>20 A. Yes.</p> <p>21 Q. Well, can I just take you back to your transcript of</p> <p>22 your call that we were looking at.</p> <p>23 A. Okay.</p> <p>24 Q. This is another call that you've had with Essex Fire and</p> <p>25 Rescue, and I just want to get your evidence clear as to</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 84</p> |

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| <p>1 what you did in response to that call. Okay?</p> <p>2 If we go, please, to page 11 of your statement and</p> <p>3 paragraph 39, please.</p> <p>4 You've now had a call, an actual conversation, which</p> <p>5 you've put at 02.56, with Essex Fire and Rescue. This</p> <p>6 is the transcript that we were looking at a moment ago.</p> <p>7 What did you then start to do, having finished that</p> <p>8 call?</p> <p>9 A. We start preparing ourselves, because he told us to get</p> <p>10 a wet towel and make your way to the fire exit. We know</p> <p>11 that there is not any choice, so Genet and me, we start</p> <p>12 preparing to ready -- to get a wet towel, and we moved</p> <p>13 to the bedroom which is close to the front door.</p> <p>14 I remember she gets some towels from the cupboard, but</p> <p>15 that was not enough, so we get it from the bed. On the</p> <p>16 bed, there is the storage on the bottom. You lift up</p> <p>17 the mattress and you got the storage. So I remember</p> <p>18 I help her opening that bed and start getting wet towel</p> <p>19 for everybody.</p> <p>20 Q. After that call from Essex Fire and Rescue, there was</p> <p>21 a last call which was from an operator in the London</p> <p>22 Fire Brigade.</p> <p>23 If we look at page 37 of your statement, please, the</p> <p>24 time of that call is 03.02.35. I don't need to go to</p> <p>25 the detail of it, but in short, the operator told you to</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 85</p> | <p>1 A. Immediately he tell me, "Make your way", so immediately</p> <p>2 after that. It's no really time. That's why we moved</p> <p>3 to the bedroom and the corridor.</p> <p>4 Q. Can we go back, then, to your statement, page 12, and</p> <p>5 look at paragraphs 40 and 41.</p> <p>6 In these parts of your statement you put Mr Enyew at</p> <p>7 the door with a wet bed sheet.</p> <p>8 Just so that we can be clear, who opened the front</p> <p>9 door?</p> <p>10 A. After we all get wet towel, he was on the front, the two</p> <p>11 children from our neighbour, then the mum and I was</p> <p>12 behind. So the way we stand, it's like all of us</p> <p>13 preparing to get out.</p> <p>14 So at that stage where we're about to leave, he was</p> <p>15 close to the front door.</p> <p>16 Q. But do you remember which one of you opened the front</p> <p>17 door? Was it --</p> <p>18 A. He is the one who opened the front door, even we told</p> <p>19 him not to open the door.</p> <p>20 Q. When the door was opened, could you see out into the</p> <p>21 lobby area?</p> <p>22 A. Yes, we were saying to him, "Don't open, don't open",</p> <p>23 because Genet, she didn't have her wet towel on her.</p> <p>24 But he was panicking, and when I say to him, "Don't</p> <p>25 open, don't open", he was saying, "Which one you want me</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 87</p> |
| <p>1 get out of the flat.</p> <p>2 A. To be honest, I've already advised by Essex Fire Service</p> <p>3 operator --</p> <p>4 Q. So --</p> <p>5 A. -- so I don't remember even I had a conversation with</p> <p>6 that, because we all were panicking and preparing</p> <p>7 ourselves to get a wet towel. So I've been told later</p> <p>8 that you have a conversation with the -- at this time.</p> <p>9 So I don't totally remember.</p> <p>10 Q. Do you remember receiving a call?</p> <p>11 A. Slightly, but to be honest, we were already preparing,</p> <p>12 because the advice is already get from Essex</p> <p>13 firefighter.</p> <p>14 But on this time, I really like to thank Russ White,</p> <p>15 I now know, who was doing an effort to contact London</p> <p>16 Fire Brigade and to call us back on our mobile phone</p> <p>17 number, left us a voicemail, that was really good.</p> <p>18 So I think we only get help -- his advice as well</p> <p>19 change life, so I like to thank Russ White. If you see</p> <p>20 me today, thank you.</p> <p>21 Q. On the basis that you can't remember this call --</p> <p>22 A. Not at all.</p> <p>23 Q. -- can you, using your last call with Essex as</p> <p>24 a reference point, remember how soon after that call</p> <p>25 ended you decided to leave your flat?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 86</p> | <p>1 to take? Which one you want me to take?" he say to me.</p> <p>2 And all of a sudden we saw a fireman there, and I gave</p> <p>3 [redacted] -- sorry, my son, my youngest son, to hold</p> <p>4 and to take it, because we are panic, we don't know what</p> <p>5 we're doing. I thought -- and my son, my youngest son,</p> <p>6 doesn't want to go with him. He cried. I remember he</p> <p>7 say, "I don't want to go."</p> <p>8 Q. And --</p> <p>9 A. And after he keep saying, insisting that, "Which one you</p> <p>10 take, which one you take?" There's no time to think.</p> <p>11 Q. I want to ask you in a moment about the firefighter that</p> <p>12 you saw.</p> <p>13 A. Yes.</p> <p>14 Q. But can you help us at all with once that door was open,</p> <p>15 what you noticed about the conditions in the lobby area?</p> <p>16 A. Smoke coming already.</p> <p>17 Q. What kind of smoke was coming?</p> <p>18 A. I cannot say what colour or anything, but I remember the</p> <p>19 alarm going off. Like I said previously, it's not loud,</p> <p>20 it's like --</p> <p>21 Q. You told us you had two alarms.</p> <p>22 A. Yes, the one --</p> <p>23 Q. One in the hallway and one in the kitchen.</p> <p>24 A. Yes, yes.</p> <p>25 Q. Which alarm was set off?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 88</p> |

1 **A. The one close to the front door.**
 2 Q. Although you can't say very much about the smoke, do you
 3 remember whether it had any effect on you when it came
 4 into the flat?
 5 **A. You see, we were moving around to go to the bathroom,**
 6 **get a wet towel, you know, we all making -- get everyone**
 7 **to get a wet towel. So I don't notice anything. But**
 8 **the only thing, the fireman was standing, being on the**
 9 **left-hand side, and watching all this drama what we were**
 10 **doing, but we didn't know. If we've been told properly,**
 11 **we could tie the wet towel. We just say get a wet**
 12 **towel, so we get a wet towel. But because of the panic,**
 13 **we not have time to think properly, so we all get wet**
 14 **towel and a bed sheet and we make our way. But he was**
 15 **there, and --**
 16 Q. Can I pause you there. I wonder whether, if we show you
 17 a plan, you might be able to tell us where you saw this
 18 firefighter.
 19 **A. Yes.**
 20 Q. Could we have MET00012593, please, page 12.
 21 Can we expand -- I suppose I'd like the communal
 22 lobby and flat 3, please.
 23 Just before I ask you to indicate where you first
 24 saw the firefighter, Mr Tekle, can I ask you this: what
 25 had happened to the lights in your property by then?

Page 89

1 **A. There's no issue with the lights. Whole light was**
 2 **working properly until we left the flat.**
 3 Q. What was the lighting like, therefore, in your hallway?
 4 **A. Obviously the hallway is dark, but we get light from our**
 5 **flat to -- which we're able to see the fireman and the**
 6 **lobby in front of the front door.**
 7 Q. So I may have confused you by the use of the word
 8 "hallway"; I meant the hallway of your flat, what was
 9 the lighting like in the hallway of your flat?
 10 **A. There was light in the flat. That's what we've been**
 11 **using from early when we go out. There was light, so --**
 12 Q. When you opened the door, we can see that you would
 13 face, as you said earlier, a wall.
 14 **A. Yes.**
 15 Q. Did you have any sense of the temperature --
 16 **A. I don't remember.**
 17 Q. -- on the landing?
 18 **A. To be honest, I don't notice any of that things. I was**
 19 **thinking how I save my sons and my family, and I don't**
 20 **really notice all the temperature and the smell, the**
 21 **smoke. I remember there's smoke, but the smell and**
 22 **temperature, I don't know.**
 23 Q. Where was the firefighter when you first saw --
 24 **A. In front of the flat, front door.**
 25 Q. Standing in front of the front door?

Page 90

1 **A. Yes, yes.**
 2 Q. Can you describe the firefighter at all?
 3 **A. I don't know. I can't describe him. I don't remember**
 4 **what he looked like, but -- and there's a firefighter**
 5 **with gear, full of gear.**
 6 Q. Was he or she tall or short?
 7 **A. He's full covered up, so I don't know what he look like.**
 8 Q. Did the firefighter have anything over his or her face?
 9 **A. Everything, everything full of -- he's got a BA, I learn**
 10 **it from here when I attend.**
 11 Q. Do you have a clear memory of the firefighter wearing
 12 breathing apparatus?
 13 **A. Yes, breathing apparatus, yes.**
 14 Q. Did the firefighter say anything to you?
 15 **A. No, we didn't have any conversation. He didn't say**
 16 **anything. But once we were really panicking, you know,**
 17 **[redacted], my youngest son, doesn't want to go with**
 18 **him. He was rolling on the floor, crying, "I don't want**
 19 **to go". So the man is insisting me, "Which one you**
 20 **take, which one you take?" again. I know my youngest**
 21 **son doesn't want to go with him, so I gave my son. And**
 22 **while he was standing -- the man who hold my older son**
 23 **went first, then the children with the mum behind, then**
 24 **me after. But Genet was slightly behind without any wet**
 25 **towel, because no time, we're all panic.**

Page 91

1 By that stage, the firefighter was behind us, and
 2 while we reach to the fire exit where the staircase is,
 3 he moved to the right corner -- to the right corner of
 4 the -- the right corner of the stairs, and the only
 5 thing I don't remember is I don't know who opened the
 6 fire exit, but the fire exit was open. We kind of line
 7 up. So he showed us the torch to the staircase.
 8 And that's it, really. After that, it's dense
 9 smoke. Not see each other. We don't know what happened
 10 for every of us.
 11 I went down, while I was holding my youngest son.
 12 Obviously I've got a wet towel and I hold the wet towel
 13 for him too, and I hold him the way he look at me like
 14 this, with the wet towel (Indicates).
 15 When I walked down, after some steps, I fall down,
 16 and because I was on the wall side, not the -- so when
 17 I fall down, I really don't want to hurt him because it
 18 is on his head side, so I turn my shoulder to the right,
 19 and for a while I was unconscious.
 20 When I know myself, I realise where I was, and I try
 21 to get up but couldn't. So I start walking slide. So
 22 when I slide, I think I reached to the landing to go to
 23 the next staircase, and I turn, just sliding myself, go
 24 to the next, and after one or two level, maybe one
 25 level, I managed to get to the side of the handrail,

Page 92

23 (Pages 89 to 92)

1 which really saves me to walk on that side. When I fall
 2 down, my wet towel is fall because we haven't been
 3 advised to tie.
 4 After that, I remember after a certain floor the
 5 smoke was very, very dense. It's like a force pushing
 6 you back, so I was not able to get it. I attempt to go
 7 up, but I couldn't because I was sliding.
 8 I couldn't breathe, so I was nearly falling back.
 9 And I don't know where it comes, but my instinct told me
 10 to take [redacted]'s wet towel, which I kept holding all
 11 the time, so I take some relief by taking out his wet
 12 towel from him and put it in my mouth, and put it back
 13 to him, and I get relief, and going back. I done that
 14 a few times.
 15 Then I went all the way up to mezzanine floor or
 16 whatever, I don't remember what floor, by slide, holding
 17 my son.
 18 Q. Can I just ask you, just to take you back a little bit.
 19 You've described that one firefighter that you saw
 20 when you were coming out of your flat.
 21 A. Yes.
 22 Q. Did you see any other firefighters in the lobby area at
 23 all?
 24 A. To be honest, I only saw one firefighter. I haven't
 25 seen anybody. We are always way behind. There may be

Page 93

1 one in the front but, like I said, it's very, very dark.
 2 You don't see anything. Even from early stage, we've
 3 been using our flat light to be able to see the lobby.
 4 So I didn't see anything. Even when he do the torch to
 5 show us the stairs, the torch, because of the smoke and
 6 darkness, it's not that strong, the light.
 7 Q. You've explained that the firefighter was using the
 8 torch --
 9 A. Yes.
 10 Q. -- and standing by the stairwell door.
 11 A. Yes.
 12 Q. If you stand up, are you able to indicate where the
 13 firefighter was when you went through the door?
 14 A. Okay. This is the stairs. It was right in the corner
 15 of where the fire exit is on the corner, there, the
 16 corner. When you go to the stairs, it was right on the
 17 corner, right side (Indicates).
 18 Q. Was he in the stairwell itself or still in the lobby
 19 area?
 20 A. No, no, no, he was in the lobby behind us.
 21 Q. So he was in the lobby area just by the door?
 22 A. Yes, by the door. I'm not sure if he hold the door or
 23 not.
 24 Q. Do you see where it says "Steps up" on the image? That
 25 would be in the stairwell. So I think the door into the

Page 94

1 stairwell, although it's not marked as a door, is to the
 2 left of that.
 3 A. Yes. Yes, right in the corner, right the corner of the
 4 end of the lobby.
 5 Q. But still --
 6 A. If that is clear.
 7 Q. But he hadn't got into the stairwell at all?
 8 A. No, no, no, he was behind us. As far as I remember,
 9 yes.
 10 Q. If we could put the red dot at the end of the wall
 11 that's ... if we move the red dot to the left, please.
 12 Keep moving it. Keep moving. Pause there. If we drop
 13 a little bit.
 14 That's where the stairwell door would be.
 15 Do you remember seeing the firefighter in that area?
 16 A. Yes. What I tried to say, what I remember, he was
 17 behind in my right side of the -- where I was.
 18 Q. So as you went through the stairwell door, you had
 19 a sense of the firefighter being behind you and on your
 20 right side?
 21 A. Yes, that's the position when he shows the torch.
 22 Q. In making your way from your door to that stairwell
 23 door, forget about the torch, but what was the
 24 visibility like in the lobby area as you went from your
 25 front door to the stairwell door?

Page 95

1 A. I don't remember any visibility. We were just walking
 2 by using his flat[sic] because he was torching it from
 3 behind once we left the flat.
 4 Q. You've described how you came down the stairs. Just so
 5 that I can be clear, was there a point when you came
 6 down from the 18th floor where the smoke on the
 7 stairwell became more dense?
 8 A. Yes, I remember, yes. That's why I take off the wet
 9 towel from my son and put it in my side, because when
 10 I found it hard to breathe, I use the towel. So, yes.
 11 Q. Can you remember how far down you'd gone when there was
 12 any light in the stairwell?
 13 A. I saw the light in the very bottom.
 14 Q. At the very bottom, did you say?
 15 A. Yes, where I get the fresh air.
 16 Q. Can I take you, please, to paragraph 46 in your
 17 statement, page 13, please.
 18 How you begin that paragraph, Mr Tekle, is:
 19 "46. We went out of the Tower to the ambulance."
 20 Just so that we can understand what happened after
 21 you left the tower, did you receive medical treatment
 22 straight away?
 23 A. Yes, the emergency service was there. They were
 24 checking my son, and after that they see us and they
 25 gave us oxygen.

Page 96

24 (Pages 93 to 96)

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| <p>1 They gave us a number for my son. They say they 2 prioritise -- they see his condition, and they 3 prioritise, was like a priority, less priority, depend 4 on the seriousness of his -- so I remember the number 5 was 3. So I don't know that number is priority 3, 1 or 6 2, but the number was 3. I hold it in my hand at that 7 time. 8 So the treatment to get is how we're sure and get 9 a small oxygen which we breathe. 10 Q. You've explained how you came -- 11 A. And the water, yes. 12 Q. I'm sorry to interrupt. Would you like to finish your 13 answer? 14 A. No, I've finished, yes. 15 Q. You've explained your descent down the stairwell. 16 What was the physical effect on you when you came 17 out of the tower? How were you feeling? 18 A. Once I get down to the very bottom, right behind me, 19 Genet, which -- I couldn't stand on the mezzanine floor, 20 so even I can't handle [redacted] because of the back, 21 the pain on the back. So I gave her to help me, and 22 I stand up holding the handrail, and, like, lying to the 23 lobby handrail is like that (Indicates) and I've been 24 there rest. 25 But everyone was surprised that we manage -- I was</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 97</p> | <p>1 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: All right? 2 THE WITNESS: Okay. 3 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: So would you like to go with the 4 usher, and we'll come back at 1.05 and see whether there 5 are more questions for you. 6 THE WITNESS: Okay. 7 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Thank you very much. 8 Right, Mr Rawat, see if you can get us back by 1.05. 9 (1.02 pm) 10 (A short break) 11 (1.05 pm) 12 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: I think Mr Rawat has one more 13 question for you, possibly more. 14 Yes, Mr Rawat. 15 THE WITNESS: Okay. 16 MR RAWAT: Thank you, Mr Chairman. 17 Mr Tekle, before I deal with the final question or 18 two, can I thank you for the patient way in which you've 19 answered my questions today. We've gone through a great 20 deal of detail and you've been very careful about giving 21 your evidence. 22 At the beginning, when I first started asking 23 questions, I explained to you that my questions were 24 going to focus on what you yourself saw and heard, and 25 it is very important that we do make sure that we have</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 99</p> |
| <p>1 not been broken. They would say to me I'm lucky, they 2 said, because of coming down, slide all the way down. 3 But that's all, really. 4 Q. Mr Tekle, in your statement -- and it begins from 5 paragraph 46 -- you set out the steps that you took 6 immediately to find your son Isaac after you escaped 7 from the tower. 8 A. Yes. 9 MR RAWAT: And, indeed, in the hours and days that followed. 10 I mean no disrespect to you or to your family when 11 I say that I don't have any questions for you about that 12 aspect of your evidence and of your statement. 13 At the moment I have no further questions to ask 14 you. There may be other questions that others ask me to 15 put to you, but I'll need to pause in order for that to 16 happen. 17 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Well, Mr Tekle, that's almost the 18 end of your evidence. I think you would probably prefer 19 to finish it now before we break for lunch, wouldn't 20 you? 21 So we're going to have a short break now of only 22 5 minutes so that Mr Rawat and others can just think 23 about whether there are any other questions they need to 24 ask you. 25 THE WITNESS: Yes, okay.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 98</p> | <p>1 got all your evidence as to what you saw and heard on 2 the night of the fire. 3 I'm not, in asking the next question, inviting you 4 to make comments on other people's evidence, and I'm not 5 inviting you to make criticisms of other individuals. 6 That would be unfair. But I want to make sure that 7 anything important that you saw and heard on the night 8 is given in evidence. 9 So if we put to one side your statement, and the 10 answers that you have given today, my question is this: 11 Is there anything else that you saw or heard on the 12 night of the fire that you think it's important to tell 13 the chairman? 14 A. First, when we get down, Genet spoke to the police 15 officer. Actually, he told us as well that he was 16 missing, but there was misunderstanding. But if that 17 police officer could tell the firefighter, because they 18 would not listen us that he was missing, I think there 19 may be more chance to get him, either alive or not 20 alive. And there was not anyone ask us what was 21 happening on the ground. 22 And another thing, I have something which I'm going 23 to read. It's very difficult, but I have to. 24 I must live with the image and thought of my little 25 boy left alone on stairs of horror all night. But our</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 100</p> |

25 (Pages 97 to 100)

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| <p>1 nightmare doesn't end there. Our little boy was 2 trampled. This is very painful, to sit here and telling 3 you that. I have to, because I need you to please feel 4 and hear why. 5 I have been let down by London Fire Brigade. My son 6 would have been alive today if we had been allowed to 7 leave earlier, when they came and telling us to stay, 8 which they tell the other flat, living one floor above 9 us, 19th floor, around the same time, they've been 10 carried and rescued -- which I'm pleased, but I'm asking 11 myself: why not us? 12 The other, most importantly, which I'm very angry, 13 last week I manage to get, through the inquiry, the man 14 who hold my son's statement. I don't understand why the 15 firemen, they prioritised the man holding my child, 16 an adult, over my son, Isaac. If they had held my son's 17 hand, I truly believe he would have been alive today. 18 What is shocking me, the man who hold my son, he'd 19 been helped all the way from top to bottom, and here in 20 his statement, I found it hard to say that he's been 21 holding in one hand the fireman, another hand my son, 22 and he slipped there. 23 Why that fireman didn't hold my son's hand? It's 24 very hard to wait all this long to listen this. 25 So this is what happened.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 101</p> | <p>1 at 2.15. 2 MR RAWAT: Thank you. 3 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: 2.15, please. 4 (1.15 pm) 5 (The short adjournment) 6 (2.15 pm) 7 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Good afternoon, ladies and 8 gentlemen. 9 As you will by now have realised, I have directed 10 that the next witness should give her evidence from 11 behind the screen, so I'm afraid you will simply have 12 a view of the screen as far as she is concerned. 13 Yes, Mr Millett. 14 MR MILLETT: Mr Chairman, good afternoon. 15 I now call our next witness, Ms Rabia Yahya, who is 16 already in place. 17 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes, thank you. 18 RABIA YAHYA (sworn) 19 Questions by COUNSEL TO THE INQUIRY 20 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Thank you very much. 21 Yes, Mr Millett. 22 MR MILLETT: Ms Yahya, good afternoon. 23 A. Hi. 24 Q. I hope you can hear me. 25 A. Yes.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 103</p> |
| <p>1 So I don't know what the London Fire Brigade said, 2 but I'm very angry, and I've been let down at all times, 3 except that Essex fireman. 4 Thank you. 5 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Mr Tekle, I can understand your 6 anger, and you've had a terrible experience, you and 7 Genet. I'm sorry that we've had to ask you to come and 8 talk about it again today. 9 But I want you to know that your evidence is very 10 helpful to us, and so although it's painful for you, it 11 is, as I say, of great value to the inquiry. 12 Can I say on my own behalf, and I suspect on behalf 13 of everyone else here, how sorry we are about the 14 terrible loss of your son Isaac, and offer you and Genet 15 our condolences, as far as that can be of any help at 16 all. 17 Thank you very much for coming. 18 THE WITNESS: Okay, thank you. 19 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Now you are free to go if you want 20 to. 21 THE WITNESS: Okay. 22 (The witness withdrew) 23 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Right, Mr Rawat. Well, that's -- 24 MR RAWAT: A full morning. 25 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: A full morning and we'll sit again</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 102</p> | <p>1 Q. Can I say, first of all, thank you very much for coming 2 to the inquiry and giving us your assistance in our 3 investigations. It is very much appreciated. 4 Can I start by asking you, first of all, for your 5 full name. 6 A. It's Rabia Yahya. 7 Q. I know that some of my questions may be difficult for 8 you to answer, bringing back that heartbreaking and 9 terrible night for you, so if you need a break at any 10 time, all you have to do is indicate and we can take 11 a break, and we will take measures to take a break. 12 What we're going to try to do is to sit to take 13 evidence for 45 minutes or so and then take a 15-minute 14 break -- 15 A. Okay. 16 Q. -- so as to give you a break and to give an opportunity 17 for people to leave the room and then come back into the 18 room so as to preserve the arrangements that we have in 19 place. 20 A. Okay. 21 Q. I should just also say, my questions are supposed to be 22 short and simple; sometimes they don't turn out that 23 way, so if you want me to repeat the question or ask it 24 in a different way, I'm very happy to do that. 25 A. Okay.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 104</p> |

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| <p>1 Q. I should just also say that sometimes when you're</p> <p>2 answering, I'm looking at the screen or at my notes.</p> <p>3 That doesn't mean I'm not listening to you; I am very</p> <p>4 much.</p> <p>5 Thank you very much.</p> <p>6 You've done, I think, two witness statements for the</p> <p>7 inquiry.</p> <p>8 A. Yes.</p> <p>9 Q. Can I just show you the first one, please, and read that</p> <p>10 into the record. That's IWS00000498.</p> <p>11 It will appear on the screen in front of you on your</p> <p>12 desk there.</p> <p>13 A. Yes.</p> <p>14 Q. Is this the first page of your first statement that</p> <p>15 you've made for the inquiry?</p> <p>16 A. Yes.</p> <p>17 Q. Can I then ask you, please, to look at the last page of</p> <p>18 that statement, which is page 9.</p> <p>19 You can see that that bears a date of 16 May 2018</p> <p>20 and there's a signature there.</p> <p>21 Can you confirm that that's your signature?</p> <p>22 A. Yes, I can, yes.</p> <p>23 Q. Have you had an opportunity to read this statement</p> <p>24 recently?</p> <p>25 A. Yes.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 105</p> | <p>1 which is at page 8.</p> <p>2 If we just turn that up, can you just identify that</p> <p>3 for us. That is a floor plan of your flat, flat 152, on</p> <p>4 the 18th floor of Grenfell Tower, as it existed as at</p> <p>5 the night of the fire, I think; is that right?</p> <p>6 A. Yes. Yeah.</p> <p>7 Q. Now, Ms Yahya, I'm going to ask you -- sorry, do you</p> <p>8 want to have a closer look at it?</p> <p>9 A. No, that's fine.</p> <p>10 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: You look slightly puzzled.</p> <p>11 A. No, no, no, it's fine. I thought that said "Bedroom"</p> <p>12 when it says "Bathroom", sorry.</p> <p>13 MR MILLETT: I want to ask you first, if I may, some</p> <p>14 questions of background.</p> <p>15 It's right, I think, that in June 2017 you lived at</p> <p>16 flat 152, Grenfell Tower, on the 18th floor.</p> <p>17 A. Yes.</p> <p>18 Q. I think you'd previously lived in flat 45 on the</p> <p>19 4th floor of Grenfell Tower.</p> <p>20 A. Yes, I did, yes.</p> <p>21 Q. How long did you live in flat 45 for?</p> <p>22 A. I think my mum and dad moved in when I was I think one,</p> <p>23 and they moved out when I was about 12.</p> <p>24 Q. Did you live with your parents all that time?</p> <p>25 A. Yes, all that time, yes.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 107</p> |
| <p>1 Q. And can you confirm that the contents are true?</p> <p>2 A. Yes.</p> <p>3 Q. Thank you.</p> <p>4 You've made a supplementary statement as well, and</p> <p>5 the reference to that is IWS00001144.</p> <p>6 Can I ask you to look at the first page of that,</p> <p>7 please, that's now on the screen.</p> <p>8 It consists of seven pages and there's a signature</p> <p>9 and a date, I think, on each page. It's dated</p> <p>10 18 October 2018.</p> <p>11 Can you please look at page 7, which is the last</p> <p>12 page.</p> <p>13 A. Yes.</p> <p>14 Q. There's a signature there. Can you confirm that that's</p> <p>15 your signature?</p> <p>16 A. Yes, it is.</p> <p>17 Q. Thank you.</p> <p>18 Have you had an opportunity to read this</p> <p>19 supplementary statement recently?</p> <p>20 A. Yes, I have.</p> <p>21 Q. Can you confirm that the contents are true?</p> <p>22 A. Yes.</p> <p>23 Q. Thank you.</p> <p>24 I think you've got one exhibit to this statement,</p> <p>25 which is labelled appendix 1, and that's IWS00001144,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 106</p> | <p>1 Q. Do you remember when you moved back into Grenfell Tower</p> <p>2 and moved to flat 152?</p> <p>3 A. Yes, yes, I moved in -- my daughter was just turning</p> <p>4 two, so it's about 2008, I'd say.</p> <p>5 Q. At that stage, who did you live with?</p> <p>6 A. At that time when I moved to Grenfell Tower, it was me,</p> <p>7 my husband and my little girl at that time, she was two.</p> <p>8 Q. Right. Then you had more children after that?</p> <p>9 A. Yes.</p> <p>10 Q. And they lived with you --</p> <p>11 A. Yes.</p> <p>12 Q. -- at flat 152?</p> <p>13 A. Yes.</p> <p>14 Q. I think you mention in your statement having a lot of</p> <p>15 family living close by.</p> <p>16 A. Yes.</p> <p>17 Q. Is that your mother and father?</p> <p>18 A. Yes. When they moved from Grenfell, they moved to</p> <p>19 Barandon Walk, which is very local still.</p> <p>20 Q. Were they living at Barandon Walk at the time of the</p> <p>21 fire?</p> <p>22 A. Yes.</p> <p>23 Q. Before I turn to the events of the night of the fire,</p> <p>24 I want to ask you one or two questions about the</p> <p>25 refurbishment.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 108</p> |

27 (Pages 105 to 108)

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| <p>1 A. Okay.</p> <p>2 Q. At paragraph 10 of your statement, page 3, if you can</p> <p>3 please be shown that, you describe there the change to</p> <p>4 your front door that was made during the refurbishment.</p> <p>5 A. Yes.</p> <p>6 Q. And you say:</p> <p>7 "The new front door looked better than the old one,</p> <p>8 and had a pump inside it which made it feel heavier</p> <p>9 because it gave the door resistance when you opened it.</p> <p>10 The door closed automatically at first, and had a letter</p> <p>11 flap and a peephole. It was draughty, and I don't</p> <p>12 remember there having been a draught seal."</p> <p>13 A. Yes.</p> <p>14 Q. "Unfortunately, the new door soon broke. It came off</p> <p>15 its hinges and jammed so we couldn't close it."</p> <p>16 First of all -- and I'll continue with the rest of</p> <p>17 that paragraph in a moment -- when you changed the front</p> <p>18 door, were you asked to change it by anybody?</p> <p>19 A. They said they were changing the whole building's front</p> <p>20 doors.</p> <p>21 Q. Who is the "they"?</p> <p>22 A. TMO.</p> <p>23 Q. So did you get a choice?</p> <p>24 A. No, it was inevitable that everyone was changing their</p> <p>25 door, so we was told we need to change our door to make</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 109</p> | <p>1 Rydon, but no one ever came to fix it. Instead, Bellal</p> <p>2 had to take out the pole from the centre of the door</p> <p>3 which makes it a fire door."</p> <p>4 First of all, Bellal is your husband?</p> <p>5 A. Yes.</p> <p>6 Q. Were you there when your husband removed the pole?</p> <p>7 A. Yes.</p> <p>8 Q. Do you remember what he did?</p> <p>9 A. Because the door wouldn't -- after a while, it got</p> <p>10 worse. The door wouldn't allow us to close it, so it</p> <p>11 had to stay ajar. So when we needed to go out or close</p> <p>12 the door behind us, there was a pole that was in between</p> <p>13 the doors, in between the -- and he had -- I don't know</p> <p>14 how to explain it.</p> <p>15 There was something in between the door hinges and</p> <p>16 he had to remove it. It was like a long pole.</p> <p>17 Q. I see. Did the pole go from the doorjamb?</p> <p>18 A. In between the door.</p> <p>19 Q. In between the door and the --</p> <p>20 A. Yes.</p> <p>21 Q. So the inner edge of the door --</p> <p>22 A. Yes exactly.</p> <p>23 Q. -- and the doorjamb, the side of the doorway?</p> <p>24 A. Exactly, yes.</p> <p>25 Q. It went from one to the other?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 111</p> |
| <p>1 it fire safety doors.</p> <p>2 Q. Did the TMO tell you that the doors were going to be</p> <p>3 fire safety doors?</p> <p>4 A. Yes.</p> <p>5 Q. Do you remember whether, after the door was fitted,</p> <p>6 there were any gaps around the door?</p> <p>7 A. I don't remember.</p> <p>8 Q. You say it was draughty.</p> <p>9 A. Yes, but that was more from the -- I felt the draught</p> <p>10 was coming more from the bottom, because we had --</p> <p>11 I don't know how to explain it. There was meant to be</p> <p>12 a flap at the bottom of the door so it wouldn't let the</p> <p>13 draught in, but our one wasn't -- they were meant to</p> <p>14 come back to fix it and they didn't.</p> <p>15 Q. Does that mean that there was still a draught coming in,</p> <p>16 or a draught that could come in, as at the night of the</p> <p>17 fire?</p> <p>18 A. Yes.</p> <p>19 Q. You also say that the door started off being</p> <p>20 self-closing but then broke. How long after the door</p> <p>21 was installed did the door break?</p> <p>22 A. No more than two or three months.</p> <p>23 Q. You go on to say, five lines up from the bottom of</p> <p>24 paragraph 10:</p> <p>25 "We reported this to the TMO and to a woman from</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 110</p> | <p>1 A. Yes.</p> <p>2 Q. That broke, did it?</p> <p>3 A. Yeah, that broke, so he had to pull it out.</p> <p>4 Q. Because it had broken and then jammed.</p> <p>5 A. Yes.</p> <p>6 Q. Did you tell the TMO that your husband had removed the</p> <p>7 door-closer?</p> <p>8 A. I told them, yes.</p> <p>9 Q. Do you remember when you told them?</p> <p>10 A. I don't remember when.</p> <p>11 Q. What did they say?</p> <p>12 A. They said they were going to send someone to come and</p> <p>13 fix it.</p> <p>14 Q. Did they?</p> <p>15 A. No.</p> <p>16 Q. Were you ever told by the TMO that it was important for</p> <p>17 fire safety that the door should be a self-closing door?</p> <p>18 A. No.</p> <p>19 Q. As at the night of the fire, was it a self-closing door?</p> <p>20 A. No.</p> <p>21 Q. Do you know whether any of your neighbours on your</p> <p>22 floor, or in fact anywhere else in the building, had</p> <p>23 doors which didn't automatically close by themselves?</p> <p>24 A. I'm not sure, no.</p> <p>25 Q. In June 2017, your flat was on the 18th floor.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 112</p> |

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| <p>1 I think it's right that the floor numbering changed</p> <p>2 during or after the refurbishment.</p> <p>3 A. Yes.</p> <p>4 Q. Is that right?</p> <p>5 A. Yes, it did.</p> <p>6 Q. I think before the refurbishment your flat was on the</p> <p>7 15th floor.</p> <p>8 A. 15th floor, yes.</p> <p>9 Q. You say that at paragraph 3 of your statement.</p> <p>10 Can I ask you this: when the floor numbering was</p> <p>11 changed, were the changes in the lobbies marked up on</p> <p>12 each floor?</p> <p>13 A. Not that I remember, no.</p> <p>14 Q. Right.</p> <p>15 Can I ask you to look at paragraph 11 of your</p> <p>16 statement. You say -- this is page 3:</p> <p>17 "11. When they renumbered the floors during the</p> <p>18 refurbishment, the new signs for each floor in the</p> <p>19 stairwell were not easy to read; they weren't even</p> <p>20 proper signs, the numbers were just stencilled onto the</p> <p>21 walls."</p> <p>22 Can you describe how big these stencilled figures</p> <p>23 were in centimetres?</p> <p>24 A. I would say about 10 centimetres.</p> <p>25 Q. Were they easy to read? Were they easily visible?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 113</p> | <p>1 Then you go on to say the handles didn't work properly,</p> <p>2 and you explain that, and you go on also to say, a few</p> <p>3 lines on from that:</p> <p>4 "The kitchen windows were very draughty, and the</p> <p>5 windows in the sitting room were a bit draughty as</p> <p>6 well."</p> <p>7 Can you see where you said that in your statement?</p> <p>8 A. Yes.</p> <p>9 Q. Can I ask, first of all, for you to be shown the floor</p> <p>10 plan of your flat, which is IWS00001144 at page 8, which</p> <p>11 you've exhibited to your second statement. We looked at</p> <p>12 it a little bit before.</p> <p>13 A. Yes.</p> <p>14 Q. Can you point out on this plan, because I know you're</p> <p>15 familiar with this, which windows you experienced</p> <p>16 draughts from?</p> <p>17 A. The kitchen window. We had a problem with the kitchen</p> <p>18 window. Two of the living room windows that are --</p> <p>19 yeah, where the -- the ones that are closest together,</p> <p>20 the two windows that are closest together.</p> <p>21 Q. So the ones on the left of the diagram?</p> <p>22 A. In the corners, yes. In the corner.</p> <p>23 Q. Oh, I see. So the ones at the top left and to the right</p> <p>24 of the corner on the left?</p> <p>25 A. Yes, that's one.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 115</p> |
| <p>1 A. Because it was more just hand-drawn, it wasn't like</p> <p>2 proper stencilled, it was just sort of like as if you</p> <p>3 were doing graffiti with a spray, ink spray.</p> <p>4 Q. So did the sizes of the numbers vary --</p> <p>5 A. Yes.</p> <p>6 Q. -- from floor to floor?</p> <p>7 A. It was handwritten, so it wouldn't have been exactly the</p> <p>8 same.</p> <p>9 Q. During your time at Grenfell Tower after the</p> <p>10 refurbishment, did you get a good chance to go up and</p> <p>11 down the stairs so you could get a good idea of the</p> <p>12 numbering?</p> <p>13 A. Quite a lot, yes.</p> <p>14 Q. Why would that be?</p> <p>15 A. Because the lift was constantly not working.</p> <p>16 Q. At paragraph 13 of your statement, you deal with the</p> <p>17 subject of the windows.</p> <p>18 You say:</p> <p>19 "13. During the refurbishment, Rydon replaced the</p> <p>20 windows, but the new windows gave trouble almost</p> <p>21 immediately."</p> <p>22 First of all, can I ask, were all the windows in</p> <p>23 your flat replaced?</p> <p>24 A. Yes.</p> <p>25 Q. You say you experienced problems almost immediately.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 114</p> | <p>1 Q. Yes.</p> <p>2 A. And then it's -- no, no, the other side.</p> <p>3 Q. Right.</p> <p>4 A. Yes.</p> <p>5 Q. So, for the transcript, that's the north-west corner of</p> <p>6 the building, the window to the immediate south of the</p> <p>7 north-west corner and the window to the immediate east</p> <p>8 of the north-west corner.</p> <p>9 A. Yes.</p> <p>10 Q. Of those windows, which was the most draughty?</p> <p>11 A. I'd say the kitchen.</p> <p>12 Q. Do you remember where the draught was coming in from?</p> <p>13 A. It was coming from the frame but also had a problem with</p> <p>14 the extractor fan that was on the window.</p> <p>15 Q. Okay.</p> <p>16 A. Because that was broken, so the draught would come in</p> <p>17 through there.</p> <p>18 Q. Focusing on the frame, and just focusing on the kitchen</p> <p>19 window, whereabouts was the draught coming from around</p> <p>20 the frame?</p> <p>21 A. To be honest, I can't remember, but I just remember</p> <p>22 there being a problem.</p> <p>23 Q. What about the living room windows? Do you remember</p> <p>24 where the draught was coming from with those?</p> <p>25 A. The bottom, I'd say, because we used to always put</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 116</p> |

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| <p>1 towels at the bottom of it so we could keep the room</p> <p>2 warm.</p> <p>3 Q. You say at the bottom. Was that on --</p> <p>4 A. The bottom of the window frame.</p> <p>5 Q. I think each window after the refurbishment had</p> <p>6 a windowsill.</p> <p>7 A. Yes.</p> <p>8 Q. A white, plasticity windowsill.</p> <p>9 A. Yes.</p> <p>10 Q. Did you put the towels on there or underneath that?</p> <p>11 A. Yes, on that, like I said, to block the draught coming</p> <p>12 from --</p> <p>13 Q. Did that help?</p> <p>14 A. It did, but it wasn't a practical --</p> <p>15 Q. No. But just to get an idea of where the air was coming</p> <p>16 in from, that would help us identify the place where the</p> <p>17 air was coming in.</p> <p>18 A. Yes.</p> <p>19 Q. What about other windows in the flat, the bedrooms, were</p> <p>20 they draughty?</p> <p>21 A. Not that I recall, no.</p> <p>22 Q. Did you report this draught problem with the windows to</p> <p>23 the TMO?</p> <p>24 A. Yes, I reported it to TMO, and also while the Rydon</p> <p>25 contractors were still on site, I spoke to them and told</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 117</p> | <p>1 A. I don't remember what it's called, I don't --</p> <p>2 Q. What did it look like?</p> <p>3 A. Erm ...</p> <p>4 Q. Perhaps I should just ask you: did you see them at work</p> <p>5 trying to seal your windows up?</p> <p>6 A. Yes, I was in and out the room, yes.</p> <p>7 Q. Do you remember what they were using?</p> <p>8 A. It was like a little gun thing and sort of to seal</p> <p>9 around. They use it for -- I don't know what it's</p> <p>10 called.</p> <p>11 Q. That's all right.</p> <p>12 How long after they'd done their work did whatever</p> <p>13 they put in peel off?</p> <p>14 A. Within a week.</p> <p>15 Q. Did you go back to Rydon or TMO and --</p> <p>16 A. Spoke to -- yeah, spoke to Rydon again on site to see if</p> <p>17 they can -- and, again, they said they were going to</p> <p>18 send someone and that never happened after that.</p> <p>19 Q. You've discussed the handles as well. Did those ever</p> <p>20 get fixed?</p> <p>21 A. No. The handles was always a problem from the</p> <p>22 beginning. It wouldn't lock properly and I was worried</p> <p>23 about the kids and stuff, because it didn't close</p> <p>24 properly with the handle. So it didn't firmly go all</p> <p>25 the way. It would always just stop halfway as you tried</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 119</p> |
| <p>1 them as well.</p> <p>2 Q. While they were still on site?</p> <p>3 A. Yes.</p> <p>4 Q. Was that towards the end of the refurbishment or earlier</p> <p>5 than that?</p> <p>6 A. I'd say probably -- they were still there for a while</p> <p>7 longer, so I would say probably still in the middle of</p> <p>8 the refurb.</p> <p>9 Q. First of all, what did the TMO do about the draughty</p> <p>10 windows?</p> <p>11 A. They said they'd make a note of it and send someone from</p> <p>12 Rydon who should deal with it.</p> <p>13 Q. And did they?</p> <p>14 A. They didn't, no.</p> <p>15 Q. Secondly, what did Rydon do about it?</p> <p>16 A. Rydon came the first time, came and said they were going</p> <p>17 to -- they tried to seal it. Then they said they were</p> <p>18 going to come and change the extractor fan for us in the</p> <p>19 kitchen. They didn't do that.</p> <p>20 Q. So just going back to trying to seal it, did Rydon</p> <p>21 succeed in sealing the gaps?</p> <p>22 A. No, because it peeled straight off.</p> <p>23 Q. What did? What peeled?</p> <p>24 A. What they sealed it with.</p> <p>25 Q. Do you remember what they sealed it with?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 118</p> | <p>1 to close it.</p> <p>2 Q. The extractor fan, you said it broke. What happened to</p> <p>3 it, do you remember?</p> <p>4 A. I can't remember what happened to it, no.</p> <p>5 Q. Did it come out of its mounting or did it just not</p> <p>6 function?</p> <p>7 A. It wasn't functioning from the beginning. It didn't</p> <p>8 ever function for us. And it sort of did sort of come</p> <p>9 out of its place and I pushed it back in, but it was</p> <p>10 loose. Where it was meant to stay, it was loose.</p> <p>11 Q. So was there air coming through the circular gap --</p> <p>12 A. Yes.</p> <p>13 Q. -- or the gap where it's supposed to be?</p> <p>14 A. Yes.</p> <p>15 Q. It was like that on the night of the fire, was it?</p> <p>16 A. Yes.</p> <p>17 Q. The draughts that you've explained in your statement and</p> <p>18 have told us about this afternoon, were they there as at</p> <p>19 the night of the fire as well?</p> <p>20 A. Because it was a summer day, I didn't notice, to be</p> <p>21 honest, much of a draught.</p> <p>22 Q. But in terms of the gaps that you had felt, I think what</p> <p>23 you're telling us is they hadn't been effectively fixed</p> <p>24 before the night of the fire?</p> <p>25 A. No, it wasn't fixed, no.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 120</p> |

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| <p>1 Q. Okay.</p> <p>2 Just going back a little bit in your statement, if</p> <p>3 I can, to page 2, please, Ms Yahya, you say at</p> <p>4 paragraph 7 at the bottom of that page:</p> <p>5 "7. I do not remember being given any fire advice</p> <p>6 when we signed our tenancy agreement or when we first</p> <p>7 moved in."</p> <p>8 When you say "when we first moved in", was that</p> <p>9 a reference to when you moved into flat 45 or when you</p> <p>10 moved to flat 152 --</p> <p>11 A. When I moved to flat 152. I was a child when I was in</p> <p>12 45, so I wouldn't remember.</p> <p>13 Q. This is 2008, then?</p> <p>14 A. Yes.</p> <p>15 Q. So what about later than 2008, were you ever given any</p> <p>16 fire safety advice after 2008?</p> <p>17 A. No.</p> <p>18 Q. Can I ask that the witness please be shown INQ00000093.</p> <p>19 This is a fire safety notice from floor 3, which is</p> <p>20 a photograph taken by the inquiry's experts.</p> <p>21 Have you ever seen this sign before?</p> <p>22 A. Yes, I have.</p> <p>23 Q. Where did you see it?</p> <p>24 A. At the bottom of the lobby, just before you go into the</p> <p>25 lifts.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 121</p> | <p>1 Q. In the event of?</p> <p>2 A. In the event of a fire.</p> <p>3 Q. Apart from this notice, were you aware of any</p> <p>4 information from any organisation or any individual</p> <p>5 person about what you should do if there was a fire in</p> <p>6 the block?</p> <p>7 A. No.</p> <p>8 Q. So this was it, was it?</p> <p>9 A. Yes, this is the only information we had.</p> <p>10 Q. At paragraph 8 of your statement on the next page,</p> <p>11 page 3, you say -- this is your first statement:</p> <p>12 "8. I thought we had a fire alarm in the lobby on</p> <p>13 our floor, for the whole floor, but on the night of the</p> <p>14 fire I didn't hear it go off."</p> <p>15 Did anybody tell you that there was a fire alarm in</p> <p>16 your lobby?</p> <p>17 A. No, I just remember seeing it.</p> <p>18 Q. Can you describe what you saw that you thought was</p> <p>19 a fire alarm?</p> <p>20 A. I saw something on top of the ceiling, just sort of</p> <p>21 hanging down, and it was sort of caged, so I think they</p> <p>22 were worried about if someone hits it or knocks it over,</p> <p>23 takes the battery out. So it had sort of like a cage on</p> <p>24 it. It was boxed.</p> <p>25 Q. I'm going to show you a picture, and this is the first</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 123</p> |
| <p>1 Q. So the bottom of the lobby on the ground floor of the</p> <p>2 tower?</p> <p>3 A. On the ground floor, yes.</p> <p>4 Q. Did you see it anywhere else in the building?</p> <p>5 A. I only ever think I saw it there.</p> <p>6 Q. Not on your own floor?</p> <p>7 A. I don't remember seeing it.</p> <p>8 Q. Do you remember seeing it on any other floor in the</p> <p>9 tower apart from the ground floor?</p> <p>10 A. No, I only remember seeing it on the ground floor.</p> <p>11 Q. I know this is a difficult question, perhaps, because</p> <p>12 timings are difficult, but how long before the fire</p> <p>13 in June 2017 do you remember seeing the sign?</p> <p>14 A. Not long, maybe about a few weeks before.</p> <p>15 Q. Did you notice it suddenly appearing or is it something</p> <p>16 you've always been aware was there?</p> <p>17 A. No, I've always been aware of it, because you know when</p> <p>18 you're standing waiting for the lift, your eye wanders</p> <p>19 and you start reading to waste time.</p> <p>20 Q. That leads to this question: did you, when your eye</p> <p>21 wandered onto it, actually ever read it?</p> <p>22 A. Yes.</p> <p>23 Q. In general terms, what was the take-away message you got</p> <p>24 from this sign? What did you think it was telling you?</p> <p>25 A. To stay put.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 122</p> | <p>1 proper picture of inside the tower. Is that okay? Are</p> <p>2 you all right to be shown photographs of inside the</p> <p>3 tower?</p> <p>4 A. Yes.</p> <p>5 Q. There is no fire in it or anything like that.</p> <p>6 A. Okay.</p> <p>7 Q. This is BLA00002513.</p> <p>8 That is a photograph taken from floor 6. Are you</p> <p>9 able to identify in that photograph what you are</p> <p>10 referring to as the fire alarm cage or --</p> <p>11 A. It doesn't look caged there. It's exposed there, so</p> <p>12 it's not -- it's just the round thing in the middle.</p> <p>13 Q. The round thing in the middle of what?</p> <p>14 A. In the middle of the -- just between the two lifts</p> <p>15 there's that round, circular --</p> <p>16 Q. On the ceiling?</p> <p>17 A. On the ceiling, yes.</p> <p>18 Q. That's what you thought was the communal fire alarm?</p> <p>19 A. Yes.</p> <p>20 Q. Did anybody ever tell you what that actually was?</p> <p>21 A. No.</p> <p>22 Q. So it was your assumption that it was a fire alarm?</p> <p>23 A. Yes.</p> <p>24 Q. Paragraph 9, same page, page 3, is where you say this:</p> <p>25 "9. Ironically, the day before the fire, someone</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 124</p> |

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| <p>1 from the London Fire Brigade came to check our flat. He</p> <p>2 checked the battery on the smoke alarms, checked that</p> <p>3 the alarms worked and asked me to sign a paper and that</p> <p>4 was it. When I asked him why he was there he said it</p> <p>5 was part of a routine check for the whole building."</p> <p>6 Did he confirm to you that the smoke alarms in your</p> <p>7 flat were working?</p> <p>8 A. Yes.</p> <p>9 Q. Did he give you any advice about what to do in the event</p> <p>10 of a fire?</p> <p>11 A. No.</p> <p>12 Q. Did you discuss communal fire alarms?</p> <p>13 A. No.</p> <p>14 Q. Do you remember before the refurbishment, and in fact</p> <p>15 going back to 2008 when you moved back into</p> <p>16 Grenfell Tower and went to flat 152, whether there was</p> <p>17 a communal fire alarm in the building at that point?</p> <p>18 A. Yes.</p> <p>19 Q. There was?</p> <p>20 A. That's the one that -- sort of similar to the one that</p> <p>21 you just showed me.</p> <p>22 Q. Did you ever hear it go off?</p> <p>23 A. No.</p> <p>24 Q. Okay.</p> <p>25 A. Not on our floor.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 125</p> | <p>1 closest to the living room or the one furthest away?</p> <p>2 A. The one that's furthest away.</p> <p>3 Q. So nearest the front door?</p> <p>4 A. Front door, yes.</p> <p>5 Q. You say you heard commotion outside your block; do you</p> <p>6 remember where it was coming from?</p> <p>7 A. It was coming from near the front of the building.</p> <p>8 Q. Could you describe the commotion?</p> <p>9 A. There was talking, and I heard a fire truck.</p> <p>10 Q. What, the siren?</p> <p>11 A. No, not the siren, just them -- I don't know -- just the</p> <p>12 noise of the fire truck as he's driving into the road.</p> <p>13 Q. Right.</p> <p>14 A. On our road.</p> <p>15 Q. Could you hear voices?</p> <p>16 A. I could hear voices, yes. Yes, I heard voices.</p> <p>17 Q. Do you remember which window you looked out of?</p> <p>18 A. Oh, I got up and walked to the kitchen window.</p> <p>19 Q. Which is on the west side of the building?</p> <p>20 A. Yes.</p> <p>21 Q. The sunset side, if you like.</p> <p>22 A. Yes.</p> <p>23 Q. Why didn't you look out of your bedroom window?</p> <p>24 A. I don't know, because I had the bed sort of blocking it,</p> <p>25 so I went to the other side.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 127</p> |
| <p>1 Q. Right.</p> <p>2 I am now going to turn to the night of the fire,</p> <p>3 Ms Yahya, if I may, and start with some general</p> <p>4 questions.</p> <p>5 First, who was present in your flat on that night?</p> <p>6 A. Me and my three kids.</p> <p>7 Q. At paragraph 17 of your statement, if you go to page 5,</p> <p>8 you explain what happens in the evening. You say you</p> <p>9 were out during the day, came home around 6.00 or 7.00</p> <p>10 and didn't leave the flat again. Your husband wasn't</p> <p>11 home.</p> <p>12 Then you say:</p> <p>13 "At about 1 a.m. on the morning of 14 June 2017</p> <p>14 I heard commotion outside our block so I went to the</p> <p>15 window to see what was going on."</p> <p>16 How do you remember that it was about 1.00 am?</p> <p>17 A. Because I picked up my phone to look at it to see what</p> <p>18 time it was.</p> <p>19 Q. Were you asleep at that stage or were you still awake?</p> <p>20 A. I probably just started to doze off.</p> <p>21 Q. What about your children?</p> <p>22 A. They were all in bed, sleeping.</p> <p>23 Q. In another room or in the same room?</p> <p>24 A. Next door.</p> <p>25 Q. Just so I am clear, which is your bedroom, is it the one</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 126</p> | <p>1 Q. Was the kitchen window open?</p> <p>2 A. Yes.</p> <p>3 Q. Were any other windows in your flat open, do you</p> <p>4 remember?</p> <p>5 A. Not that I remember.</p> <p>6 Q. Okay.</p> <p>7 A. My bedroom window was opened.</p> <p>8 Q. Do you remember noticing any signs of smoke or fire at</p> <p>9 that stage?</p> <p>10 A. No.</p> <p>11 Q. In your statement, halfway down paragraph 17, you say:</p> <p>12 "When I looked out I could see one fire truck but</p> <p>13 I couldn't see any fire."</p> <p>14 So you're looking out of your kitchen window; in</p> <p>15 which direction did you look to see the fire truck?</p> <p>16 A. As you look from the kitchen window, you can actually</p> <p>17 see that whole road, the whole of the Grenfell Road, and</p> <p>18 it leads all the way underneath Grenfell Tower itself.</p> <p>19 Q. So you could see the walkway, as it were, and underneath</p> <p>20 it?</p> <p>21 A. Yes.</p> <p>22 Q. Could you see what was going on?</p> <p>23 A. Like I said, I only saw the fire truck and obviously</p> <p>24 people were outside.</p> <p>25 Q. Then you go on to say:</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 128</p> |

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| <p>1 "I called 999 straightaway to find out if there was 2 an emergency." 3 We've actually got your first 999 call transcript, 4 which carries a time of 01.33.55. 5 I am going to come back to the detail of that in 6 a minute, but just in terms of timing, are you sure that 7 you called 999 straight away or was there a period of 8 delay before you did, or a period of time that passed 9 before you called 999? 10 A. My recollection is that I had a call before. 11 Q. What, to London Fire Brigade? 12 A. Yes. 13 Q. Do you remember what happened on that call? You say you 14 called to find out if there was an emergency, and you 15 say in your statement: 16 "They informed me that there was a fire on the 17 4th floor but that it was under control and we should 18 stay inside our flat." 19 A. Yes. 20 Q. How confident are you that that is what you remember of 21 your first call? 22 A. I'm pretty confident that I had a phone call before 23 01.30. 24 Q. Okay. Well, we'll come back to look at the detail of 25 the call that we do have a record for in a moment.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 129</p> | <p>1 out into the communal lobby? 2 A. I can't remember but -- I can't remember. 3 Q. Okay. 4 On page 5 of your statement, a little bit lower 5 down, paragraph 18, you say: 6 "18. About 20 minutes later I looked outside my 7 kitchen window and I could see smoke lower down." 8 20 minutes later than what? 9 A. After waking up the kids, I think. 10 Q. You say you looked out of your kitchen window and you 11 could see smoke lower down. 12 A. Yes. 13 Q. Could you see where the smoke was coming from? 14 A. I couldn't see, it's just I knew it was lower down, 15 I couldn't see where. 16 Q. Your kitchen I think I said earlier faces west; I think 17 actually it faces east, doesn't it, the sunrise side? 18 A. I'm not sure. 19 Q. Okay. 20 You've described the smoke in your statement as grey 21 rather than black. Do you remember how thick it was 22 when you saw it first? 23 A. When I first started seeing smoke, it wasn't that thick, 24 no. It was just early stages, I would say. 25 Q. Did it have a particular smell?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 131</p> |
| <p>1 Before we do, you describe, I think, waking up your 2 children at this point because you wanted them to be 3 alert in case you needed to evacuate quickly. That's 4 what you say in your statement there. 5 A. Yes. 6 Q. Was it in your mind that you might need to evacuate 7 quickly? 8 A. Yes. 9 Q. Was that in your mind before you made the 999 call or 10 after you made the 999 call? 11 A. After I made the 999 call. 12 Q. So even though you were told that you should stay inside 13 your flat, you still thought you might need to evacuate 14 quickly? 15 A. Yes, because I heard more Fire Brigade coming, so I knew 16 it wasn't -- I wasn't convinced that it was just a small 17 thing because other fire trucks kept coming. 18 Q. You say they kept coming; could you see them coming? 19 A. Yes. 20 Q. You describe waking up your children and getting them 21 ready to leave. Did you do that before your first 999 22 call, or after? 23 A. That's the thing, I remember doing that afterwards. 24 Q. Afterwards, okay. 25 Did you at this point open your front door and look</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 130</p> | <p>1 A. It smelt of burnt plastic, I remember that smell. 2 Q. Did it have any particular physical effect on you? 3 A. It made me cough, it made me wheeze, because I've got 4 asthma. 5 Q. Right. You've got asthma, do you? 6 A. Yes. So I did come in the house from looking outside 7 the window, come in and coughing. 8 Q. Can I just ask you -- if you don't want to answer this, 9 you don't have to answer this -- because of your asthma, 10 are you particularly sensitive to dust or smoke? 11 A. Yes, I have a lot of triggers that trigger my asthma, 12 yes. 13 Q. Could you see any fire at that point? 14 A. No. 15 Q. Do you remember what the London Fire Brigade were doing 16 at that point? 17 A. I couldn't see clearly enough to see. I just remember 18 there was a whole lot of them coming in and out their 19 trucks. 20 Q. At paragraph 20 of your statement, you say that your 21 neighbour in flat 156: 22 "... Shah, chair of the leaseholder association, 23 knocked on our door ..." 24 This is the bottom of page 5. 25 A. Yes.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 132</p> |

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| <p>1 Q. "... and told me that he and his wife were leaving and 2 that I should take the children and get out too." 3 When you refer to Shah, is that Shahid Ahmed? 4 A. Yes. I didn't know his name. 5 Q. He's from flat 156? 6 A. Yes. 7 Q. I wonder if you can help me just clear something up 8 about that conversation? 9 Can I ask you to be shown your supplemental 10 statement, and go, please, to paragraph 5. You say in 11 that paragraph: 12 "5. After that call [that's the first 999 call that 13 you're referring to at paragraph 4 of that statement] I 14 woke the kids and told them to get dressed in case we 15 had to leave the building. My children were awake and 16 dressed when Shah and his wife knocked on our door. 17 They both looked alarmed. It was Shah's wife who spoke 18 with me." 19 And that's, I think, Sayeda. 20 A. Okay, yes. 21 Q. That's her name, isn't it? 22 A. Yes. 23 Q. Do you remember who you actually spoke to, whether it 24 was Shah or Sayeda, at that stage? 25 A. In my head, I spoke to Sayeda. That's how I remember</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 133</p> | <p>1 A. No. 2 Q. And no signs of fire either? 3 A. No fire, no smoke, no. 4 Q. When they knocked on the door, did you see any signs of 5 smoke in the communal lobby? 6 A. The only little bit of smoke that was coming through is 7 from the stairs, the fire exit door. 8 Q. At that point, do you remember whether you heard the 9 sound of the smoke extraction system or the ventilation 10 system running? 11 A. No. 12 Q. You don't? 13 A. No. 14 Q. How thick was the smoke in the communal lobby at the 15 moment when you opened the door to Shah and Sayeda? 16 A. It wasn't bad. It wasn't bad. 17 Q. Not bad? 18 A. No. 19 Q. Do you think -- 20 A. The lights were still on, you know, we spoke for 21 a few minutes, and ... 22 Q. Did it have any physical effect on you, even though it 23 wasn't bad? 24 A. The thing is, I wouldn't know because I was coughing 25 before that, so ...</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 135</p> |
| <p>1 it, speaking to her. 2 Q. So when you go back to paragraph 20 of your statement, 3 and you see you say there that Shah knocked on your door 4 and told you that he and his wife were leaving, and that 5 you should take the children and get out too, is that 6 Shah speaking or is that Sayeda speaking? 7 A. No, that's Sayeda speaking. 8 Q. Was Shah there as well? 9 A. He was with her, yes, he was near the fire exit door. 10 So he was there. 11 Q. Okay. 12 You then describe the conversation, both in the 13 statement and in your second statement. 14 Did either Shah or Sayeda tell you why they were 15 leaving? 16 A. From what I remember, they said the fire's spread up. 17 That's the only thing I remember. 18 Q. Did you consider going with them? 19 A. I couldn't go with them. I knew I couldn't because 20 I had three kids. I was worried. 21 Q. So did you -- 22 A. I didn't know whether it was safe for us to stay or 23 to -- I didn't know what was on the stairs. 24 Q. At the time they knocked on your door, were there any 25 signs of smoke in your flat?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 134</p> | <p>1 Q. Did it smell the same as the smoke you'd smelt coming 2 from outside? 3 A. The smoke smelt stronger. 4 Q. We know that Shahid and Sayeda Ahmed left the building 5 at about 1.32 am because that's what the CCTV has 6 showed, and if we look at paragraph 3 of your second 7 statement -- IWS00001144, page 2 -- you say in the 8 last-but-one sentence, after referring to them leaving 9 the tower at approximately 1.32: 10 "... so my first 999 call would have been before 11 then. I remember that when I made my first 999 call on 12 14 June 2017, my children were still asleep." 13 A. Yes. 14 Q. I just want to look at the 999 call with you to see if 15 we can sort out a potential timing issue. 16 It's LFB00000662. 17 This is a transcript of the call, and you can see at 18 the top of the page there's a line of numbers next to 19 the word "Event", and the second number in from the 20 right is 013355, and that's the time at which the call 21 started. It lasts 1 minute and 21 seconds. 22 It starts by saying: 23 "OPERATOR: Hello, Fire Brigade. 24 "CALLER: Yeah, all right. There's a fire in my 25 building and -</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 136</p> |

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| <p>1 "OPERATOR: What road - what building are you in? 2 "CALLER: Grenfell Tower. 3 "OPERATOR: Grenfell Tower, okay. We are there, 4 we're dealing with it, okay? D... - 5 "CALLER: I'm scared and I've got three young kids 6 and I'm pregnant, I don't know what to do. 7 "OPERATOR: No. Can you get to a window, get some 8 fresh air?" 9 And it continues over the page. 10 On what I've shown you so far, does this ring a bell 11 with you as being your first call? 12 A. No, I think I had before this another phone call. 13 Q. So if there was a call before this, you would think this 14 is your second call? 15 A. Yes, this would be my second one. 16 Q. You then go on to say to the control room operator on 17 page 2, halfway down: 18 "CALLER: Are we safe? 19 "OPERATOR: I, I obviously can't, erm, I don't, I 20 don't know, I mean, if, if you can get to the window and 21 get some air. 22 "CALLER: There's no smoke in my house yet but - 23 "OPERATOR: There's no smoke in your house yet? 24 "CALLER: No, but I tried to get out to go through 25 the fire escape and there's just thick black smoke."</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 137</p> | <p>1 black smoke on the call, are you telling the operator 2 that it's in the stairwell? 3 A. Yes, I think so, yes. 4 Q. What about the lobby itself, at that stage, was there 5 smoke in the lobby? 6 A. It was only coming from the stairwell if the door was 7 open. 8 Q. When you saw the thick black smoke in the stairwell, do 9 you remember where you were standing? 10 A. Outside of my front door. 11 Q. How far outside your front door? 12 A. Because like I said, between my front door and the fire 13 exit to the stairwell, it's a very short distance, so 14 I was probably standing halfway between my front door 15 and the stairwell. So I would say it's a metre between 16 my front door and -- 17 Q. Did you get a good look into the stairwell? 18 A. Yes. 19 Q. So this call at 01.33 must have been after you'd seen 20 the thick black smoke in the stairwell. 21 A. Yes, that's why I said I knew there's another one, 22 another phone call which I made to 999, because this was 23 after my kids woke up, after the neighbour knocked on 24 the door. 25 Q. Yes. Indeed, in paragraph 3 of your second statement,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 139</p> |
| <p>1 Just pausing there, do you remember telling the 2 operator that you tried to get out through the fire 3 escape? 4 A. I don't remember. It's only now, through the 5 transcript, that I know I said it. 6 Q. Had you actually tried to get out of your flat and cross 7 the lobby to get to the stairs at that stage? 8 A. I must have done, but I just don't remember. 9 Q. When you refer to thick black smoke, where was that? 10 A. It would be in the stairwell. 11 Q. Let's just try and piece that together. 12 At paragraph 7 of your second statement -- so we're 13 still within your second statement, IWS00001142, 14 page 3 -- you're dealing with the transcript of this 15 call, and you say, a third of the way down: 16 "I believe I said that there was black smoke in the 17 fire escape because at some point when I was speaking 18 with Shah's wife, Shah was standing in the doorway to 19 the stairwell, holding the door to the stairwell open. 20 The doorway to the stairwell is only a couple of metres 21 from my front door. I was standing on my doorstep 22 speaking with Shah's wife and I faintly remember looking 23 past Shah, into the stairwell and seeing thick, black 24 smoke in the stairwell." 25 So that being your recollection, when you say thick</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 138</p> | <p>1 you do say that no record seems to have been identified 2 of your 999 calls prior to Shah knocking on your door, 3 but you recall at least one. 4 A. Yes. 5 MR MILLETT: Mr Chairman, we've been going for I think just 6 a little bit over 45 minutes. 7 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes. 8 MR MILLETT: It might be now -- 9 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Is this a convenient point? 10 MR MILLETT: It is convenient certainly from my point of 11 view, and I hope for the witness as well. 12 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Would you like a break now, do you 13 think? 14 THE WITNESS: Yes, I don't mind. 15 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: All right. We'll stop now. We'll 16 resume at 3.20. Is that about right, Mr Millett? 17 MR MILLETT: Yes, indeed, it is. To give time for people 18 to -- 19 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: The ushers will give you directions 20 in a minute. 21 All right, 3.20, please. 22 MR MILLETT: Mr Chairman, I ought to explain what should 23 happen. We have to clear the room. 24 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: I thought that had been explained, 25 but perhaps not.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 140</p> |

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| <p>1 MR MILLETT: I don't think it has been explained.</p> <p>2 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Oh, I'm sorry, I need to explain.</p> <p>3 Because the witness is giving evidence from behind</p> <p>4 a screen, I'm afraid we've got to adopt some slightly</p> <p>5 different arrangements now for having our short break.</p> <p>6 I'm going to ask everyone to leave the room as quickly</p> <p>7 as possible, please, after I've got out, and when the</p> <p>8 witness has got back in the room after our break, then</p> <p>9 to come back in as quickly as possible. All right?</p> <p>10 I'll now make way for the rest of you. Thank you.</p> <p>11 (3.07 pm)</p> <p>12 (A short break)</p> <p>13 (3.20 pm)</p> <p>14 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: All right? Ready to carry on?</p> <p>15 THE WITNESS: Yes.</p> <p>16 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Thank you very much.</p> <p>17 Yes, Mr Millett.</p> <p>18 MR MILLETT: Ms Yahya, thank you very much for coming back</p> <p>19 to us.</p> <p>20 Can I just go back to the question of your first 999</p> <p>21 call.</p> <p>22 When you made your first 999 call, do you remember</p> <p>23 whether the person you spoke to identified themselves?</p> <p>24 A. No, not that I remember, no.</p> <p>25 Q. They didn't say "London Fire Brigade" or something like</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 141</p> | <p>1 A. I was told to stay, I'm safer inside my flat.</p> <p>2 Q. You've told us about the first 999 call where you were</p> <p>3 told to stay put and we've seen some of the transcript</p> <p>4 for the second 999 call, the one at 01.33.</p> <p>5 A. Mm.</p> <p>6 Q. 01.33.55.</p> <p>7 Can I just take you back to that again. Its</p> <p>8 LFB00000662 at page 2.</p> <p>9 At the bottom of that page you can see that the</p> <p>10 operator says:</p> <p>11 "OPERATOR: Is that the - so if you can stay in your</p> <p>12 flat and block it up, okay? Just try to keep calm and</p> <p>13 get some fresh air by the window.</p> <p>14 "CALLER: Okay.</p> <p>15 "OPERATOR: Yes? And what floor are you on?</p> <p>16 "CALLER: I'm on the 18th. Please send someone.</p> <p>17 "OPERATOR: Okay. I'll let them know you're there,</p> <p>18 okay?</p> <p>19 "CALLER: All right, okay.</p> <p>20 "OPERATOR: All right, thank you, bye."</p> <p>21 What did you think you were supposed to do as</p> <p>22 a result of that call?</p> <p>23 A. To wait and someone would come.</p> <p>24 Q. What influence did the advice you received on that call</p> <p>25 I've just shown you from the operator have on what you</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 143</p> |
| <p>1 that?</p> <p>2 A. It was just the operator, as far as I know.</p> <p>3 Q. Do you remember whether the operator was like</p> <p>4 a telephone operator or a Fire Brigade operator?</p> <p>5 A. I'm not sure.</p> <p>6 Q. After Shahid and Sayeda Ahmed left from your front door,</p> <p>7 what did you do next?</p> <p>8 A. I got the kids. We all went back into our living room.</p> <p>9 We were sitting there, and that's when obviously the</p> <p>10 whole family -- phone calls were coming in. I was</p> <p>11 getting phone calls from outside, people from the</p> <p>12 outside.</p> <p>13 Q. I think they told you -- you say this at paragraph 19 of</p> <p>14 your first statement -- that the police were evacuating</p> <p>15 Barandon Walk. Do you remember that?</p> <p>16 A. Yes, because I spoke to my mum and she told me. So she</p> <p>17 was evacuated and, yes, I remember speaking to her.</p> <p>18 Q. Did your mum or other family members give you any advice</p> <p>19 about what you should do?</p> <p>20 A. They were all just shouting to get out.</p> <p>21 Q. Shouting to get out?</p> <p>22 A. Yes.</p> <p>23 Q. What was your response to that?</p> <p>24 A. I think I just told them that I was told to stay.</p> <p>25 Q. Right.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 142</p> | <p>1 did next?</p> <p>2 A. It had a lot because I stayed. I did what they said and</p> <p>3 stayed.</p> <p>4 Q. When your family phoned, I think you said that you told</p> <p>5 them that you'd been told to stay by 999.</p> <p>6 A. Yes.</p> <p>7 Q. To be clear, is that right?</p> <p>8 A. Yes.</p> <p>9 Q. Going back to your first witness statement at page 6,</p> <p>10 you say:</p> <p>11 "21. At about 2 a.m. two fire fighters, one male</p> <p>12 and one female, knocked on our door. They were wearing</p> <p>13 breathing apparatus sets. They came inside as soon as</p> <p>14 I opened the door and told me to hurry up and shut the</p> <p>15 door quickly, as by this time there was dark, thick</p> <p>16 smoke in the 18th floor lobby."</p> <p>17 A. Yes.</p> <p>18 Q. Then you go on to describe how they came into the flat</p> <p>19 and took off their helmets, asked if you were okay,</p> <p>20 asked how many of you there were.</p> <p>21 A. Yes.</p> <p>22 Q. Just taking this in stages, first of all, do you</p> <p>23 remember why they told you to hurry?</p> <p>24 A. Because the smoke was going to come into my flat.</p> <p>25 Q. Did you get a good look at the smoke when you opened the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 144</p> |

1 door to them?

2 **A. Yes.**

3 Q. Can you describe it for us?

4 **A. It was black. You couldn't see beyond anything.**

5 Q. Right. Could you see any lights out in the lobby?

6 **A. No, there was no lights. Lights had gone off by then.**

7 Q. You say the lights had gone off?

8 **A. Yes, because prior to that, when the neighbour knocked**

9 **on my door, the lights were still on.**

10 Q. Could you tell whether the lights had gone off or the

11 smoke was so thick that you just couldn't see the

12 lights?

13 **A. It could be. I don't know.**

14 Q. Do you remember smelling the smoke?

15 **A. Yes.**

16 Q. Could you describe the smell for us?

17 **A. It was bad. It was very thick and it smelt more -- the**

18 **smell of strong burning plastic was more -- I don't**

19 **know, yes.**

20 Q. Did it have any physical effect on you?

21 **A. Yes, it made me cough. My coughing just got worse.**

22 Q. Okay. Any other effects?

23 **A. My son as well, he was coughing because he's got asthma**

24 **too.**

25 Q. What about your eyes?

Page 145

1 **A. No. They were okay.**

2 Q. Okay.

3 Between the time when Shahid and Sayeda Ahmed left

4 you and these two firefighters arriving, did you look

5 into the communal lobby?

6 **A. I don't think I did, no.**

7 Q. Okay.

8 You've said in your statement that the two

9 firefighters arrived around 2.00 am. How do you recall

10 the time at around 2.00 am?

11 **A. That's only approximately. I wasn't 100 per cent sure.**

12 Q. Okay.

13 **A. But it was a good -- I only guessed it because I knew**

14 **from phone calls I was getting from family. But I would**

15 **say it was a good 20/25 minutes between Sayeda knocking**

16 **on the door to them -- firefighters coming.**

17 Q. How long after the 999 call we've just seen, the one you

18 made at 01.33, do you think those firefighters arrived?

19 **A. I don't know.**

20 Q. Okay.

21 **A. I'm not sure.**

22 Q. When the two firefighters knocked on your door, what

23 were the conditions like in your flat?

24 **A. I didn't have smoke yet. From the window you could**

25 **start to see sparks and things -- I don't know, smoke**

Page 146

1 **was getting higher, more visible from the windows.**

2 **Little sparks you could see coming.**

3 Q. Which windows could you see the sparks coming from?

4 **A. More so from the kitchen window.**

5 Q. Any smoke coming in at that stage from that window?

6 **A. Not that I can recall.**

7 Q. And were the sparks coming up or coming down or across?

8 Do you remember which direction they were coming from?

9 **A. At that time, I wouldn't be able to guess which way they**

10 **were coming, I couldn't remember.**

11 Q. Do you remember how long these two firefighters stayed

12 in your flat for?

13 **A. No more than 5 minutes.**

14 Q. How far into the flat did they come?

15 **A. They came all the way into the living room.**

16 Q. Did they sit down?

17 **A. No.**

18 Q. Okay.

19 **A. They just stood up.**

20 Q. You say in your statement at paragraph 21 they asked if

21 you were okay and they asked how many of you there were.

22 What did you tell them?

23 **A. I told them there's one adult, three kids and I also**

24 **told them that I was pregnant.**

25 Q. You did tell them that you were pregnant?

Page 147

1 **A. Yes.**

2 Q. Where were your children at that stage?

3 **A. They were with me.**

4 Q. You then say in the middle of that same paragraph:

5 "They said they were going to check on the

6 neighbours on our floor and that they would get us all

7 out together."

8 **A. Yes.**

9 Q. Did they say if they would get you out personally or

10 that some other firefighters in general would be coming

11 up to get you?

12 **A. They just said that they were going to knock on the**

13 **neighbours' door and we'll get you all out together.**

14 **They didn't emphasise whether it would be them or**

15 **someone else, they just said, "We'll get you all out**

16 **together".**

17 Q. Did they explain to you how --

18 **A. But I presumed it was them.**

19 Q. Did they explain to you how they were going to get you

20 out?

21 **A. No.**

22 Q. Did you have a conversation with them about how you were

23 going to get down the stairwell?

24 **A. No.**

25 Q. Did they explain to you the conditions in the stairs?

Page 148

37 (Pages 145 to 148)

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| <p>1 A. No.</p> <p>2 Q. You then say they were there for 5 minutes and you</p> <p>3 packed some things up. At the end of that paragraph you</p> <p>4 say:</p> <p>5 "Then we waited. But I never saw those or any other</p> <p>6 fire fighters again on our floor after that point."</p> <p>7 A. Yes, that's true.</p> <p>8 Q. How long after they left did you realise that they</p> <p>9 weren't going to be coming back, or might not be coming</p> <p>10 back?</p> <p>11 A. The thing is with that, I stayed in that flat after that</p> <p>12 another 10 minutes after that, and I was sort of --</p> <p>13 I wasn't going to wait for them because I was forced to</p> <p>14 leave because fire came into my kitchen.</p> <p>15 Q. Yes. Okay. I'll come back to that in a moment.</p> <p>16 Before I do, Firefighter Lawson says that he and</p> <p>17 a female firefighter did come back again and told you</p> <p>18 that people were coming for you. That's his evidence in</p> <p>19 his witness statement.</p> <p>20 Can you comment on that?</p> <p>21 A. He's lying. He didn't say that.</p> <p>22 Q. He didn't say that?</p> <p>23 A. He didn't come back again.</p> <p>24 Q. All right. Well, you say he's lying; in his oral</p> <p>25 evidence, when he gave evidence to the inquiry, he did</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 149</p> | <p>1 very -- it's just small.</p> <p>2 Q. Had you ever experienced that lack of water pressure</p> <p>3 from that shower before?</p> <p>4 A. No.</p> <p>5 Q. Did you try any of the other taps in the flat?</p> <p>6 A. Yes, it's the same.</p> <p>7 Q. At paragraph 22 of your statement, you say:</p> <p>8 "22. At around about 2.40 a.m. sparks from the</p> <p>9 cladding started to fall onto our window ledges which</p> <p>10 led to the fire spreading into our home very quickly.</p> <p>11 The flames came in through the kitchen window. There</p> <p>12 had been no smoke in the flat before this point. The</p> <p>13 flat had started feel warm but I hadn't thought much of</p> <p>14 it."</p> <p>15 Just in terms of the timing, in your supplemental</p> <p>16 statement, you say that you believe that it was around</p> <p>17 02.30 that you first saw the sparks.</p> <p>18 I can show you that, if you like. It's page 4 at</p> <p>19 paragraph 10 of that statement.</p> <p>20 You do this based on the transcripts of the calls.</p> <p>21 A. Yes.</p> <p>22 Q. We can look at the second or third, perhaps, of those</p> <p>23 calls in a moment, but you think it was around 02.30</p> <p>24 that you first saw sparks coming into your flat?</p> <p>25 A. Approximately, yes, yes.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 151</p> |
| <p>1 say that he wasn't sure if he went back to your flat.</p> <p>2 A. Because he didn't come.</p> <p>3 Q. But as a matter of your recollection, you say he didn't</p> <p>4 come?</p> <p>5 A. 100 per cent, he didn't come back.</p> <p>6 Q. Okay.</p> <p>7 At paragraph 21, you also say that these</p> <p>8 firefighters when they visited your flat told you to put</p> <p>9 damp blankets under the front door?</p> <p>10 A. Yes.</p> <p>11 Q. Did you do that after they left?</p> <p>12 A. Yes.</p> <p>13 Q. Did you wet the blankets before you did that?</p> <p>14 A. It wasn't soaked because we had minimal water pressure</p> <p>15 coming up, so it was very hard to wet a whole blanket.</p> <p>16 Q. Okay. I was going to ask you about that.</p> <p>17 In which room did you try to wet your blankets, was</p> <p>18 it the bathroom or the kitchen?</p> <p>19 A. The bathroom.</p> <p>20 Q. Was it the sink or the shower?</p> <p>21 A. Shower.</p> <p>22 Q. When you say minimal water pressure, what happened when</p> <p>23 you turned the tap?</p> <p>24 A. Water was coming out but ever so very small amounts. It</p> <p>25 wasn't powerful. It had no pressure. It was just</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 150</p> | <p>1 Q. Is the correction that you made in your supplemental</p> <p>2 statement because you'd seen the transcript of that</p> <p>3 call?</p> <p>4 A. Yes, exactly, yes.</p> <p>5 Q. Okay.</p> <p>6 Let's look at that call. If we go straight to it,</p> <p>7 it's LFB00000365.</p> <p>8 It's timed, as you can see from the number on the</p> <p>9 right-hand side of the blue part, at 02.34.42, so</p> <p>10 an hour or so after the last call you made.</p> <p>11 So if we look at the transcript of that, you say:</p> <p>12 "CALLER: Hello. Please, just -- the fire's in my</p> <p>13 building, and it's come to my floor now. You said it's</p> <p>14 on the fourth floor. My floor is on fire."</p> <p>15 You go on to say:</p> <p>16 "CALLER: I'm on the 18th floor."</p> <p>17 Then having got through the information about floors</p> <p>18 and flat number, at the bottom of page 2, you say:</p> <p>19 "CALLER: 153 now. I came to my neighbour's flat</p> <p>20 because my flat's on fire."</p> <p>21 So in this call you're now in your neighbour's</p> <p>22 house?</p> <p>23 A. Yes.</p> <p>24 Q. Does that establish the earliest time, do you think,</p> <p>25 which we can see you being in your neighbour's flat,</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 152</p> |

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| <p>1 about 02.30?</p> <p>2 A. Yes, I would say so, yes.</p> <p>3 Q. I am going to come back to that in a minute, but before</p> <p>4 I move back to that, can I just ask you some questions</p> <p>5 about your flat being on fire.</p> <p>6 First, how long before you moved to your neighbour's</p> <p>7 flat, flat 153, did you make this call to 999?</p> <p>8 A. Sorry, repeat the question.</p> <p>9 Q. Yes. How long before you made this call to 999 do you</p> <p>10 think you moved to your neighbour's flat?</p> <p>11 A. Within minutes, because I wanted to let them know that,</p> <p>12 you know, because I felt in my head that they were going</p> <p>13 to come back, so they'd need to know where I was. So</p> <p>14 I wanted to let them know that I'm now in flat 153.</p> <p>15 Q. Yes.</p> <p>16 How long before you left your flat to go next door</p> <p>17 to your neighbour's did you first see sparks from the</p> <p>18 cladding landing on your window ledge as you said in</p> <p>19 your first statement at paragraph 22?</p> <p>20 A. As soon as it happened, as soon as it caught fire, the</p> <p>21 window ledge in my kitchen, I got my kids and we just</p> <p>22 went straight.</p> <p>23 Q. Focusing on the moment when you saw the sparks coming</p> <p>24 in, you say it "started to fall onto our window ledges".</p> <p>25 Were those window ledges outside the windows?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 153</p> | <p>1 just seemed like it was just melting, and it just</p> <p>2 come -- it came straight through, whether from the</p> <p>3 window -- it was through all of it.</p> <p>4 Q. Did you see sparks falling from the cladding in any</p> <p>5 other window or through any other window in your flat</p> <p>6 before you left?</p> <p>7 A. No, it was just my kitchen window.</p> <p>8 Q. Where were you standing when you saw the fire coming</p> <p>9 through your kitchen window?</p> <p>10 A. We was all in the sitting room because we have open plan</p> <p>11 kitchen and sitting room, so it's all open. So we was</p> <p>12 in the living room and it was right in front of us.</p> <p>13 Q. Are there sliding doors between --</p> <p>14 A. I didn't have it. I had open plan. There was no</p> <p>15 sliding doors.</p> <p>16 Q. How far did the fire come into your kitchen, do you</p> <p>17 remember, before you left the flat?</p> <p>18 A. After it just took over the whole window ledge from the</p> <p>19 inside, that's when I left.</p> <p>20 Q. You say the whole window ledge.</p> <p>21 A. Yes, from the inside, it just went, and it happened very</p> <p>22 quickly.</p> <p>23 Q. How much of the window was being burnt by fire?</p> <p>24 A. A good 60/70 per cent of it, it was taken.</p> <p>25 Q. Was most of the fire on the bottom or at the top or at</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 155</p> |
| <p>1 A. Outside window ledge, yes.</p> <p>2 Q. Did sparks come into your kitchen?</p> <p>3 A. Yes, it turned into a full-blown fire that came through</p> <p>4 the window into the kitchen.</p> <p>5 Q. Was the kitchen window open?</p> <p>6 A. Not that I remember. But it must have -- I don't know,</p> <p>7 probably was a little bit open because I kept looking in</p> <p>8 and out.</p> <p>9 Q. I was going to say the first time you looked out of the</p> <p>10 building when you woke up, you looked out of the kitchen</p> <p>11 window.</p> <p>12 A. Yes.</p> <p>13 Q. When the fire came through, did you watch the fire come</p> <p>14 in?</p> <p>15 A. Yes, I did, yes. It literally was very quickly that it</p> <p>16 just caught very quickly and it just -- it was literally</p> <p>17 less than a minute from the sparks falling on the window</p> <p>18 ledge from the outside to it actually being inside the</p> <p>19 kitchen. It was within a minute that it happened.</p> <p>20 Q. I know this is, in a sense, asking this question in slow</p> <p>21 motion, but I wonder whether you can remember whether</p> <p>22 you saw the fire only coming in through the open window</p> <p>23 or whether you also might have seen the fire coming</p> <p>24 round the edges?</p> <p>25 A. The whole thing, it was just melting. The whole window</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 154</p> | <p>1 the sides, do you remember?</p> <p>2 A. It was mostly from -- it's from the window frame itself.</p> <p>3 Q. Do you remember what colour the flames were?</p> <p>4 A. Vibrant orange.</p> <p>5 Q. Did you notice any smoke?</p> <p>6 A. By this point there was smoke coming.</p> <p>7 Q. What colour was the smoke?</p> <p>8 A. It was a dark, dark grey, nearly black.</p> <p>9 Q. Did you smell it?</p> <p>10 A. Yes.</p> <p>11 Q. Was the smell similar to or different from the smell</p> <p>12 you'd smelt before?</p> <p>13 A. It was similar.</p> <p>14 Q. Did it have any physical effect on you?</p> <p>15 A. Like I said, it did trigger off my asthma.</p> <p>16 Q. As I've read to you, at the end of paragraph 22, your</p> <p>17 last sentence says:</p> <p>18 "The flat had started feel warm but I hadn't thought</p> <p>19 much of it."</p> <p>20 Did you notice if the warmth was in any particular</p> <p>21 place in your flat?</p> <p>22 A. More like in the kitchen side, which now makes sense</p> <p>23 because the fire was coming from that side of the</p> <p>24 building.</p> <p>25 Q. Before you left your flat, did any smoke alarms go off?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 156</p> |

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| <p>1 A. No.</p> <p>2 Q. We know, because we've seen from the call, and you tell</p> <p>3 us in the next paragraph, that you saw the fire come in</p> <p>4 and you then moved to flat 153.</p> <p>5 A. Yes.</p> <p>6 Q. That's Mr Paulos Tekle's flat, isn't it?</p> <p>7 A. Yes.</p> <p>8 Q. I think in your statement you call him Mr Paulos.</p> <p>9 A. I don't know him other than that, yes.</p> <p>10 Q. Okay.</p> <p>11 Can I just ask you to be shown the plan of the</p> <p>12 floor, which is MET00012593 at page 12.</p> <p>13 I should just explain to you, Ms Yahya, what this</p> <p>14 is. This is a cross-section plan of Grenfell Tower at</p> <p>15 the time of the fire. This is actually the 4th floor,</p> <p>16 but all the floors are the same or substantially similar</p> <p>17 all the way up the building.</p> <p>18 You were in flat 152.</p> <p>19 A. Yes.</p> <p>20 Q. Which is on the bottom-right of the diagram, so</p> <p>21 south-east corner, and 153 is the one next door to the</p> <p>22 left of that, in I suppose brown or grey --</p> <p>23 A. Yes.</p> <p>24 Q. -- on the south-west corner.</p> <p>25 Could you just point out your front door for us</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 157</p> | <p>1 time, when you opened your front door, went out and</p> <p>2 turned left?</p> <p>3 A. It was very bad. You couldn't see anything. You</p> <p>4 couldn't see your hand in front of your face if you put</p> <p>5 it there.</p> <p>6 Q. How did you guide yourself?</p> <p>7 A. The wall, and I'm quite familiar with the building, so</p> <p>8 I knew.</p> <p>9 Q. Why did you decide to go to flat 153?</p> <p>10 A. Because the firefighters that came to the flat before,</p> <p>11 those two that came to my flat, said to me that they</p> <p>12 were going to get my neighbours and get us out together,</p> <p>13 so that stayed in my head. So I thought that if I was</p> <p>14 with my neighbour, they would see and we'll all get out</p> <p>15 together.</p> <p>16 Q. Is there a reason why, instead of going to your</p> <p>17 neighbour's flat in 153, you didn't go into the</p> <p>18 stairwell?</p> <p>19 A. Because I didn't know what was in the stairwell and,</p> <p>20 like I said, the firefighter told me that they are going</p> <p>21 to get us out together. So it made sense to go to my</p> <p>22 neighbour's house where they said they're going to get</p> <p>23 them out too.</p> <p>24 Q. Okay.</p> <p>25 The smoke conditions in the communal lobby during</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 159</p> |
| <p>1 using the little red dot. Let me see if I can lead you</p> <p>2 on this. I think your front door is the opening to the</p> <p>3 left of the room which says "Bathroom"; is that right?</p> <p>4 A. Yes, yes.</p> <p>5 Q. If we could just put the red dot in that opening. No,</p> <p>6 it's flat 2, I am going to point to it. There. No,</p> <p>7 bathroom. To the left of bathroom by the hall. Up</p> <p>8 a bit. Yes.</p> <p>9 That's your front door.</p> <p>10 A. Yes.</p> <p>11 Q. So to get to flat 153, you come out of your front door,</p> <p>12 turn left --</p> <p>13 A. Yes.</p> <p>14 Q. -- and then walk down the passage to the front door,</p> <p>15 which would then be on your left?</p> <p>16 A. Yes.</p> <p>17 Q. How long did that take you?</p> <p>18 A. It didn't -- it was a struggle because the kids were</p> <p>19 with me and they were scared to go, and I needed them to</p> <p>20 trust me, because they thought they were safe. I know</p> <p>21 there was fire inside the kitchen, but they could see</p> <p>22 smoke and they didn't want to go into that. So it was</p> <p>23 a struggle to have to physically pull them to go next</p> <p>24 door.</p> <p>25 Q. What were the smoke conditions like in the lobby at that</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 158</p> | <p>1 your walk to flat 153, were they the same as you'd</p> <p>2 experienced when you'd opened the door to the</p> <p>3 firefighters earlier?</p> <p>4 A. Things progressively got worse.</p> <p>5 Q. Worse?</p> <p>6 A. Yes.</p> <p>7 Q. Did the smoke have a particular smell?</p> <p>8 A. The smell was just stronger. It was just -- everything</p> <p>9 was just worse, the smell, the smoke.</p> <p>10 Q. Could you actually breathe it?</p> <p>11 A. You couldn't, you would choke if you inhaled that.</p> <p>12 Q. Did you have something over your --</p> <p>13 A. I covered the kids before I left. Their faces.</p> <p>14 Q. Right. What about you?</p> <p>15 A. I did have one, I covered my face too.</p> <p>16 Q. With what?</p> <p>17 A. With a wet towel.</p> <p>18 Q. Did that help you breathe?</p> <p>19 A. Yes, it helped.</p> <p>20 Q. Did you notice any particular temperature in the</p> <p>21 communal lobby when you went through it?</p> <p>22 A. Heat, there was a lot of heat.</p> <p>23 Q. Did you notice that it was hotter in the lobby than the</p> <p>24 time when you opened the door to the --</p> <p>25 A. Oh, yes, yes, definitely hotter.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 160</p> |

40 (Pages 157 to 160)

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| <p>1 Q. When you say hotter, I wonder, can you give us 2 a comparison of how hot it was? Summer's day hot or 3 hotter than that? 4 A. It was definitely hotter than a summer's day. It was 5 definitely hotter than a summer's day. 6 Q. Did you knock on the door of flat 153? 7 A. Yes, I did. 8 Q. Or was the door open? 9 A. No, it was closed. I knocked on the door. 10 Q. Who opened the door, do you remember? 11 A. It was Genet. 12 Q. Genet. 13 A. Yes. 14 Q. Do you remember what the conditions were like in the 15 flat when you went in? 16 A. Their flat was smoke-free. There was no smoke. 17 Q. No smoke? 18 A. No. 19 Q. Could you see any fire or sparks when you went in? 20 A. No. 21 Q. Do you remember who was in the flat, flat 153, when you 22 went into it with your children? 23 A. It was Genet with her husband, and there was another man 24 there and two children. 25 Q. Did you know the other man?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 161</p> | <p>1 operator says: 2 "OPERATOR: Right. Okay. What we're advising to do 3 is put some damp towels around yourself -- 4 "CALLER: Yeah? 5 "OPERATOR: -- okay, and then -- 6 "CALLER: Sorry? 7 "OPERATOR: Put some damp towels around yourself and 8 (Overspeaking) 9 "CALLER: I know, but it's a matter of time 10 (Overspeaking) 11 "OPERATOR: (Overspeaking) no, listen, listen, it's 12 -- we're advising you to safely try and get out." 13 And then at the bottom of the page the operator 14 says: 15 "OPERATOR: Right. You need to get some towels and -- 16 damp towels, damp sheets, and make sure it's safe, put 17 them round your mouth so obviously you're not breathing 18 the smoke in, and guide yourself out, and in between 19 time we're going to tell them on the radio what floor 20 you're on." 21 Then there's some discussion about how many there 22 are of you. 23 Then you say towards the bottom of page 4 in 24 response to the operator's question: 25 "OPERATOR: ... So, are you able to get out of the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 163</p> |
| <p>1 A. No, I don't know him. 2 Q. You didn't know that he was the lodger from -- 3 A. I didn't know that until afterwards. 4 Q. Do you remember where the father, Paulos Tekle, was when 5 you went into the flat? 6 A. They were all in the living room. 7 Q. Do you remember whether he was sitting on the ledge of 8 a window when you came in? 9 A. Not when I came in, but then when I was talking to his 10 wife and, you know, told her that my flat's now on fire, 11 he then panicked and went to the window ledge. 12 Q. Did you see what he did? 13 A. Yes, he wanted to jump. 14 Q. Did you talk to him? 15 A. I didn't speak to him, no. 16 Q. Can I take you back to your call that we looked at 17 a minute ago at LFB00000365, which is the call you made 18 at 02.34.42, where you said on the second page at the 19 bottom, "I came to my neighbour's because my flat's on 20 fire." 21 A. Yes. 22 Q. Just to be clear, why did you call 999 after moving into 23 flat 153? 24 A. So that I can inform them where I was. 25 Q. If you look on in the call, the top of page 3, the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 162</p> | <p>1 flat? 2 "CALLER: No, we can't get out of the flat. That's 3 what we're saying. It's thick black smoke. I had to 4 come to my neighbour's house, because it's in my flat 5 now. The fire's in my flat. I had to come to my 6 neighbour's flat; and we struggled, and it's next-door." 7 At that stage in the call, did you get any 8 impression of whether or not the operator was 9 understanding your predicament? 10 A. No, I don't think she understood my predicament. 11 Q. Then we can work our way through the call. After the 12 advice where you were told you must get out and you say 13 "We can't", page 5, you say to the operator, and this is 14 a third of the way down: 15 "CALLER: The fire brigade said he was going to come 16 back to us, and he hasn't. 17 "OPERATOR: Right. So, what I'm going to do is I'm 18 going to tell them, the command unit -- and how are the 19 children -- how many -- how old are the children? 20 "CALLER: They're different ages from 11 -- 21 "OPERATOR: Yeah? 22 "CALLER: -- to the youngest, which is 3. 23 "OPERATOR: Eleven to three years old? 24 "CALLER: Yeah. 25 "OPERATOR: Okay, and there's no way that you can get</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 164</p> |

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| <p>1 out?</p> <p>2 "CALLER: No.</p> <p>3 "OPERATOR: Right, if --</p> <p>4 "CALLER: And I'm pregnant, and, you know ...</p> <p>5 "OPERATOR: Pregnant; okay. Right, I'm just going to</p> <p>6 tell them -- I'm just going to tell the command unit to</p> <p>7 go and check your floor (Overspeaking)."</p> <p>8 Then you say halfway down page 6, in response to her</p> <p>9 advice "if the situation gets worse, then give me a ring</p> <p>10 straight back, okay?":</p> <p>11 "CALLER: It's getting -- it's worse now</p> <p>12 (Overspeaking)</p> <p>13 "OPERATOR: I know it -- I know it's worse. I know</p> <p>14 it's worse. But I'm going to tell them -- as soon as I</p> <p>15 put --</p> <p>16 "CALLER: Okay.</p> <p>17 "OPERATOR: -- the phone down ..."</p> <p>18 And she ends up by saying:</p> <p>19 "OPERATOR: ... I'm going to tell the command unit --</p> <p>20 "CALLER: All right. Okay.</p> <p>21 "OPERATOR: -- down there to come --</p> <p>22 "CALLER: Okay.</p> <p>23 "OPERATOR: -- and -- directly up to you ..."</p> <p>24 I've read you quite a lot of that, giving you the</p> <p>25 impression of the call.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 165</p> | <p>1 "OPERATOR: 153. Okay, and what's going on? Is</p> <p>2 there a fire in your flat?"</p> <p>3 Then at the top of page 3, the caller says:</p> <p>4 "CALLER: The fire is in 152, we're in 153 at the</p> <p>5 moment but could you send someone please?</p> <p>6 "OPERATOR: Okay. So it's in the flat next door is</p> <p>7 it? The fire's in the flat next to you?</p> <p>8 "CALLER: Yes.</p> <p>9 "OPERATOR: Okay. Listen, so is your mum and dad</p> <p>10 there I can speak to or are you the best person to speak</p> <p>11 to you?</p> <p>12 "CALLER: Yeah, here's my mum.</p> <p>13 "OPERATOR: Okay. Hello?</p> <p>14 "CALLER 2: Hello?"</p> <p>15 Is that you, caller 2?</p> <p>16 A. Yes.</p> <p>17 Q. Okay.</p> <p>18 "OPERATOR: Hello, yeah, your daughter told me that</p> <p>19 the fire is in the flat next door, is that right?</p> <p>20 "CALLER 2: Yeah."</p> <p>21 Then it goes on.</p> <p>22 Then over the next page, at the top of the page,</p> <p>23 page 4, the operator says:</p> <p>24 "OPERATOR: Okay. Well listen we're — if the fire's</p> <p>25 in the flat next door you're going to have to leave,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 167</p> |
| <p>1 After that call was over, what did you think you</p> <p>2 were supposed to do?</p> <p>3 A. It was confusing, because from the last bit of that, the</p> <p>4 message I got was that she was going to tell them to</p> <p>5 come up for us.</p> <p>6 Q. What did you think?</p> <p>7 A. That they were going to come up for us.</p> <p>8 Q. That call was at 02.34, as we've seen.</p> <p>9 You then, I think, make another call at 02.48, and</p> <p>10 that's LFB00000384. If we can please have that</p> <p>11 transcript.</p> <p>12 I think this call is either made by you or made by</p> <p>13 a child and then you take the call over. Do you</p> <p>14 remember that?</p> <p>15 A. Yes, briefly, yes.</p> <p>16 Q. Okay.</p> <p>17 Just tracing it through, the original caller says on</p> <p>18 page 2, a quarter of the way down:</p> <p>19 "CALLER: We're in Grenfell Tower, we're on the 18th</p> <p>20 floor and we're stuck in the building and just want</p> <p>21 somebody to help us (inaudible).</p> <p>22 "OPERATOR: What, you're on the 18th floor?</p> <p>23 "CALLER: Pardon?</p> <p>24 "OPERATOR: Did you say you're on the 18th floor?</p> <p>25 "CALLER: Yeah, 18th floor, 153.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 166</p> | <p>1 okay, you're going to have to make your way —</p> <p>2 "CALLER: Where? We're on the 18th floor --</p> <p>3 "OPERATOR: Okay.</p> <p>4 "CALLER 2: -- (inaudible) thick black smoke.</p> <p>5 "OPERATOR: I know. Listen, we're not going to be</p> <p>6 able to get up there to you. You need to leave the flat</p> <p>7 and get out. What — now you need to listen to me very</p> <p>8 carefully. What you need to do, you need to get some</p> <p>9 wet towels and towels, put them around your mouth so you</p> <p>10 won't inhale the smoke and you need to get out, okay?</p> <p>11 Make your way down, don't use the lift, use the</p> <p>12 stairwells, okay, but you need to put wet blankets and</p> <p>13 that around your mouth and the kids as well, okay, and</p> <p>14 make your way downstairs if the fire's in the flat next</p> <p>15 door if that's what's going on, okay? Do you</p> <p>16 understand?"</p> <p>17 That's where the call or the transcript of the call</p> <p>18 terminates.</p> <p>19 At that point, did you have a clear understanding</p> <p>20 about what you had to do?</p> <p>21 A. I didn't know -- I completely forgot about this until</p> <p>22 I read the transcript. I actually didn't remember them</p> <p>23 saying this to me. It's only that I saw it in the</p> <p>24 transcript that I knew it happened.</p> <p>25 Now, like I say, I don't know -- I don't remember</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 168</p> |

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| <p>1 them saying this to me. I didn't reply to them, so</p> <p>2 I don't know whether the information has got to me or</p> <p>3 not. I don't know what happened there.</p> <p>4 Q. Do you remember -- because we know you did leave -- what</p> <p>5 motivated you to make that final decision to evacuate</p> <p>6 the flat?</p> <p>7 A. It was a lot of things. Seeing the kids, seeing them</p> <p>8 watching someone trying to jump out the window and them</p> <p>9 crying and screaming. That kind of did make me want to</p> <p>10 protect them from seeing that.</p> <p>11 Q. Right. Right.</p> <p>12 Do you remember -- maybe you don't -- passing on any</p> <p>13 advice you got from 999 to anybody else in the flat?</p> <p>14 A. Like I said, I don't even remember having this</p> <p>15 conversation with them.</p> <p>16 Q. Do you remember Paulos Tekle making a call to 999 and</p> <p>17 telling the operator that smoke was coming from the</p> <p>18 windows outside?</p> <p>19 A. I don't remember.</p> <p>20 Q. Do you remember seeing smoke coming through the Paulos'</p> <p>21 windows at any stage before you left?</p> <p>22 A. There must have been, yes.</p> <p>23 Q. Did that have an impact on your decision?</p> <p>24 A. Yes, that did as well, because I knew that the fire was</p> <p>25 next door, and I know it was going very quickly and</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 169</p> | <p>1 remember having those thoughts on the night itself?</p> <p>2 A. Like I say, I didn't remember them advising us to leave.</p> <p>3 That was just now, in hindsight, after reading the</p> <p>4 transcript.</p> <p>5 Q. You say in the last sentence of this paragraph:</p> <p>6 "The previous call left us with some hope that</p> <p>7 someone would come for us. This call didn't."</p> <p>8 I know you don't remember the call and were only</p> <p>9 reminded of it by the transcript, but do you remember</p> <p>10 a point when the hope you had had to be rescued went?</p> <p>11 A. I think so. In hindsight, it probably did, yes, because</p> <p>12 it was more of a clearer instruction than false hope.</p> <p>13 Q. Having made the decision to leave, did you have any</p> <p>14 discussion with any of the others in the flat about</p> <p>15 leaving?</p> <p>16 A. I don't remember exactly the discussion, but I think we</p> <p>17 said, "We just need to go, we need to get out". And</p> <p>18 Genet went and got towels from the cupboard to wet them.</p> <p>19 I remember going with her to the kitchen to try to wet</p> <p>20 the towels.</p> <p>21 Q. Right.</p> <p>22 A. To use so she can cover her kids.</p> <p>23 Q. Did she manage to wet the towels?</p> <p>24 A. It was the same water pressure.</p> <p>25 Q. Same problem?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 171</p> |
| <p>1 I knew it was a matter of time before it reaches --</p> <p>2 because we share a wall between us, our bedrooms are</p> <p>3 very close together, so it would be a matter of time</p> <p>4 before the fire comes into next door. That was another</p> <p>5 reason why I left.</p> <p>6 Q. Yes.</p> <p>7 Just going back to this call.</p> <p>8 In your supplemental statement, if you please go to</p> <p>9 paragraph 18, which is on page 6, you say:</p> <p>10 "Having read this transcript."</p> <p>11 I'll wait for that to be shown. It's there on the</p> <p>12 screen, paragraph 18:</p> <p>13 "18. Having read this transcript, I vaguely</p> <p>14 remember this call, and the operator saying that no one</p> <p>15 was going to come and rescue us, but there was so much</p> <p>16 going on — Paulos was threatening to jump out of the</p> <p>17 window, I had the kids. That's probably why I couldn't</p> <p>18 answer after she gave her advice. Or maybe the line</p> <p>19 dropped before I could respond. I do think that being</p> <p>20 told no one was going to rescue us impacted my decision</p> <p>21 to try to get out; that, and Paulos threatening to jump</p> <p>22 out of the window made me feel that we had to leave."</p> <p>23 So just pausing there, is that, what you said in</p> <p>24 your statement there, a result of your thinking about</p> <p>25 the night after having seen the transcript, or do you</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 170</p> | <p>1 A. Yes, it just took long.</p> <p>2 Q. Do you remember hearing or seeing Paulos call 999 and</p> <p>3 get advice about what they should do?</p> <p>4 A. He may have done. I know there was 999 calls being</p> <p>5 made, I just don't remember what he said or what they</p> <p>6 said to him.</p> <p>7 Q. When you left, were you carrying the wet towels or</p> <p>8 blankets that you had wet as best you could with Genet</p> <p>9 in her flat?</p> <p>10 A. For the kids, yes.</p> <p>11 Q. What about you?</p> <p>12 A. I started off with one, but it dropped off.</p> <p>13 Q. At the moment you decided to leave, do you remember what</p> <p>14 the conditions inside the Paulos' flat were like?</p> <p>15 A. It was okay, but the smoke had been starting to seep</p> <p>16 through.</p> <p>17 Q. Do you remember where it was beginning to seep through</p> <p>18 from?</p> <p>19 A. Because we was only in their living room, like we didn't</p> <p>20 go to the bedrooms or anything, we was only in the</p> <p>21 living room. So it was just from the living room</p> <p>22 windows.</p> <p>23 Q. Living room window?</p> <p>24 A. Yes.</p> <p>25 Q. Do you remember which living room window particularly</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 172</p> |

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| <p>1 the smoke was coming in from?</p> <p>2 A. No.</p> <p>3 Q. When you left the flat, do you remember who opened the</p> <p>4 front door?</p> <p>5 A. I think it was the lodger, I think.</p> <p>6 Q. Did you have any discussion about leaving the flat with</p> <p>7 him before you left?</p> <p>8 A. No, but I think they could see us preparing with the</p> <p>9 kids, getting them ready to leave. I didn't speak to</p> <p>10 that man at all.</p> <p>11 Q. So he opened the front door, and who went out of the</p> <p>12 front door first?</p> <p>13 A. I can't remember whether it was him or Paulos. I can't</p> <p>14 remember which one left first. I think it was him but</p> <p>15 then Paulos followed not long after. Then it was Genet,</p> <p>16 and then me and the kids.</p> <p>17 Q. So you went after Paulos and their children?</p> <p>18 A. Yes, because I needed to sort of prep my kids, in</p> <p>19 a sense, not to let go of me, not to -- talk them</p> <p>20 through it.</p> <p>21 Q. Do you remember any discussion about leaving before the</p> <p>22 lodger, Mr Enyew, opened the front door to flat 153?</p> <p>23 A. We must have done. I must have done with Genet and</p> <p>24 said, "Let's go, we'll go together."</p> <p>25 Q. Do you remember seeing a firefighter as you left, either</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 173</p> | <p>1 followed her husband, and then I was ready to leave</p> <p>2 straight after. So we left more or less together.</p> <p>3 I remember seeing her just before we went --</p> <p>4 I remember her talking or seeing her just before we went</p> <p>5 down the stairwell. Then after that, I didn't hear or</p> <p>6 see any of them.</p> <p>7 Q. Who went first into the stairwell? Did she go first or</p> <p>8 did you go first?</p> <p>9 A. I think she went first.</p> <p>10 Q. Did she push the stairwell door herself or did you push</p> <p>11 it for yourself or did you hold it open for her?</p> <p>12 A. I don't remember.</p> <p>13 Q. How did you find your way with your three children to</p> <p>14 the stairwell?</p> <p>15 A. It was very difficult. I think one of them slipped as</p> <p>16 well at the time, trying to find our way through the</p> <p>17 smoke. But like I said, I was quite familiar with the</p> <p>18 building, so I knew roughly where it would be. We sort</p> <p>19 of had to feel our way as well.</p> <p>20 Q. Do you remember, before leaving the flat, whether there</p> <p>21 was any discussion about who should take which of</p> <p>22 Paulos's children?</p> <p>23 A. I vaguely remember the lodger offering to help Genet and</p> <p>24 saying, "Let me help you take one of your sons".</p> <p>25 Q. Right.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 175</p> |
| <p>1 in the doorway of the flat or in the lobby --</p> <p>2 A. There was no firefighter there at all.</p> <p>3 Q. You say that with confidence.</p> <p>4 A. Yes.</p> <p>5 Q. Are you sure about that?</p> <p>6 A. I'm 100 per cent sure, there was no firefighter there at</p> <p>7 all.</p> <p>8 Q. It was dark and smoky, so how do you know?</p> <p>9 A. Because he would've been instructing us.</p> <p>10 Q. Right.</p> <p>11 A. And we was left to our own devices. So if he was there,</p> <p>12 he should -- he would've told us what to do, you know,</p> <p>13 said something.</p> <p>14 Q. Did you hear any voices other than the voices --</p> <p>15 A. No.</p> <p>16 Q. -- of Paulos or --</p> <p>17 A. No.</p> <p>18 Q. -- the lodger?</p> <p>19 Did you see any torches?</p> <p>20 A. No.</p> <p>21 Q. I know it's difficult to get timings right, but how long</p> <p>22 after Paulos and the lodger left the flat did you leave?</p> <p>23 A. Not long, like within minutes.</p> <p>24 Q. Minutes?</p> <p>25 A. Yes, within minutes, because he left and then Genet</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 174</p> | <p>1 Just going back to some evidence you gave a minute</p> <p>2 ago, you say the lodger left, Paulos Tekle left, Genet</p> <p>3 left and then you left, you say, within minutes.</p> <p>4 Just going back to that, I know it's difficult,</p> <p>5 because timings are very difficult, when you say</p> <p>6 within minutes, do you mean within minutes or within</p> <p>7 seconds?</p> <p>8 A. Within seconds, then, yes.</p> <p>9 Q. I don't want to suggest something.</p> <p>10 A. No, no, it makes more sense, within seconds, because</p> <p>11 I didn't stay after them more than 10/15 seconds after</p> <p>12 that, yes.</p> <p>13 Q. Right.</p> <p>14 When you came out into the lobby, were the smoke</p> <p>15 conditions in the lobby the same as you'd experienced</p> <p>16 when you left your flat and went to flat 153?</p> <p>17 A. Yes. Yes, the same.</p> <p>18 Q. What about the temperature?</p> <p>19 A. I think I remember it being overwhelmingly hot -- the</p> <p>20 heat was there.</p> <p>21 Q. Hotter than when you came from your flat to the --</p> <p>22 A. Yes, definitely hotter.</p> <p>23 Q. -- neighbour's? Definitely hotter.</p> <p>24 When you got to the stairwell, were the conditions</p> <p>25 in the stairs, when you first saw them, following Genet,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 176</p> |

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| <p>1 worse than in the lobby that you'd just come through?</p> <p>2 A. I would say it's probably the same, but the smell was</p> <p>3 probably more stronger in the stairwell.</p> <p>4 Q. At paragraph 25 of your first statement, on page 7 --</p> <p>5 that's IWS00000498 -- you say:</p> <p>6 "25. Conditions in the stairwell were even worse</p> <p>7 than in the lobby. There was intense heat that seemed</p> <p>8 to increase as we descended ..."</p> <p>9 You just said to us the smell was more intense.</p> <p>10 A. Yes.</p> <p>11 Q. In terms of smoke thickness, were those conditions in</p> <p>12 the stairwell worse than the lobby?</p> <p>13 A. I think so, yes.</p> <p>14 Q. Okay.</p> <p>15 You say:</p> <p>16 "There was intense heat that seemed to increase as</p> <p>17 we descended ..."</p> <p>18 When you opened the stairwell door into the</p> <p>19 stairwell from the lobby, could you describe whether the</p> <p>20 temperature stayed the same or whether it was</p> <p>21 immediately hotter?</p> <p>22 A. No, there was definitely a temperature difference</p> <p>23 because when you opened the stairwell door -- it was hot</p> <p>24 in the lobby, but from the stairwell it hit you more.</p> <p>25 Q. So just summarising where we've got to, it was hot when</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 177</p> | <p>1 in your eyes.</p> <p>2 Q. Really? Okay?</p> <p>3 A. It was like streaming.</p> <p>4 Q. At that point, when the temperature was at its hottest</p> <p>5 during your descent down the stairs, how would you</p> <p>6 compare it with anything you've experienced before?</p> <p>7 A. I can't because I've never experienced that sort of</p> <p>8 intense heat before.</p> <p>9 Q. So hotter than a summer's day?</p> <p>10 A. Very much hotter.</p> <p>11 Q. Did the heat subside, did it go down, after a particular</p> <p>12 point?</p> <p>13 A. As probably we got to the lower floors, maybe about the</p> <p>14 3rd floor.</p> <p>15 Q. During your descent, could you see any light in the</p> <p>16 stairwell at any point?</p> <p>17 A. No, the only light I saw is from the firemen's helmet,</p> <p>18 a torch, a firefighter's torch on his head.</p> <p>19 Q. Whereabouts on your descent did you see a fireman's</p> <p>20 torch?</p> <p>21 A. That was about the 7th floor.</p> <p>22 Q. That's quite a particular, definite number. How do you</p> <p>23 know or why are you saying 7th floor?</p> <p>24 A. Because my daughter, the whole time we was going down,</p> <p>25 she was very vocal, she kept shouting, "What floor are</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 179</p> |
| <p>1 you left your flat and went to your neighbour's. When</p> <p>2 you came out of your neighbour's, it was definitely</p> <p>3 hotter.</p> <p>4 A. Yes.</p> <p>5 Q. Then you opened the stair door and it's hotter still.</p> <p>6 A. Yes, it got worse, because like I said, the temperature</p> <p>7 difference was worse, because as you opened the door, it</p> <p>8 hit you more, so you could feel it.</p> <p>9 Q. Then you say the heat "seemed to increase as we</p> <p>10 descended".</p> <p>11 Do you remember, first of all, at what point it</p> <p>12 started to decrease? I know it's very difficult, you're</p> <p>13 in the dark and coming down with three children, but do</p> <p>14 you remember even vaguely --</p> <p>15 A. When it decreased?</p> <p>16 Q. Increased.</p> <p>17 A. Oh, increased.</p> <p>18 Q. As you came down, at what point the temperature started</p> <p>19 to climb.</p> <p>20 A. I don't know.</p> <p>21 Q. How long into your descent do you think it was at its</p> <p>22 hottest?</p> <p>23 A. I think it was a few floors lower.</p> <p>24 Q. Did that heat have any effect on you physically?</p> <p>25 A. It did because that's when, you know, you could feel it</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 178</p> | <p>1 we on? What floor are we on?"</p> <p>2 Q. Right.</p> <p>3 A. That's when my son then collapsed on the 7th floor.</p> <p>4 Q. Okay.</p> <p>5 A. Smoke got to him, he was just unconscious, and the</p> <p>6 firefighter was coming out of the 7th floor and he said,</p> <p>7 "You're on the 7th floor, keep going" -- he picked him</p> <p>8 up and he said, "Keep going, you're on the 7th floor,</p> <p>9 keep going."</p> <p>10 Q. Indeed, you say in paragraph 27 of your statement that</p> <p>11 when you got to the 7th floor, your son collapsed.</p> <p>12 Can I just go back to what you said a minute ago</p> <p>13 about your daughter being very vocal and counting out</p> <p>14 the numbers.</p> <p>15 How did she work out which floor you were on so she</p> <p>16 could shout out the numbers?</p> <p>17 A. It wasn't her who was shouting the numbers, she just</p> <p>18 kept saying, "What floor are we on?" It was the</p> <p>19 firefighter who answered her and said "You're on the 7th</p> <p>20 floor, keep going".</p> <p>21 Q. I'm sorry, I may have misunderstood, because you said</p> <p>22 a little earlier the whole time you were going down, she</p> <p>23 was shouting "What floor are we on?"</p> <p>24 A. Nobody answered her because we didn't know.</p> <p>25 Q. Oh, I see. Then you get to the 7th floor and</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 180</p> |

1 a firefighter says 7th?
 2 **A. Yes.**
 3 Q. Did you encounter that firefighter on the 7th floor or
 4 was --
 5 **A. He was coming out of the 7th floor.**
 6 Q. Okay.
 7 **A. He was coming into the stairwell.**
 8 Q. Just going back to the heat question, when you were at
 9 the 7th floor, what was the temperature like there?
 10 **A. Still the same as the heat -- quite intense heat.**
 11 Q. Does that mean still at its hottest or slightly less hot
 12 or more hot?
 13 **A. Wasn't probably as hot as the higher floors, yes,**
 14 **probably decreased by now, yes.**
 15 Q. When the firefighter came out from the 7th floor, did
 16 you get a chance to look into the lobby?
 17 **A. No.**
 18 Q. What were the smoke conditions like on the 7th floor at
 19 the point when your son collapsed?
 20 **A. It was still quite thick. Thick, dark smoke.**
 21 Q. How many firefighters do you remember seeing on the 7th
 22 floor?
 23 **A. I think I remember seeing three, but that's a guess.**
 24 Q. What were they doing, do you remember?
 25 **A. They were in the 7th floor. But I don't remember them**

Page 181

1 coming down -- no, I don't remember them coming down
 2 before us, I think they opened the 7th floor, they saw
 3 my son unconscious on the floor, one of them picked him
 4 up and carried him, and then we -- and the other two
 5 just kept shouting at us to keep going, keep going, keep
 6 going.
 7 Q. Did you tell those firefighters that there were still
 8 people up on higher floors?
 9 **A. No. Their radio was going off and they were being**
 10 **instructed to leave.**
 11 Q. Do you remember during your descent down the whole
 12 staircase whether you saw any other doors into the
 13 stairwell from lobbies open?
 14 **A. No.**
 15 MR MILLETT: Okay.
 16 Mr Chairman, we've been going more or less an hour,
 17 I just noticed. I have very few questions left.
 18 I think it may be the appropriate thing to ask if that's
 19 all right with you and then take a short break.
 20 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: When you say a very few questions,
 21 what are we talking about in terms of time?
 22 MR MILLETT: Seven questions. In terms of time, 5 minutes,
 23 I'd have thought.
 24 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: We're getting on very well, as you
 25 can tell. Mr Millett has a few more questions. Do you

Page 182

1 feel that you need a break?
 2 THE WITNESS: I can carry on.
 3 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: You can carry on. All right, well,
 4 then, I think it's probably better that we do, if that's
 5 all right. If you get to the stage when you feel you've
 6 had enough and you need a break, will you let me know?
 7 THE WITNESS: Yes, I will.
 8 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Keep going, Mr Millett.
 9 MR MILLETT: I will do. It may be more convenient if,
 10 rather than the sort of break we had earlier on, people
 11 can perhaps stay in situ and any further questions can
 12 be fed to me and I can consider them.
 13 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: You could go to them.
 14 MR MILLETT: I could make a rare trip.
 15 Ms Yahya, I want just to turn, then, finally, to
 16 your experience outside the tower.
 17 When you got outside, were you treated by
 18 paramedics?
 19 **A. Not straight away.**
 20 Q. How long after?
 21 **A. Because when we got outside -- because my son got out**
 22 **first, and as soon as I got outside, I was looking for**
 23 **my son. So I saw him laying on the floor, so I ran over**
 24 **to him. He was being treated. Then they put him in the**
 25 **ambulance. I wanted to go with him; they didn't let me,**

Page 183

1 they said I needed to be seen first. So then I just
 2 waited around for a bit. Then someone came, then
 3 a paramedic came, which was probably about -- I think
 4 all in all afterwards it was about 15 minutes after
 5 I left before someone, a paramedic, came. And I asked
 6 them for an inhaler because I didn't have one.
 7 Q. Did you get one?
 8 **A. I got an empty one.**
 9 Q. Right.
 10 **A. I had to literally find another paramedic to give me**
 11 **a full one.**
 12 Q. In your statement at paragraph 30 on page 8, you explain
 13 that you were still standing as your symptoms hadn't
 14 kicked in yet and you say:
 15 "... I wasn't considered a priority for the
 16 ambulances. My two daughters and I were the last
 17 residents to leave the area in an ambulance. We were
 18 taken to the Royal Free Hospital in Hampstead."
 19 Do you remember how long you had to wait before
 20 going in an ambulance?
 21 **A. After having left, I would say a good hour and a half to**
 22 **two hours. Morning had -- it was early hours, morning.**
 23 **There was already daylight.**
 24 Q. Were you told why there was a delay in taking you?
 25 **A. Just told I have to wait my turn.**

Page 184

46 (Pages 181 to 184)

1 Q. Did anybody explain?
 2 **A. I think one of them said, "You're in a queue, they're**
 3 **taking everyone, you just have to wait for your turn."**
 4 Q. I think you said earlier in your evidence that your son
 5 suffers from asthma.
 6 **A. Yes.**
 7 Q. Can you tell us -- you don't have to answer this
 8 question if you don't want to -- a little bit about the
 9 effects of the smoke and the experience on your son's
 10 asthma on the night?
 11 **A. It made him very wheezy. He was struggling to breathe.**
 12 **That's why he was the only one who collapsed. He was**
 13 **struggling before we left.**
 14 Q. Before you left the flat?
 15 **A. Yes.**
 16 Q. Before you left flat 153?
 17 **A. Yes.**
 18 Q. What about before he arrived and you arrived with him in
 19 flat 153?
 20 **A. He was wheezing the whole time. He was coughing and**
 21 **wheezing.**
 22 MR MILLETT: Well, thank you very much.
 23 Mr Chairman, perhaps this is an appropriate moment
 24 for a short break, and I would --
 25 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes. Well, I think you'll need

Page 185

1 a short break.
 2 MR MILLETT: I have no further questions.
 3 I should just say, Ms Yahya, thank you for
 4 everything so far. I have no further questions for you,
 5 but it may be that other people have. So I'm going to
 6 ask the chairman to rise --
 7 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Well, I wonder whether it would be
 8 convenient to do what we did with an earlier witness,
 9 and Ms Yahya and I can sit here and you can go down
 10 there and speak to anyone who wants to speak to you.
 11 Would that be sensible?
 12 MR MILLETT: Very good. Very sensible, I'll do that.
 13 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: We're going to have a short break
 14 while Mr Millett checks he doesn't have any more
 15 questions, and you and I can sit here. They don't need
 16 to concern us up there. All right?
 17 (Pause)
 18 MR MILLETT: Mr Chairman.
 19 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Have you completed any discussions?
 20 MR MILLETT: It's a small harvest.
 21 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Right.
 22 I think there are going to be a few more questions.
 23 THE WITNESS: Okay.
 24 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: But with any luck, not too many.
 25 MR MILLETT: Ms Yahya, the first question -- it may be the

Page 186

1 only question -- is: when you made your decision finally
 2 to leave flat 153, what role did your own asthma have in
 3 that decision?
 4 **A. To be honest, I didn't think about my asthma. It was**
 5 **the last thing I was thinking about.**
 6 Q. What about your son?
 7 **A. Yes, I was more concerned about the kids, and my son,**
 8 **seeing him struggle, it did -- yes, in hindsight it did**
 9 **probably make my decision to leave more.**
 10 Q. Yes.
 11 In your statement at paragraph 31, you say that one
 12 of your daughters was kept at Royal Free and another was
 13 admitted to the intensive care unit at King's College
 14 Hospital.
 15 Were you told that they were being taken to those
 16 hospitals at the time they were taken?
 17 **A. Well, my two daughters came with me first to Royal Free**
 18 **Hospital, so we went in the ambulance together. My son,**
 19 **I didn't know where he was. I didn't even know if he**
 20 **was okay. It was only -- I actually didn't even know**
 21 **until after I woke up from the coma.**
 22 Q. So before you were put into the induced coma, you
 23 weren't told where your son had been taken?
 24 **A. No.**
 25 Q. Did you ask anybody?

Page 187

1 **A. From the time that I got to the hospital to the time**
 2 **that I collapsed was a very short time, so after that**
 3 **I don't -- I ...**
 4 Q. Yes. Well, thank you very much.
 5 Ms Yahya, I have no further questions except one,
 6 and it's this.
 7 In addition to the two witness statements that you
 8 have given to us, and in addition to what you've told us
 9 this afternoon about your experiences on the night, is
 10 there anything in addition that you saw or you heard or
 11 you smelt or you felt on the night of the fire that you
 12 think that it's important that the chairman should know?
 13 **A. No.**
 14 **SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: All right.**
 15 MR MILLETT: Ms Yahya, thank you very much. I just want to
 16 express my gratitude to you for your patience in
 17 answering my questions and for assisting us greatly with
 18 your evidence today. We very much appreciate your
 19 coming here and doing that, so thank you very much.
 20 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: I'd like to add my thanks to those
 21 of Mr Millett. As I've said to others, it's vital to us
 22 that we find out what was going on inside the building
 23 at different times, so your evidence in telling us what
 24 you experienced is really important, and I'm very
 25 grateful to you for coming to tell us about it, even

Page 188

47 (Pages 185 to 188)

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| <p>1 though I suspect to describe such an horrendous</p> <p>2 experience must be quite difficult for you.</p> <p>3 Anyway, thank you very much indeed for coming.</p> <p>4 THE WITNESS: Thank you.</p> <p>5 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Now, I'm going to rise. I suggest</p> <p>6 you can stay there until the room has been cleared.</p> <p>7 I am going to ask everyone to clear the room, please, as</p> <p>8 quickly as possible after I've left.</p> <p>9 MR MILLETT: Mr Chairman, I'm not going to disagree with any</p> <p>10 of that.</p> <p>11 Before I do, I should just say for those who are in</p> <p>12 the room that we were expecting, as I said last night,</p> <p>13 to read some further witness statements into the record</p> <p>14 and read out parts of them. They are extremely valuable</p> <p>15 and an important part of this part of Phase 1.</p> <p>16 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Of course, yes.</p> <p>17 MR MILLETT: I'm afraid it will be now obvious to everybody</p> <p>18 in the room that we are a little bit behind in our</p> <p>19 reading because we are obviously prioritising the</p> <p>20 witnesses who come in terms of time management.</p> <p>21 We hope to be able to catch up during this week, and</p> <p>22 I will update you, Mr Chairman, and those in the hearing</p> <p>23 room as soon as I can.</p> <p>24 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Very good. Well, thank you very</p> <p>25 much, Mr Millett.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 189</p> | |
| <p>1 Well, thank you again for coming.</p> <p>2 Can I ask, once I have left the room, for the rest</p> <p>3 of you to leave as quickly as possible.</p> <p>4 Thank you very much.</p> <p>5 (4.30 pm)</p> <p>6 (The hearing adjourned until Wednesday, 31 October 2018</p> <p>7 at 10.00 am)</p> <p>8 </p> <p>9 I N D E X</p> <p>10 </p> <p>11 PAULOS TEKLE (sworn)1</p> <p>12 Questions by MR RAWAT1</p> <p>13 RABIA YAHYA (sworn)103</p> <p>14 Questions by COUNSEL TO THE INQUIRY103</p> <p>15 </p> <p>16 </p> <p>17 </p> <p>18 </p> <p>19 </p> <p>20 </p> <p>21 </p> <p>22 </p> <p>23 </p> <p>24 </p> <p>25 </p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 190</p> | |

| | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| A | 165:9 169:13 170:18 172:3 | 187:18 | 146:11 151:25 | assuming 82:14 |
| a.m 126:13 144:11 151:8 | advise 80:21 | ambulances 184:16 | area 8:17 11:6,10 | assumption 124:22 |
| Abebe 23:7 31:11 | advised 32:23 | Amharic 31:6 | 11:18 12:15 16:4 | assure 56:3 72:9 |
| 32:7,16,20 37:17 | 66:25 84:16 86:2 | 70:14 | 16:19 19:16,22 | asthma 132:4,5,9 |
| 38:1,23 40:17 | 93:3 | amounts 150:24 | 20:15,24 21:2,4 | 132:11 145:23 |
| 53:4,8,9,15 54:2,7 | advising 49:14 | anger 102:6 | 21:10 26:23 28:15 | 156:15 185:5,10 |
| 82:8,11 83:1,15 | 163:2,12 171:2 | angry 101:12 102:2 | 28:19 30:24,25 | 187:2,4 |
| 84:6 | afraid 103:11 | annexed 57:13 | 34:10 40:16 41:5 | attempt 93:6 |
| able 8:5 11:23 12:2 | 141:4 189:17 | answer 23:12 59:6 | 41:18 45:2,3,7,10 | attend 91:10 |
| 16:7 28:14,19 | afternoon 20:5 | 74:9,12 97:13 | 45:13 52:19,23 | attention 18:9 |
| 31:14 41:16 42:14 | 103:7,14,22 | 104:8 132:8,9 | 56:3,11,19 81:8 | 37:11 40:1,4,6 |
| 45:21 54:14 69:5 | 120:18 188:9 | 170:18 185:7 | 87:21 88:15 93:22 | 52:22 82:11 |
| 74:5 78:2 81:16 | ages 164:20 | answered 28:25 | 94:19,21 95:15,24 | audio 59:9 69:4 |
| 89:17 90:5 93:6 | ago 42:23 85:6 | 99:19 180:19,24 | 184:17 | 70:2,20 |
| 94:3,12 124:9 | 162:17 176:2 | answering 105:2 | arguing 36:10 | August 3:15 |
| 147:9 163:25 | 180:12 | 188:17 | arms 83:5 | automatically |
| 168:6 189:21 | agreement 121:6 | answers 73:10 | arrangements | 12:16,21,25 |
| Abraham 23:6,7,8 | ah 17:21,21 | 100:10 | 104:18 141:5 | 109:10 112:23 |
| 24:2 31:11 38:5 | ahead 15:2 43:6 | anybody 18:25 | arrival 34:9 55:10 | available 5:6 |
| 49:14 51:12 53:4 | Ahmed 133:3 | 45:22 46:1,2 | arrive 47:14 | avoid 52:24 |
| 70:13 82:8 | 136:4 142:6 146:3 | 93:25 109:18 | arrived 47:19 | awake 18:23 |
| action 23:17,18,19 | air 5:15 7:12 8:1,16 | 123:15 124:20 | 146:9,18 185:18 | 126:19 133:15 |
| 23:20 | 10:5 96:15 117:15 | 169:13 185:1 | 185:18 | aware 45:12 76:19 |
| actual 85:4 | 117:17 120:11 | 187:25 | arriving 146:4 | 122:16,17 123:3 |
| add 188:20 | 137:8,21 143:13 | anyway 65:13 | aside 20:10 45:1,12 | B |
| addition 188:7,8,10 | ajar 111:11 | 75:24 189:3 | 81:4 | BA 91:9 |
| additional 57:6 | alarm 15:5,8,16 | apart 14:15 30:17 | asked 6:25 29:8 | back 4:6 11:4 15:12 |
| 72:25 79:9 | 88:19,25 123:12 | 30:25 46:3 70:12 | 47:24 55:18 79:11 | 15:13,20,24 16:11 |
| adjourned 190:6 | 123:15,19 124:10 | 122:9 123:3 | 82:22 109:18 | 16:15 17:3 18:15 |
| adjournment 103:5 | 124:18,22 125:17 | apologise 39:15 | 125:3,4 144:19,20 | 21:5,20,22,25 |
| admitted 187:13 | alarmed 133:17 | apparatus 91:12,13 | 147:20,21 184:5 | 22:2,5,10,12 |
| adopt 141:4 | alarms 14:19,21 | 144:13 | asking 4:4 34:8 | 23:14 31:2,21 |
| adult 101:16 | 15:1,14 88:21 | appear 47:7 105:11 | 52:5 81:23 99:22 | 33:11 34:2,3,15 |
| 147:23 | 125:2,3,6,12 | appearing 122:15 | 100:3 101:10 | 35:18 38:22 41:4 |
| adults 58:2,4 63:8 | 156:25 | appendix 106:25 | 104:4 154:20 | 41:24 43:8 44:5 |
| 79:13 | alert 130:3 | appreciate 2:12 | asks 57:24 58:19 | 52:8 55:3 58:13 |
| advice 13:8 25:3 | alive 100:19,20 | 37:15 188:18 | 62:16 74:4 76:2 | 60:9 66:15 68:7 |
| 32:1 40:22 49:18 | 101:6,17 | appreciated 2:2 | 79:25 | 68:20,24 82:17 |
| 49:19 50:2 51:21 | allow 111:10 | 104:3 | asleep 126:19 | 84:10,21 86:16 |
| 53:13 66:22,24 | allowed 42:10 | appropriate 182:18 | 136:12 | 87:4 93:6,8,12,13 |
| 71:20 79:21 86:12 | 101:6 | 185:23 | aspect 98:12 | 93:18 97:20,21 |
| 86:18 121:5,16 | alluded 10:18 | approximate 38:4 | assent 49:2 | 99:4,8 104:8,17 |
| 125:9 142:18 | ambulance 96:19 | 39:12 | assistance 104:2 | 108:1 110:14 |
| 143:24 164:12 | 183:25 184:17,20 | approximately | assisting 188:17 | 118:20 119:15 |
| | | 52:13 136:9 | association 132:22 | 120:9 121:2 |

| | | | | |
|--|--|---|---|--|
| 125:15,15 129:5 129:24 134:2 141:8,9,18,20 142:8 143:7 144:9 149:9,10,15,17,23 150:1,5 153:3,4 153:13 162:16 164:16 165:10 170:7 176:1,4 180:12 181:8 background 4:4 107:14 bad 50:6 135:16,16 135:17,23 145:17 159:3 balcony 58:24,25 59:4,5,6,7,13,19 60:4 Barandon 108:19 108:20 142:15 based 151:20 basically 65:13 83:8 basis 86:21 bathroom 89:5 107:12 150:18,19 158:3,7,7 battery 123:23 125:2 bears 105:19 bed 17:13 85:15,16 85:18 87:7 89:14 126:22 127:24 bedroom 6:11,14 7:14 8:4,11,12,16 9:20,22 62:18 63:12,18 64:9,10 64:11 65:6,9 67:2 67:13,15,16,17,19 80:14 85:13 87:3 107:11 126:25 127:23 128:7 bedrooms 6:9 7:10 7:12 8:17 14:24 80:13 117:19 | 170:2 172:20 began 37:17 begged 83:6 begging 50:23,23 beginning 36:2 99:22 119:22 120:7 172:17 begins 98:4 behalf 102:12,12 belief 75:16,18 78:21 believe 18:19 20:7 25:23,24 75:20 101:17 138:16 151:16 believing 47:18 bell 137:10 Bellal 111:1,4 Berkti 29:22 30:1 best 52:11 54:1 167:10 172:8 better 9:17 12:22 13:1 56:24 64:20 64:22 109:7 183:4 beyond 145:4 big 62:25 113:22 Biruk 29:22 bit 21:22 33:7 43:16 48:10 50:15 51:13 58:17 63:25 64:19 82:13 93:18 95:13 115:5,12 121:2 131:4 135:6 140:6 154:7 158:8 166:3 184:2 185:8 189:18 BLA00002416 13:19 BLA00002513 124:7 black 131:21 137:25 138:9,16 138:23 139:1,8,20 145:4 156:8 164:3 168:4 | blackish 61:5 blanket 49:19 50:14 52:24 76:4 150:15 blankets 50:21 150:9,13,17 168:12 172:8 block 49:21 50:10 51:20 71:24 117:11 123:6 126:14 127:5 143:12 blocking 127:24 blue 7:23 152:9 body 49:20 50:20 bottom 7:14,15 8:18 17:10 22:24 62:15 65:5 69:8 76:1,23 78:5 79:11,24,25 81:14 85:16 96:13,14 97:18 101:19 110:10,12,23 116:25 117:1,3,4 121:4,24 122:1 132:24 143:9 152:18 155:25 162:19 163:13,23 bottom-right 157:20 Bourne 69:20 boxed 123:24 boy 100:25 101:1 boys 4:8 break 2:14 26:5,10 33:9,19 43:16 48:12 63:24 65:22 65:25 66:6 68:4 68:11 98:19,21 99:10 104:9,11,11 104:14,16 110:21 140:12 141:5,8,12 182:19 183:1,6,10 185:24 186:1,13 breaks 26:8 | breathe 93:8 96:10 97:9 160:10,18 185:11 breathing 91:12,13 144:13 163:17 briefly 166:15 brigade 25:2,4,6 51:10 69:14 70:7 71:1,8,9,13,14,15 82:2 85:22 86:16 101:5 102:1 125:1 129:11 130:15 132:15 136:23 141:25 142:4 164:15 Brigades 71:22 bringing 104:8 broke 109:14 110:20 112:2,3 120:2 broken 98:1 112:4 116:16 brought 15:24 59:25 brown 157:22 BT 69:16 70:17 71:9,12 building 22:7 78:8 80:20 112:22 116:6 122:4 125:5 125:17 127:7,19 133:15 136:4,25 137:1 152:13 154:10 156:24 157:17 159:7 166:20 175:18 188:22 building's 109:19 burning 145:18 burnt 132:1 155:23 bye 143:20 <hr/> C <hr/> cage 123:23 124:10 caged 123:21 124:11 | call 1:11 10:7 21:23 21:24,24 22:19 23:14,24 31:13 38:1 39:10 40:23 53:15,16,21 56:25 57:12,18 58:6,11 58:12,14 62:16 63:5 66:23 67:4 68:22 69:3,9,11 69:12,13,22,23,25 70:2,4,6,12,23,25 71:13 72:1,4,7 73:5,7,24 77:20 78:2,12 79:16,19 82:21 84:22,24 85:1,4,8,20,21,24 86:10,16,21,23,24 103:15 129:3,10 129:13,21,22,25 130:9,10,11,22 133:12,12 136:10 136:11,14,17,20 137:11,12,13,14 138:15 139:1,19 139:22 141:21,22 143:2,4,22,24 146:17 152:3,6,10 152:21 153:7,9 157:2,8 162:16,17 162:22,25 164:7 164:11 165:25 166:1,8,9,12,13 168:17,17 169:16 170:7,14 171:6,7 171:8 172:2 called 23:23 24:20 24:21 27:24 78:13 119:1,10 129:1,7 129:9,14 caller 58:3,21,23 58:25 60:16 61:15 61:18,22,25 62:3 62:6,8,12,14,18 62:20,23 66:19 73:15 74:7 76:6 |
|--|--|---|---|--|

| | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|---|
| 77:3,11 80:4,25 81:2,15,18 136:24 137:2,5,18,22,24 143:14,16,19 152:12,16,19 163:4,6,9 164:2 164:15,20,22,24 165:2,4,11,16,20 165:22 166:17,19 166:23,25 167:3,4 167:8,12,14,15,20 168:2,4 calling 56:13 calls 18:16,21 23:5 23:12 41:21 53:4 53:8,18 69:22 72:20,22,24 83:15 140:2 142:10,11 146:14 151:20,23 172:4 calm 143:12 calmed 80:2 camera 35:8 care 187:13 careful 99:20 carefully 168:8 carried 101:10 182:4 carries 129:4 carry 33:23 68:15 75:17 141:14 183:2,3 carrying 172:7 case 38:12 130:3 133:14 catch 189:21 caught 153:20 154:16 cause 25:19 CCTV 136:5 ceiling 123:20 124:16,17 cent 54:4 55:25 72:11,17,18 75:4 146:11 150:5 | 155:24 174:6 centimetres 113:23 113:24 centre 111:2 certain 31:21 93:4 certainly 140:10 chair 132:22 chairman 1:10 13:13 25:25 26:12 67:25 68:19 99:16 100:13 103:14 140:5,22 182:16 185:23 186:6,18 188:12 189:9,22 chance 2:4 3:17 50:7 69:11 81:18 100:19 114:10 181:16 change 26:22 86:19 109:3,18,25 118:18 changed 109:17 113:1,11 changes 113:11 changing 109:19 109:24 check 22:16 80:22 125:1,5 148:5 165:7 checked 81:6 125:2 125:2 checking 96:24 checks 186:14 child 52:3 101:15 121:11 166:13 children 4:22 6:12 27:12,14 38:15 48:3,17,20,23 49:4 50:22,22 55:18 58:9,10,10 79:13 87:11 91:23 108:8 126:21 130:2,20 133:2,15 134:5 136:12 148:2 161:22,24 | 164:19,19 173:17 175:13,22 178:13 choice 85:11 109:23 choke 160:11 choose 84:18 chunk 62:25 circular 120:11 124:15 circumstance 50:5 cladding 151:9 153:18 155:4 clear 9:19 16:10 21:7 28:6 42:17 70:5 71:3 77:12 79:24 84:25 87:8 91:11 95:6 96:5 126:25 133:7 140:23 144:7 162:22 168:19 189:7 cleared 189:6 clearer 171:12 clearly 41:19 42:11 47:1 54:15 132:17 climb 36:21,25 43:8 178:19 climbed 36:18 38:1 39:25 54:22 55:7 72:6 81:22 climbing 83:23 close 8:10 10:6 14:22 15:3 36:22 47:5 63:13 64:7 79:23 80:4 85:13 87:15 89:1 108:15 109:15 111:10,11 112:23 119:23 120:1 170:3 closed 12:16,21 52:18 76:20 109:10 161:9 closer 107:8 closest 6:11 8:12,15 9:21 10:13 35:7 | 64:12 115:19,20 127:1 closing 12:24 collapsed 180:3,11 181:19 185:12 188:2 collected 15:23 College 187:13 colour 64:23 65:2 88:18 156:3,7 coma 187:21,22 come 2:19 14:8 15:12 18:15 20:3 21:25 22:2 25:6 28:4 29:8 30:7 31:24 32:5,19 33:11 34:25 37:7 43:15 44:1,5,19 46:10 49:15 52:8 52:16 55:3,18 58:3 60:9 62:23 68:6,24 83:4 99:4 102:7 104:17 110:14,16 112:12 116:16 118:18 120:5,8 129:5,24 132:6,7 141:9 143:23 144:24 147:14 149:15,17 149:23 150:2,4,5 152:13 153:3,13 154:2,13 155:2,16 157:3 158:11 164:4,5,15 165:21 166:5,7 170:15 171:7 177:1 189:20 comes 9:4,5 15:13 26:25 28:13 74:3 75:23 76:17 77:15 81:11 93:9 170:4 comfortable 1:17 coming 1:25 5:15 7:12 8:16 10:5 11:1 12:7 16:15 | 17:3 19:13,17 26:17 28:8,18 30:9,10,13,19 34:2 41:21 42:17 49:11,21 50:13 52:25 59:2,24 60:16,24 61:15,17 61:20 62:4,7,9 63:6,10,19 64:2,5 64:9,16 65:8 66:5 66:11 67:7,23,24 68:20 73:25 76:5 76:7,10,19 77:1,8 80:6,11,13,16 83:7 88:16,17 93:20 98:2 102:17 104:1 110:10,15 116:12,13,19,24 117:11,15,17 120:11 127:6,7 130:15,17,18,18 131:13 132:18 135:6 136:1 139:6 141:18 142:10 146:16 147:2,3,5 147:7,7,8,10 148:10 149:9,9,18 150:15,24 151:24 153:23 154:22,23 155:8 156:6,23 169:17,20 173:1 178:13 180:6 181:5,7 182:1,1 188:19,25 189:3 190:1 command 164:18 165:6,19 Commander 69:21 comment 149:20 comments 100:4 commitments 5:3 common 9:15 commonsensely 74:18 commotion 126:14 |
|--|--|--|--|---|

| | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|---|
| <p>127:5,8 communal 11:6,9 16:19 89:21 124:18 125:12,17 131:1 135:5,14 146:5 159:25 160:21 communicating 48:5 communication 47:9 48:5 compare 179:6 comparison 161:2 complete 52:16 completed 186:19 completely 19:21 168:21 concern 186:16 concerned 17:6 103:12 187:7 condition 49:13,14 97:2 conditions 2:10 41:5,13 44:9 45:1 45:9 51:18 56:10 56:19 74:23 81:7 88:15 146:23 148:25 158:25 159:25 161:14 172:14 176:15,24 177:6,11 181:18 condolences 102:15 confidence 174:3 confident 129:20 129:22 confirm 3:13,20 6:10 105:21 106:1 106:14,21 125:6 confused 90:7 confusing 166:3 connect 70:6 71:14 connected 69:14 connecting 71:12 consider 134:18 183:12</p> | <p>considered 184:15 consists 106:8 constantly 114:15 contact 23:2 25:5 31:10 41:24 53:7 56:22 82:12,22 86:15 contacts 32:20 contents 3:20 106:1 106:21 context 57:10 continue 2:1 26:4 48:8 65:24 109:16 continues 137:9 continuously 40:22 contractors 117:25 control 25:23 129:17 137:16 controlling 49:23 50:16 51:11 convenient 66:5 67:25 68:1 140:9 140:10 183:9 186:8 conversation 17:23 21:19 24:7 30:12 31:2,3 36:10,12 37:6,17 38:6,23 38:24 40:17,24 44:3,5,12,22 46:9 47:6,10,11,12,13 47:16 48:4,12 50:18 51:11 52:11 52:16,23 53:22 54:4 63:9,21 65:14 70:9,10,14 70:19 75:3 85:4 86:5,8 91:15 133:8 134:12 148:22 169:15 conversations 54:2 convinced 130:16 copy 3:7 core 2:3 corner 6:6 10:8,8</p> | <p>10:19 92:3,3,4 94:14,15,16,17 95:3,3 115:22,24 116:5,7,8 157:21 157:24 corners 115:22 correct 10:11 corrected 78:23 correction 152:1 corridor 14:22 56:2 79:23 80:10 87:3 cough 132:3 145:21 coughing 132:7 135:24 145:21,23 185:20 council 4:10 COUNSEL 103:19 190:12 counting 180:13 couple 23:2 66:6 138:20 course 13:12 14:8 39:13 47:5 48:18 84:12 189:16 cover 49:19,20 50:10,12,14,21 51:21 52:24 171:22 covered 34:4 91:7 160:13,15 covering 46:21 cried 88:6 criticisms 100:5 cross 138:6 cross-section 157:14 crying 61:25 91:18 169:9 Cunde 69:21 cupboard 85:14 171:18</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">D</p> <hr/> <p>D 137:4 190:9 dad 23:8 107:22</p> | <p>167:9 damp 150:9 163:3 163:7,16,16 dangerous 54:17 dark 19:19,20,22 24:10 26:24 28:10 34:14,17,18 35:20 44:15,16,16 45:1 90:4 94:1 144:15 156:8,8 174:8 178:13 181:20 darkness 41:7 94:6 date 105:19 106:9 dated 3:15 106:9 daughter 108:3 167:18 179:24 180:13 daughters 184:16 187:12,17 day 4:21,22,22 120:20 124:25 126:9 161:2,4,5 179:9 daylight 184:23 days 16:23 69:17 98:9 deal 55:10 99:17,20 114:16 118:12 dealing 70:9 71:11 71:17,22 72:3 137:4 138:14 dealing' 71:1,4 dealings 71:5 debris 59:24 60:16 60:24 61:1,2 decide 159:9 decided 32:10 86:25 172:13 decision 25:14 169:5,23 170:20 171:13 187:1,3,9 decrease 178:12 decreased 178:15 181:14 definite 179:22</p> | <p>definitely 16:9 160:25 161:4,5 176:22,23 177:22 178:2 delay 129:8 184:24 delayed 1:3 dense 92:8 93:5 96:7 depend 69:10 97:3 descended 177:8 177:17 178:10 descent 97:15 178:21 179:5,15 179:19 182:11 describe 19:24 23:4 27:23 36:2 40:7 60:24 91:2,3 109:3 113:22 123:18 127:8 130:1,20 134:12 144:18 145:3,16 177:19 189:1 described 15:14 17:12 46:14 93:19 96:4 131:20 describing 50:20 54:21 deserve 26:10 desk 3:3 105:12 desperate 42:6,12 44:11 49:12,17 desperation 54:22 detail 30:12 39:15 48:12 85:25 99:20 129:5,24 devices 174:11 diagram 115:21 157:20 difference 27:1 45:11 177:22 178:7 different 2:22 14:18 16:13 20:19 24:9 35:6 57:5 61:1 104:24 141:5</p> |
|--|--|--|--|---|

| | | | | |
|--|--|--|---|--|
| 156:11 164:20 188:23 difficult 2:13 32:2 37:16 52:10 53:23 100:23 104:7 122:11,12 174:21 175:15 176:4,5 178:12 189:2 directed 103:9 direction 128:15 147:8 directions 140:19 directly 165:23 disabled 50:2 disagree 189:9 disaster 25:20 69:17 70:16 discuss 51:20 125:12 discussed 32:13 56:12 119:19 discussing 51:19 discussion 52:9 56:15,16 163:21 171:14,16 173:6 173:21 175:21 discussions 186:19 disrespect 98:10 distance 139:13 disturbing 13:16 document 3:9,25 doing 8:21 9:14 29:1 52:10 54:1 86:15 88:5 89:10 114:3 130:23 132:15 181:24 188:19 door 6:14 11:9,13 11:14,20,21,22 12:2,3,14,19 14:23 18:11,22 19:1,6,8,10,13,21 21:3,8,12 26:20 26:22 27:6,12,16 28:1,3,7 29:3 | 30:23 31:1,23,25 32:5,19 34:13,16 35:8,10,20 36:3,4 36:9 37:23 39:21 40:16 41:4,10 42:2 43:4,6,7,11 43:18,22,24 44:7 44:19 45:4,14,17 45:20,24 46:6,15 47:6,17,19 51:20 52:18,24 55:8,9 55:16 56:17 62:8 63:11 67:15 72:14 74:18,25 75:8,13 76:4,20 77:10,12 77:14 79:23 80:23 81:2 83:13,19 84:8 85:13 87:7,9 87:15,17,18,19,20 88:14 89:1 90:6 90:12,24,25 94:10 94:13,21,22,22,25 95:1,14,18,22,23 95:25,25 109:4,7 109:9,10,14,18,25 109:25 110:5,6,12 110:19,20,21 111:2,3,9,10,12 111:15,18,19,21 112:17,17,19 126:24 127:3,4 130:25 132:23 133:16 134:3,9,24 135:4,7,15 138:19 138:21 139:6,10 139:11,12,14,16 139:24 140:2 142:6 144:12,14 144:15 145:1,9 146:16,22 148:13 150:9 153:16 157:21,25 158:2,9 158:11,14,24 159:1 160:2,24 161:6,8,9,10 | 167:6,19,25 168:15 169:25 170:4 173:4,11,12 173:22 175:10 177:18,23 178:5,7 door-closer 112:7 doorjamb 111:17 111:23 doors 28:19 35:14 109:20 110:1,2,3 111:13 112:23 155:13,15 182:12 doorstep 138:21 doorway 21:4 111:23 138:18,20 174:1 dot 95:10,11 158:1 158:5 doubt 25:17 downstairs 168:14 doze 126:20 drama 89:9 draught 8:10 9:5 109:12 110:9,13 110:15,16 116:12 116:16,19,24 117:11,22 120:21 draughts 5:15 8:1,9 10:4,13 115:16 120:17 draughty 109:11 110:8 115:4,5 116:10 117:20 118:9 draw 82:10 dressed 27:12 133:14,16 driver 12:10 driving 127:12 drop 95:12 dropped 170:19 172:12 due 14:8 duration 69:15 dust 132:10 | E E 190:9 earlier 18:20 19:17 34:8 37:16 50:6 68:22 69:12 74:2 78:7 80:11 81:4 90:13 101:7 118:4 131:16 160:3 180:22 183:10 185:4 186:8 earliest 152:24 early 17:3 53:9 90:11 94:2 131:24 184:22 easily 113:25 east 116:7 131:17 easy 25:22 28:12 47:3 113:19,25 edge 11:20 111:21 edges 154:24 effect 89:3 97:16 132:2 135:22 145:20 156:14 178:24 effectively 120:23 effects 145:22 185:9 effort 78:8 86:15 either 15:16 16:15 21:23 72:10 100:19 134:14 135:2 166:12 173:25 Eleven 164:23 emergency 21:24 71:5 74:6,10,11 74:13,17,19 75:1 96:23 129:2,14 emphasise 148:14 empty 184:8 encounter 181:3 encountered 2:10 ended 86:25 ends 165:18 English 52:14,16 | 70:12 71:3,5 entering 80:3 Enyew 27:25 28:7 29:1,12,19 31:2 32:19 34:5,9 35:24 36:4,9 43:6 43:20 47:12,20 49:9 58:7 87:6 173:22 equipment 50:3 erm 119:3 137:19 error 9:15 escape 23:21 24:2 31:19 40:3 50:6,9 53:10 75:14 137:25 138:3,17 escaped 31:24,25 32:14 98:6 escaping 56:14 especially 32:3 Essex 72:20 73:5 77:19,25 78:6,17 82:2 84:24 85:5 85:20 86:2,12,23 102:3 establish 152:24 estimate 52:10 estimates 37:15 Ethiopian 31:6 evacuate 130:3,6 130:13 169:5 evacuated 142:17 evacuating 32:22 142:14 evening 5:6 126:8 event 57:15 123:1,2 125:9 136:19 events 2:12 54:20 72:5 108:23 everybody 79:14 85:19 189:17 evidence 1:7 2:1,17 4:3 10:11 17:11 33:11 34:8 35:18 39:24 42:18 68:5 |
|--|--|--|---|--|

| | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|---|
| 68:22 71:7 84:25 98:12,18 99:21 100:1,4,8 102:9 103:10 104:13 141:3 149:18,25 149:25 176:1 185:4 188:18,23 exactly 111:22,24 114:7 152:4 171:16 example 22:21 52:21 exception 7:8 exchange 72:19,21 excited 47:17 exercise 12:11,13 exhibit 106:24 exhibited 18:15 57:13 115:11 exhibits 3:23 4:2 existed 107:4 exit 74:6,10,11,13 74:13,17,19 75:1 75:25 77:17 78:9 79:22 85:10 92:2 92:6,6 94:15 134:9 135:7 139:13 expand 6:6 7:6 11:5 57:21 73:9 76:23 78:5 89:21 expanded 17:10 expect 66:4 expecting 189:12 experience 102:6 183:16 185:9 189:2 experienced 114:25 115:15 151:2 160:2 176:15 179:6,7 188:24 experiences 188:9 experts 13:21 121:20 explain 6:1 13:20 | 17:13 35:6 45:14 48:6 54:15 73:22 82:7 110:11 111:14 115:2 126:8 140:22 141:2 148:17,19 148:25 157:13 184:12 185:1 explained 15:22 17:11 24:24 29:8 30:1 32:7 78:20 94:7 97:10,15 99:23 120:17 140:24 141:1 explaining 4:7 exposed 124:11 express 188:16 extraction 135:9 extractor 116:14 118:18 120:2 extremely 189:14 eye 122:18,20 eyes 145:25 179:1 F face 46:17,18,21,25 90:13 91:8 159:4 160:15 faces 131:16,17 160:13 facing 6:9 7:21,22 10:2 36:24 fact 24:11 112:22 125:14 faintly 138:22 fair 45:7 fairness 68:23 fall 92:15,17 93:1,2 151:9 153:24 falling 93:8 154:17 155:4 false 171:12 familiar 115:15 159:7 175:17 family 5:3,14 9:2 17:13 23:17 24:21 | 24:25 31:15 32:11 40:23 84:4 90:19 98:10 108:15 142:10,18 144:4 146:14 fan 116:14 118:18 120:2 far 17:5 21:5 36:25 43:24 44:14 45:2 71:13 76:19 95:8 96:11 102:15 103:12 137:10 139:11 142:2 147:14 155:16 186:4 fast 38:9 father 108:17 162:4 fed 183:12 feel 26:5 84:18 101:3 109:8 151:13 156:18 170:22 175:19 178:8,25 183:1,5 feeling 97:17 felt 110:9 120:22 153:12 188:11 female 144:12 149:17 fighter 82:14,17,19 82:19 83:13 fighters 82:15 144:11 149:6 figure 72:16 figures 113:22 final 99:17 169:5 finally 183:15 187:1 find 23:19,21 24:7 24:19 38:7,25 41:4 82:14,17 98:6 129:1,14 175:13,16 184:10 188:22 fine 26:7 44:23 | 57:11 68:14 107:9 107:11 finish 53:12 97:12 98:19 finished 85:7 97:14 fire 1:8 2:11 13:8,9 13:22 16:16 21:18 21:21 22:7,14,16 23:16 24:6 25:1,4 25:5,18 27:10,21 30:8,20 31:19,24 38:8 40:3,20 41:15,17 49:23 50:9,16,17,18,25 50:25 51:1,3,5,10 51:11 53:10 54:10 54:11,16 55:19 56:5,7,8 62:7,8,10 62:11,13,14,14,17 62:18,22 63:18 65:5,8,12 67:7,9 69:14 70:7 71:1,2 71:8,9,10,13,14 71:15,22 72:20,22 73:15,17,21,25 74:3,8,13 75:23 75:24,25 76:17 77:16,17,19,25 78:6,9,17 79:3,4 79:21 80:2 81:3 82:2,14,15,17,18 82:19 83:7,9,13 84:24 85:5,10,20 85:22 86:2,16 92:2,6,6 94:15 100:2,12 101:5 102:1 107:5 108:21,23 110:1,3 110:17 111:3 112:17,19 120:15 120:19,24 121:5 121:16,19 122:12 123:2,5,12,14,15 123:19 124:5,10 124:18,22,25 | 125:1,10,12,17 126:2 127:9,12 128:8,12,13,15,23 129:11,16 130:15 130:17 132:13,15 134:9 135:2,3,7 136:23,24 137:25 138:2,17 139:12 141:25 142:4 144:11 149:6,14 151:10 152:14,20 153:5,20 154:3,13 154:13,22,23 155:8,16,23,25 156:23 157:3,15 158:21 161:19 162:10,20 164:15 167:2,4,19 169:24 170:4 188:11 fire's 59:2 134:16 152:12 164:5 167:7,24 168:14 firefighter 36:5 38:7,25 39:4,21 41:9,25 44:4,12 45:5,8,12,18 46:1 46:8,10,12,14,16 46:18 47:3,7,11 47:20,24 48:13,20 49:6,10,18 50:10 50:24 51:17,23,23 52:7,9,12 53:7,13 53:22 54:3,5 56:2 56:22 72:14 82:22 83:17,19 84:7 86:13 88:11 89:18 89:24 90:23 91:2 91:4,8,11,14 92:1 93:19,24 94:7,13 95:15,19 100:17 149:16,17 159:20 173:25 174:2,6 180:6,19 181:1,3 181:15 firefighter's 46:4 |
|--|--|--|--|---|

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|--|
| 179:18 firefighters 25:22 32:8,11,24 52:7 56:22 93:22 146:4 146:9,16,18,22 147:11 148:10 150:8 159:10 160:3 181:21 182:7 fireman 31:22 88:2 89:8 90:5 101:21 101:23 102:3 fireman's 179:19 firemen 101:15 firemen's 179:17 firmlly 119:24 first 1:25 2:24 3:1,5 4:6 7:22 19:7 31:19 34:18 36:18 36:20 38:23 39:18 52:15 55:7 57:9 57:12 60:2,3,6,7 69:8 70:25 72:6 73:1,3 79:6,18 80:23 82:10,22 83:15,25 84:9 89:23 90:23 91:23 99:22 100:14 104:1,4 105:9,14 105:14 106:6 107:13 109:10,16 111:4 114:22 115:9 118:9,16 121:6,8 123:11,25 126:5 129:3,21 130:21 131:22,23 133:12 136:10,11 137:11 141:20,22 142:14 143:2 144:9,22 151:17 151:24 153:6,17 153:19 154:9 173:12,14 175:7,7 175:8,9 176:25 177:4 178:11 | 183:22 184:1 186:25 187:17 firstly 71:7 83:21 fitted 110:5 five 48:2 58:4 63:8 79:13 110:23 fix 11:1,2 72:4 110:14 111:1 112:13 fixed 11:3 119:20 120:23,25 fixture 35:13 flame 64:7,9,16,16 65:1,1 67:24 74:3 80:14 flames 64:5,23 67:23 80:16 151:11 156:3 flap 109:11 110:12 flat 4:8,20 5:10,14 5:20 6:6,7,8,14,17 6:19,21,22,22 7:4 7:4,6 11:6,6 12:7 12:20 14:14,15,20 15:4 16:8,15 17:15 19:7,8,25 21:12,17 22:2,6 22:11,12,22 23:10 24:4,8 25:7 26:17 26:25 28:14,15,18 29:8,12,14,15,19 29:20 30:2,6,7,9 30:10,14,14,19,19 30:20,23 32:12,18 32:19,21,23 34:5 34:22 35:1,2,7,8 35:10,11,13 41:13 43:1 44:19 45:16 46:8,10 48:15 49:4,7 50:12 52:8 52:25 55:11,17,21 56:21 58:7,7 59:2 61:12,17 62:10,11 62:12,17,22 63:6 63:7 64:2,5,7 | 65:11,11,12 67:5 67:15 72:5 73:11 73:21 74:1 75:23 75:24 77:3,5,15 77:16,17 79:14 80:7,16 81:8 82:20 83:4,12,14 83:17,20 84:5,8 84:16 86:1,25 89:4,22 90:2,5,8,9 90:10,24 93:20 94:3 96:3 101:8 107:3,3,16,18,21 108:2,12 112:25 113:6 114:23 115:10 117:19 121:9,10,11 125:1 125:7,16 126:5,10 128:3 129:18 130:13 132:21 133:5 134:25 138:6 143:1,12 144:18,24 146:23 147:12,14 149:11 150:1,8 151:5,12 151:13,24 152:18 152:19,25 153:5,7 153:7,10,14,16 155:5,17 156:18 156:21,25 157:4,6 157:18 158:6,11 159:9,10,11,17 160:1 161:6,15,16 161:21,21 162:5 162:23 164:1,2,4 164:5,6 167:2,6,7 167:19,25 168:6 168:14 169:6,13 171:14 172:9,14 173:3,6,22 174:1 174:22 175:20 176:16,16,21 178:1 185:14,16 185:19 187:2 flat's 152:20 | 162:10,19 flat[sic] 96:2 flats 6:2 20:13 28:20,22 flexible 5:1 16:12 floor 4:8 6:2,4,5,7,8 12:12,14,16 13:23 13:25 14:3,9,13 14:16 16:1,4,19 22:20 23:6,10,11 23:22 24:6,6,13 24:16,17,18,21 25:7 31:21 32:3 32:25 34:23 35:6 35:9,16 40:10,11 40:24 41:9 61:12 61:14 81:17,17,20 81:24 82:16 83:3 84:14,14 91:18 93:4,15,16 96:6 97:19 101:8,9 107:3,4,16,19 112:22,25 113:1,7 113:8,10,12,18 114:6,6 115:9 121:19 122:1,3,6 122:8,9,10 123:13 123:13 124:8 125:25 129:17 143:15 144:16 148:6 149:6 152:13,14,14,16 157:12,15 163:19 165:7 166:20,22 166:24,25 168:2 179:14,21,23,25 180:1,3,6,7,8,11 180:15,18,20,23 180:25 181:3,5,9 181:15,18,22,25 182:2,3 183:23 floors 6:4 14:11 113:17 152:17 157:16 178:23 179:13 181:13 | 182:8 focus 2:9 27:23 69:25 99:24 focusing 52:24 75:13 116:18,18 153:23 follow 28:17 56:1 followed 36:4 98:9 173:15 175:1 following 176:25 fool 38:16 footage 42:14,18,21 force 93:5 forced 149:13 forget 95:23 forgive 65:18 forgot 168:21 formally 2:25 found 3:6 23:24 96:10 101:20 four 58:4 60:21 63:8 66:10 79:12 fourth 152:14 frame 116:13,18,20 117:4 156:2 free 102:19 184:18 187:12,17 fresh 96:15 137:8 143:13 friend 31:11 41:8 49:13 83:2 friends 14:5,9 15:25 40:23 frighten 44:21 front 3:4 11:9,13 11:14,20,21 12:3 12:19 14:22,23 18:11,22 19:6,8 19:10,13,21 21:3 21:7 27:5 28:1,3,7 29:4 31:1,1 35:8 40:16 41:4 43:4 43:11,18,22,24 44:7 45:4,5 46:6 47:5,6 51:20 |
|---|---|---|--|--|

| | | | | |
|--|---|--|---|--|
| 52:18,23 74:18 75:8 76:4,20 77:10,12,14 79:23 80:23 81:2 85:13 87:8,10,15,16,18 89:1 90:6,6,24,24 90:25,25 94:1 95:25 105:11 109:4,7,17,19 127:3,4,7 130:25 138:21 139:10,11 139:12,14,16 142:6 150:9 155:12 157:25 158:2,9,11,14 159:1,4 173:4,11 173:12,22 full 1:23,24 19:19 19:19 24:9 35:1 59:1 74:7 75:2 77:4 81:3 91:5,7,9 102:24,25 104:5 184:11 full-blown 154:3 function 120:6,8 functioning 120:7 further 21:10 46:6 53:4 62:15 66:16 77:7 98:13 183:11 186:2,4 188:5 189:13 furthest 6:18 7:3 67:8 127:1,2 future 26:8 | 25:3,11 29:5 31:4 36:6,11 37:4 40:22 55:22 56:17 56:18 76:9,13 80:8 85:11 87:23 91:24 97:19 100:14 102:7,14 161:11,12,23 171:18 172:8 173:15,23 174:25 175:23 176:2,25 Genet's 69:6 gentlemen 103:8 getting 38:12 41:22 50:2 65:12 76:13 76:16 85:18 130:20 142:11 146:14 147:1 165:11 173:9 182:24 girl 108:7 give 1:23 2:1 4:10 13:18 42:17 49:18 52:22 53:5 54:9 69:5 78:2 103:10 104:16,16 125:9 140:17,19 142:18 161:1 165:9 184:10 given 19:17 53:18 66:22 70:3,5 71:21 78:19 100:8 100:10 121:5,15 188:8 gives 57:18 73:4 giving 37:15 74:9 99:20 104:2 141:3 165:24 go 3:9,17 4:2,6 5:25 6:3 9:25 15:2,16 16:22 21:5,10 26:9,13 30:23,25 31:2,9 33:13 35:18 36:1 38:20 39:17 41:4,6,24 | 42:13 45:17 46:6 46:9 50:20 54:18 57:8 58:13 60:15 62:15 68:6 70:23 73:1,8 76:1,22 77:16,17 78:3,8 81:25 82:25 84:10 85:2,24 87:4 88:6 88:7 89:5 90:11 91:17,19,21 92:22 92:23 93:6 94:16 99:3 102:19 110:23 111:11,17 114:10 115:1,2 119:15,24 121:24 123:14 125:22 126:7 128:25 133:10 134:2,19 137:16,24 141:20 144:18 152:6,15 153:16 156:25 158:19,22,23 159:9,17,21 165:7 170:8 171:17 172:20 173:19,24 173:24 175:7,8 179:11 180:12 183:13,25 186:9 goes 40:21 167:21 going 1:6 2:17 14:11 15:13 19:18 20:4 23:20,22 24:19 25:6,17,19 25:22,23,25 26:6 26:7 32:5 33:3,5 33:10 37:5,9 40:25 41:1 47:18 48:7 49:15,17 51:9,25 54:11 63:2,21 64:15 70:3 75:9 83:5 88:19 93:13 98:21 99:24 100:22 104:12 107:7 110:2 112:12 | 118:16,18,20 119:17 121:2 123:25 125:15 126:2,15 128:22 129:5 134:18 140:5 141:6 144:9 144:24 148:5,12 148:19,23 149:9 149:13 150:16 153:3,12 154:9 158:6 159:12,16 159:20,22 163:19 164:15,17,18 165:5,6,14,19 166:4,7 167:1,25 168:1,5,15 169:25 170:7,15,16,20 171:19 176:1,4 179:24 180:7,8,9 180:20,22 181:8 182:5,5,6,9,16 183:8 184:20 186:5,13,22 188:22 189:5,7,9 good 1:5,10,21,22 26:1 44:22 47:6,9 47:10 50:7 70:8 86:17 103:7,14,22 114:10,11 139:17 144:25 146:13,15 155:24 184:21 186:12 189:24 graffiti 114:3 grateful 188:25 gratitude 188:16 great 99:19 102:11 greatly 188:17 Grenfell 71:2 73:15 107:4,16,19 108:1 108:6,18 114:9 125:16 128:17,18 137:2,3 157:14 166:19 grey 131:20 156:8 157:22 | ground 14:3 63:21 100:21 122:1,3,9 122:10 guess 147:9 181:23 guessed 146:13 guide 159:6 163:18 gun 119:8 <hr/> H Haftom 30:1 half 57:22 184:21 halfway 43:14 119:25 128:11 137:17 139:14 165:8 hall 158:7 hallway 27:3 44:17 88:23 90:3,4,8,8,9 Hampstead 184:18 hand 46:13 97:6 101:17,21,21,23 159:4 hand-drawn 114:1 handle 8:4,7 10:8,9 10:20 97:20 119:24 handles 10:24 115:1 119:19,21 handrail 92:25 97:22,23 handwritten 114:7 hanging 123:21 happen 53:7 98:16 140:23 happened 29:24 72:5 84:17 89:25 92:9 96:20 101:25 119:18 120:2,4 129:13 150:22 153:20 154:19 155:21 168:24 169:3 happening 22:19 24:19 26:20 28:6 34:13 36:8 54:15 61:14 100:21 |
|--|---|--|---|--|

| | | | | |
|--|--|--|---|---|
| <p>happens 126:8</p> <p>happy 26:6 33:23 68:15 104:24</p> <p>hard 53:24 96:10 101:20,24 150:15</p> <p>harvest 186:20</p> <p>Hashim 24:25 25:1 37:6</p> <p>Hashim's 24:21</p> <p>head 92:18 133:25 153:12 159:13 179:18</p> <p>hear 1:6 17:18 18:7 18:10 20:13 21:19 39:3 43:1 46:3 47:3 49:9 52:18 52:21 101:4 103:24 123:14 125:22 127:15,16 174:14 175:5</p> <p>heard 2:11 15:5,16 17:16 42:2 45:24 69:23 99:24 100:1 100:7,11 126:14 127:5,9,16 130:15 135:8 188:10</p> <p>hearing 1:6 18:11 28:22 172:2 189:22 190:6</p> <p>heartbreaking 104:8</p> <p>heat 160:22,22 176:20 177:7,16 178:9,24 179:8,11 181:8,10,10</p> <p>heavier 109:8</p> <p>held 4:15 101:16</p> <p>helicopter 25:9 37:7 42:14,18</p> <p>helicopters 42:9</p> <p>hello 62:5,6 73:14 79:3 136:23 152:12 167:13,14 167:18</p> <p>helmet 46:25 47:2</p> | <p>179:17</p> <p>helmets 144:19</p> <p>help 2:2 5:24 11:12 12:24 37:25 53:6 53:19 72:13 73:3 83:21 84:2 85:18 86:18 88:14 97:21 102:15 117:13,16 133:7 160:18 166:21 175:23,24</p> <p>helped 101:19 160:19</p> <p>helpful 26:15 30:12 63:23 102:10</p> <p>helpfully 18:14</p> <p>helps 5:5,7</p> <p>hesitate 2:21</p> <p>Hi 103:23</p> <p>higher 6:3 147:1 181:13 182:8</p> <p>hindsight 171:3,11 187:8</p> <p>hinges 109:15 111:15</p> <p>hire 12:10</p> <p>hit 177:24 178:8</p> <p>hits 123:22</p> <p>Hiwot 40:24</p> <p>hold 31:20 39:6,6 88:3 91:22 92:12 92:13 94:22 97:6 101:14,18,23 175:11</p> <p>holding 37:10 39:5 40:14 92:11 93:10 93:16 97:22 101:15,21 138:19</p> <p>hole 49:20</p> <p>home 15:24 16:3 126:9,11 151:10</p> <p>honest 9:8,12 11:24 12:22 19:14 22:18 24:5 30:17 46:13 47:13 48:7 59:8 64:18 71:25 72:15</p> | <p>75:10 80:18 81:12 86:2,11 90:18 93:24 116:21 120:21 187:4</p> <p>hope 2:18 11:8 25:20 32:25 37:7 41:7,9 48:3 51:16 53:14 66:7 67:11 103:24 140:11 171:6,10,12 189:21</p> <p>hopefully 3:9 11:25</p> <p>hopeless 83:8</p> <p>hoping 25:16 32:4</p> <p>horrendous 189:1</p> <p>horror 100:25</p> <p>hospital 184:18 187:14,18 188:1</p> <p>hospitals 187:16</p> <p>hot 9:3 161:2,2 176:19 177:23,25 181:11,12,13</p> <p>hotter 160:23,25 161:1,3,4,5 176:21,22,23 177:21 178:3,5 179:9,10</p> <p>hottest 178:22 179:4 181:11</p> <p>hour 26:10 152:10 182:16 184:21</p> <p>hours 5:6 98:9 184:22,22</p> <p>house 73:16,18 132:6 137:22,23 152:22 159:22 164:4</p> <p>hung 82:16</p> <p>hung-up 83:10</p> <p>hurry 144:14,23</p> <p>hurt 92:17</p> <p>husband 108:7 111:4,6 112:6 126:10 161:23 175:1</p> | <p>I</p> <p>idea 114:11 117:15</p> <p>identified 3:24 140:1 141:23</p> <p>identify 46:17,20 107:2 117:16 124:9</p> <p>illuminated 28:15</p> <p>image 6:21 13:11 13:13 35:3,5 94:24 100:24</p> <p>immediate 116:6,7</p> <p>immediately 87:1,1 98:6 114:21,25 177:21</p> <p>impact 169:23</p> <p>impacted 170:20</p> <p>implored 82:14</p> <p>important 39:16 45:23 59:11 99:25 100:7,12 112:16 188:12,24 189:15</p> <p>importantly 101:12</p> <p>impossible 75:18 75:20</p> <p>impression 164:8 165:25</p> <p>inaudible 58:3,4,20 58:21,25 59:6 61:15,16,25 62:3 62:6,8,14,20,23 73:16 76:6 77:3 80:25 81:2,15 166:21 168:4</p> <p>included 69:24</p> <p>including 58:9</p> <p>increase 177:8,16 178:9</p> <p>increased 178:16 178:17</p> <p>indicate 89:23 94:12 104:10</p> <p>indicated 20:21 27:10</p> <p>Indicates 44:1</p> | <p>92:14 94:17 97:23</p> <p>indicating 50:11</p> <p>individual 123:4</p> <p>individuals 100:5</p> <p>induced 187:22</p> <p>inevitable 109:24</p> <p>influence 25:14 143:24</p> <p>inform 162:24</p> <p>information 13:8 22:13 24:12,15 25:11 34:25 35:24 40:19 41:21 47:25 54:9 70:3,5 75:1,5 81:5,11 123:4,9 152:17 169:2</p> <p>informed 129:16</p> <p>inhale 168:10</p> <p>inhaled 160:11</p> <p>inhaler 184:6</p> <p>ink 114:3</p> <p>inner 111:21</p> <p>INQ00000093 121:18</p> <p>inquiry 1:23 2:2,5 2:25 3:5 82:8 101:13 102:11 103:19 104:2 105:7,15 149:25 190:12</p> <p>inquiry's 13:21 121:20</p> <p>inside 37:11 59:2 109:8 124:1,2 129:18 130:12 143:1 144:13 154:18 155:19,21 158:21 172:14 188:22</p> <p>insisting 88:9 91:19</p> <p>installed 110:21</p> <p>instinct 93:9</p> <p>instructed 182:10</p> <p>instructing 174:9</p> <p>instruction 171:12</p> |
|--|--|--|---|---|

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| intense 177:7,9,16 179:8 181:10 | 126:13 136:12 | 149:14 150:18 151:11 153:21 154:2,4,5,10,19 155:7,9,11,16 156:22 158:21 171:19 | 65:1,15,16 67:20 69:18,23 70:16 71:9,12,13,15 72:15 75:10 76:11 81:1 84:15,17 85:10 86:15 88:4 89:6,10 90:22 91:3,7,16,20 92:5 92:9,20 93:9 97:5 102:1,9 104:7 110:11 111:13 112:21 115:14 119:9 122:11,17 127:11,24 133:4 134:22,23 135:20 135:24 136:4 137:6,20 138:5 142:2 143:17 145:13,19 146:19 146:25 153:11,12 153:13,14 154:6 154:20 157:2,9 158:20 159:19 161:25 162:1,2,3 162:10 163:9 165:4,13,13,13 168:5,21,25 169:2 169:3,4,25 171:8 172:4 174:8,12,21 176:4 178:12,20 178:25 179:23 180:24 183:6 187:19,19,20 188:12 | language 31:3,4,6,7 48:5 52:15 last-but-one 136:8 lasted 38:24 lasts 37:20 136:21 late 15:4 17:1 23:24 73:20 Lawson 149:16 laying 183:23 layout 5:10 6:2 lead 158:1 leads 122:20 128:18 leak 8:6 9:5 leaks 49:21 50:11 learn 91:9 learnt 22:3 27:24 84:19 leaseholder 132:22 leave 11:12 12:18 15:4 16:25 24:4 31:23 32:11,23 44:11 49:12,15,17 86:25 87:14 101:7 104:17 126:10 130:21 133:15 141:6 149:14 167:25 168:6 169:4 170:22 171:2,13 172:13 173:9 174:22 175:1 182:10 184:17 187:2,9 190:3 leaving 16:16 32:21 133:1 134:4,15 136:8 171:15 173:6,21 175:20 led 12:15 77:13 151:10 ledge 36:7,11,16,19 36:25 37:2 38:1 39:10,19,25 40:10 41:11,16 42:4,7 42:15,19 43:8 |
| intensive 187:13 | K | knew 130:15 131:14 134:19 139:21 146:13 159:8 168:24 169:24 170:1 175:18 knock 18:11,22 31:25 32:5 36:3 37:23 42:2,5 43:3 47:17 55:8,9,16 148:12 161:6 knocked 31:22 32:23 83:13,19 84:7 132:23 133:16 134:3,24 135:4 139:23 144:12 145:8 146:22 161:9 knocking 18:25 42:24 140:2 146:15 knocks 123:22 know 2:14 4:11 5:7 5:21 8:18 9:7,8,9 9:9,11,11,13,15 9:18 12:9 13:1 15:1,2,2 16:6 17:19,21,25 20:1 20:3,4,5,25 21:21 22:4,20 24:18,19 25:16,21,22 27:11 29:11,13,15 33:1 37:8,9 40:2,4,7 42:22 43:13,25 44:23 48:1 49:21 49:22,24,25 52:10 53:23 59:2,5,12 59:14,25 62:20 63:15,16 64:16 | known 69:11 knows 31:4 Kumon 15:23 | |
| interested 32:14 | Kedir 24:25 25:1,3 25:12 | | | |
| interrupt 58:13 75:17 97:12 | keep 2:18 26:6,7 48:9 88:9 95:12 95:12 117:1 143:12 180:7,8,9 180:20 182:5,5,5 183:8 | | | |
| interrupting 65:18 | keeping 63:1 | | | |
| investigate 19:6 | kept 69:17,18 70:17 93:10 130:17,18 154:7 179:25 180:18 182:5 187:12 | | | |
| investigations 104:3 | kicked 184:14 | | | |
| Investigator 69:20 | kids 58:4 59:12 63:8 119:23 126:6 131:9 133:14 134:20 137:5 139:23 142:8 147:23 153:21 158:18 160:13 168:13 169:7 170:17 171:22 172:10 173:9,16 173:18 187:7 | | | |
| inviting 100:3,5 | kind 15:1 50:23 61:1 88:17 92:6 169:9 | | | |
| involved 47:12 | kinds 61:2 | | | |
| Ironically 124:25 | King's 187:13 | | | |
| Isaac 15:23 83:5 98:6 101:16 102:14 | Kingdom 25:21 | | | |
| issue 17:5 20:6 25:20 48:4 90:1 136:15 | kitchen 5:22 7:9 10:6,14 14:22 15:3 36:22 55:20 56:6,8,13 63:10 76:10,11,14,16 80:9,12 88:23 115:4,17,17 116:11,18 118:19 127:18 128:1,14 128:16 131:7,10 131:16 147:4 | | | |
| IWS00000498 105:10 177:5 | | | | |
| IWS00000847 82:4 | | | | |
| IWS00001001 35:3 | | | | |
| IWS00001051 3:2 34:6 57:8 73:2 | | | | |
| IWS00001142 138:13 | | | | |
| IWS00001144 106:5,25 115:10 136:7 | | | | |
| J | | | L | |
| jammed 109:15 112:4 | | | labelled 106:25 lack 151:2 ladies 103:7 lady 75:22 landing 19:22 58:22 90:17 92:22 153:18 | |
| job 5:5 12:9 | | | | |
| joke 49:8 | | | | |
| jump 37:10 40:11 81:15,16,19 83:5 83:6,13,19 162:13 169:8 170:16,21 | | | | |
| jumping 81:23 | | | | |
| June 4:10,12 5:10 5:17 10:23 12:25 15:19 107:15 112:25 122:13 | | | | |

| | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| 49:11 54:22,25 55:7 59:20,23 60:4,6 72:6 81:22 81:25 83:12,18,22 83:23 84:7 153:18 153:21 154:1,18 155:18,20 162:7 162:11 ledges 151:9 153:24,25 left 24:8 30:2 31:14 35:2 45:15,20 48:23 51:23 52:4 53:16 77:24 78:3 78:11 86:17 90:2 95:2,11 96:3,21 100:25 115:21,23 115:24 136:4 142:6 146:3 149:8 150:11 153:16 155:6,17,19 156:25 157:22 158:3,7,12,15 159:2 160:13 169:21 170:5 171:6 172:7 173:3 173:7,14,25 174:11,22,25 175:2 176:2,2,3,3 176:16 178:1 182:17 184:5,21 185:13,14,16 189:8 190:2 left-hand 45:16,19 89:9 left-right 45:25 legs 37:3,4 let's 9:25 13:5 43:16 60:3 68:24 70:23 138:11 152:6 173:24 letter 109:10 letterbox 51:21 level 7:16,17 92:24 92:25 | LFB00000365 152:7 162:17 LFB00000384 166:10 LFB00000662 136:16 143:8 life 53:24 86:19 lift 16:23 27:25 28:3 29:4,17 31:5 85:16 114:15 122:18 168:11 lifts 11:15,15,17 12:8 13:23,25 14:2 121:25 124:14 light 16:5,9,23 17:2 19:16 26:24,25 27:1 28:13,15,18 35:13,22 90:1,4 90:10,11 94:3,6 96:12,13 179:15 179:17 lighting 26:23 35:21 90:3,9 lights 16:4,6,18,18 17:4,5 27:3 28:10 44:17 89:25 90:1 135:20 145:5,6,6 145:7,9,10,12 line 11:21 19:7 21:14 57:24 92:6 136:18 170:18 lines 34:12 61:10 66:10 110:23 115:3 listen 63:20 69:11 78:10,14 100:18 101:24 163:11,11 167:9,24 168:5,7 listened 48:3 59:9 listening 105:3 literally 154:15,16 184:10 little 21:22 43:16 44:2 48:10 58:17 | 62:15 63:24 64:19 77:7 93:18 95:13 100:24 101:1 108:7 115:12 119:8 121:2 131:4 135:6 140:6 147:2 154:7 158:1 180:22 185:8 189:18 live 4:19 23:10 100:24 107:21,24 108:5 lived 14:9 16:1 29:15,22 107:15 107:18 108:10 living 14:24 29:12 29:13 55:24 56:1 60:21 67:6,9 76:21 79:20 101:8 108:15,20 115:18 116:23 127:1 142:8 147:15 155:12 162:6 172:19,21,21,23 172:25 lobbies 113:11 182:13 lobby 11:9,18,24 12:15 16:4,7,18 19:16 20:15,23 21:2,10 24:9 26:23 27:17,25 28:15,19 30:24 34:10,14,17 35:20 40:16 41:5,7 44:10,15 45:2,3 45:13,17 46:8,19 52:19,23 56:11,15 56:19 74:23 75:18 75:21 81:8 87:21 88:15 89:22 90:6 93:22 94:3,18,20 94:21 95:4,24 97:23 121:24 122:1 123:12,16 | 131:1 135:5,14 138:7 139:4,5 144:16 145:5 146:5 158:25 159:25 160:21,23 174:1 176:14,15 177:1,7,12,19,24 181:16 local 108:19 location 8:17 65:11 65:12 lock 119:22 lodger 162:2 173:5 173:22 174:18,22 175:23 176:2 London 71:1 77:21 78:7 79:4 85:21 86:15 101:5 102:1 125:1 129:11 132:15 141:25 long 12:10 25:17 33:1 38:24 47:15 52:11 69:16 70:17 101:24 107:21 110:20 111:16 119:12 122:12,14 146:17 147:11 149:8 153:6,9,16 158:17 172:1 173:15 174:21,23 178:21 183:20 184:19 longer 66:4 118:7 look 3:3 7:10,22 13:5,17 15:21 19:3,7 21:4,16 22:24 33:14 34:7 46:20 55:15 57:2 57:9 64:10 67:2 69:2,8 72:23 74:22 75:9 78:25 79:1,11 85:23 87:5 91:7 92:13 105:17 106:6,11 107:8,10 113:15 | 119:2 124:11 126:17 127:23 128:15,16 129:24 130:25 136:6,14 139:17 144:25 146:4 151:22 152:6,11 162:25 181:16 looked 64:14 67:13 91:4 109:7 115:11 127:17 128:12 131:6,10 133:17 154:9,10 162:16 looking 4:2 22:21 27:16 33:6 39:6 45:25 56:13 67:22 80:5 84:2,22 85:6 105:2 128:14 132:6 138:22 154:7 183:22 looks 7:19 33:3 59:15 loose 120:10,10 loss 102:14 lot 5:15 40:25 63:21 108:14 114:13 132:11,18 144:2 160:22 165:24 169:7 loud 15:6 42:5,5,24 88:19 louder 15:8 lounge 6:11,18 7:1 7:20 8:8,15 9:21 10:2,13,19,20 36:23 43:9 54:23 lower 24:13,16,17 131:4,7,11,14 178:23 179:13 luck 186:24 lucky 98:1 lunch 98:19 lying 97:22 149:21 149:24 |
|--|---|---|---|---|

M

| | | | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| main 30:18 | 73:17 79:18 98:10 | 140:5,8,10,16,17 | 109:17 129:25 | 108:6,18,18 121:7 |
| making 34:17 | 105:3 110:15 | 140:22 141:1,17 | 135:15 149:15 | 121:8,9,10,11 |
| 40:22 69:9 89:6 | 137:20 176:6 | 141:18 182:15,22 | 151:23 153:23 | 125:15 153:6,10 |
| 95:22 169:16 | 181:11 | 182:25 183:8,9,14 | 167:5 172:13 | 157:4 |
| male 46:17 56:2 | means 23:19 58:5 | 185:22 186:2,12 | 185:23 | moving 89:5 95:12 |
| 144:11 | 73:19 | 186:14,18,20,25 | moments 42:23 | 95:12 162:22 |
| man 27:24 36:9 | meant 16:12 90:8 | 188:15,21 189:9 | months 110:22 | mum 87:11 91:23 |
| 42:6 91:19,22 | 110:11,13 120:10 | 189:17,25 | MOORE-BICK | 107:22 142:16,18 |
| 101:13,15,18 | measures 104:11 | million 49:16 | 1:5,12,15,19 | 167:9,12 |
| 161:23,25 173:10 | medical 96:21 | mind 24:1 40:9 | 13:15 26:2,5,9 | mute 15:7 |
| manage 50:6 97:25 | medium 61:1 | 52:2,6 63:1 64:25 | 33:3,8,16,21,23 | |
| 101:13 171:23 | meeting 69:19 | 65:2 66:2 130:6,9 | 33:25 38:18,21 | N |
| managed 67:20 | melting 154:25 | 140:14 | 49:1 65:18,21,25 | N 190:9 |
| 92:25 | 155:1 | minimal 150:14,22 | 66:3 68:1,3,13,15 | name 1:23,24 20:1 |
| management | members 142:18 | minute 25:19 129:6 | 68:17 98:17 99:1 | 20:3,5 104:5 |
| 189:20 | memory 47:19 | 136:21 140:20 | 99:3,7,12 102:5 | 133:4,21 |
| marked 7:23 95:1 | 59:22 70:8,25 | 153:3 154:17,19 | 102:19,23,25 | national 31:6 |
| 113:11 | 71:3 91:11 | 162:17 176:1 | 103:3,7,17,20 | near 8:3 127:7 |
| MARTIN 1:5,12 | mention 17:16 | 180:12 | 107:10 140:7,9,12 | 134:9 |
| 1:15,19 13:15 | 29:19 48:17 56:25 | minutes 25:25 | 140:15,19,24 | nearby 28:23 |
| 26:2,5,9 33:3,8,16 | 84:11 108:14 | 37:20 38:3,6 39:9 | 141:2,14,16 | nearest 78:9 127:3 |
| 33:21,23,25 38:18 | mentioned 23:1 | 52:13 69:15 98:22 | 182:20,24 183:3,8 | nearly 93:8 156:8 |
| 38:21 49:1 65:18 | 25:7,9 29:21,21 | 104:13 131:6,8 | 183:13 185:25 | necessary 23:20 |
| 65:21,25 66:3 | 34:20 36:16 48:14 | 135:21 140:6 | 186:7,13,19,21,24 | 24:2 |
| 68:1,3,13,15,17 | 48:23 56:5 59:4 | 146:15 147:13 | 188:14,20 189:5 | need 2:13,24 3:6 |
| 98:17 99:1,3,7,12 | 60:12 80:8 | 149:2,12 153:11 | 189:16,24 | 4:23 24:2,3 26:7 |
| 102:5,19,23,25 | mentioning 56:10 | 174:23,24,25 | morning 1:5,10,21 | 40:11 54:13 85:24 |
| 103:3,7,17,20 | 84:9 | 176:3,6,6 182:22 | 1:22 5:6 17:3 | 98:15,23 101:3 |
| 107:10 140:7,9,12 | Meron 40:24,24 | 184:4 | 102:24,25 126:13 | 104:9 109:25 |
| 140:15,19,24 | mess 75:5 | missed 58:12 | 184:22,22 | 130:6,13 141:2 |
| 141:2,14,16 | message 77:24 78:3 | missing 78:12 | mother 29:16 | 153:13 163:15 |
| 182:20,24 183:3,8 | 78:11,15 122:23 | 100:16,18 | 108:17 | 168:6,7,8,8,10,12 |
| 183:13 185:25 | 166:4 | mistake 63:14 | motion 154:21 | 171:17,17 183:1,6 |
| 186:7,13,19,21,24 | met 29:16 | mistime 52:4 | motivated 169:5 | 185:25 186:15 |
| 188:14,20 189:5 | MET00012593 | misunderstanding | mounting 120:5 | needed 54:8 111:11 |
| 189:16,24 | 5:25 89:20 157:12 | 100:16 | mouth 93:12 | 130:3 158:19 |
| mask 46:16,18,23 | metre 139:15 | misunderstood | 163:17 168:9,13 | 173:18 184:1 |
| 46:24 | metres 138:20 | 180:21 | move 4:11 14:18 | neighbour 19:25 |
| maths 15:23 58:5 | mezzanine 93:15 | mix 17:25,25 | 15:19 35:9 67:4 | 20:7 21:17 22:3,6 |
| Matt 69:20 | 97:19 | mm 65:17 143:5 | 72:19 95:11 153:4 | 22:9 26:17 55:10 |
| matter 16:21 47:14 | middle 34:11 118:7 | mobile 15:8 86:16 | moved 4:8,12 5:14 | 55:17,21 56:17,21 |
| 50:5 150:3 163:9 | 124:12,13,14 | moment 13:18 | 9:2 63:7 79:22 | 58:3,7 63:7 77:15 |
| 170:1,3 | 148:4 | 38:18 44:5 58:14 | 80:9 84:5 85:12 | 80:5 87:11 132:21 |
| mattress 85:17 | Millett 103:13,14 | 63:25 70:4 85:6 | 87:2 92:3 107:22 | 139:23 145:8 |
| mean 19:9 51:8 | 103:21,22 107:13 | 88:11 98:13 | 107:23 108:1,2,3 | 159:14 |
| | | | | neighbour's 152:19 |

| | | | | |
|--|---|--|---|---|
| 152:21,25 153:6 153:10,17 159:17 159:22 162:19 164:4,6 176:23 178:1,2 neighbours 20:10 21:23 22:19 23:3 55:1 83:4 112:21 148:6 159:12 neighbours' 148:13 never 14:15 29:7 29:13,13 46:2 119:18 149:5 179:7 new 33:4,5 109:7 109:14 113:18 114:20 next-door 6:22 164:6 night 2:10,13 15:10 15:11,16 16:3,5,6 16:15,16 17:1,12 17:13 25:18 29:12 100:2,7,12,25 104:9 107:5 108:23 110:16 112:19 120:15,19 120:24 123:13 126:2,5 170:25 171:1 185:10 188:9,11 189:12 nightmare 101:1 Nodded 49:2 noise 15:5 20:13 42:23 127:12 noises 17:15 18:7,8 28:22 52:19 normal 16:5 17:12 18:5,5 20:20,25 20:25 41:15 49:19 Normally 23:23 north-west 116:5,7 116:8 note 118:11 notes 105:2 | notice 4:11 8:1,16 9:3 13:22,24 14:12,14 19:12,14 20:16 27:8,10 35:17 44:9,11 89:7 90:18,20 120:20 121:19 122:15 123:3 156:5,20 160:20 160:23 noticed 7:9 11:24 12:17 14:21 15:3 40:15 56:18 61:3 88:15 182:17 noticing 9:4 128:8 number 13:14 29:21 61:12 73:6 78:13,13 86:17 97:1,4,5,6 136:19 152:8,18 179:22 numbering 113:1 113:10 114:12 numbers 57:17 113:20 114:4 136:18 180:14,16 180:17 <hr/> O <hr/> o'clock 84:13 obvious 189:17 obviously 4:10 16:11 21:12 23:19 25:5,16 39:11 40:4,21 44:1,24 45:15,20 50:1 51:10 63:8 65:16 72:17 73:19 74:13 75:22 77:9,15 90:4 92:12 128:23 137:19 142:9 163:17 189:19 occasion 27:5,8 31:5 occasional 29:17 occasions 35:19 October 1:1 106:10 | 190:6 offer 102:14 offering 175:23 officer 38:7 100:15 100:17 officially 4:11 oh 51:13 59:10,10 115:23 127:18 141:2 160:25 178:17 180:25 okay 1:18 2:16,23 4:5 10:1,3 13:4,11 22:1 24:23 26:11 33:15,15,22,24 48:11 51:14 55:5 57:2,3,7 58:15,15 61:23 62:4 65:24 66:11,11,12,13,15 66:19,20 68:25 70:1 74:5 81:15 81:20,21 84:23 85:1 94:14 98:25 99:2,6,15 102:18 102:21 104:15,20 104:25 109:1 116:15 121:1 124:1,6 125:24 128:6 129:24 130:24 131:3,19 133:20 134:11 137:3,4 143:12,14 143:17,18,19 144:19 145:22 146:1,2,7,12,20 147:18,21 149:15 150:6,16 152:5 157:10 159:24 163:2,5 164:25 165:5,10,16,20,22 166:16 167:1,6,9 167:13,17,24 168:1,3,10,12,13 168:15 172:15 177:14 179:2 180:4 181:6 | 182:15 186:23 187:20 old 109:7 164:19,23 older 91:22 Olympia 69:19 once 12:6,12 14:14 32:8 52:18 81:22 88:14 91:16 96:3 97:18 190:2 one-year 14:16 ones 115:19,21,23 open 8:5 10:21 11:21 28:7 34:18 36:4 41:10 43:12 43:13,15 44:2,3,7 44:19 45:15,17 75:13 77:9 87:19 87:22,22,25,25 88:14 92:6 128:1 128:3 130:25 138:19 139:7 154:5,7,22 155:10 155:11,14 161:8 175:11 182:13 opened 19:6,8,12 19:15,21 26:19,22 27:5,11,16 29:2 30:23 32:18 34:13 35:19 36:9 40:15 43:7,22,24 44:7 45:20 56:17 74:24 75:8 87:8,16,18 87:20 90:12 92:5 109:9 128:7 135:15 144:14,25 159:1 160:2,24 161:10 173:3,11 173:22 177:18,23 178:5,7 182:2 opening 28:3 34:15 64:8 74:24 85:18 158:2,5 opens 11:9 45:24 operator 57:24 58:1,19,20,22,24 | 59:1 60:12,14 61:12,13,14,17,20 61:23 62:1,4,7,10 62:13,16,17,19,22 66:10,11,15,17,20 73:10,13,14 74:4 74:5 76:1,3,25 77:1,7,8,19 79:2,3 79:11,25 80:2,19 80:20 81:1,16,19 85:21,25 86:3 136:23 137:1,3,7 137:16,19,23 138:2 139:1 142:2 142:3,4,4 143:10 143:11,15,17,20 143:25 163:1,2,5 163:7,11,13,15,25 164:8,13,17,21,23 164:25 165:3,5,13 165:17,19,21,23 166:22,24 167:1,6 167:9,13,18,23,24 168:3,5 169:17 170:14 operator's 163:24 opportunity 104:16 105:23 106:18 opposite 34:22 option 22:18 38:14 40:3 oral 149:24 orange 64:16,25 65:1,2 67:24 74:3 80:14 156:4 order 2:17 36:14 57:5 98:15 organisation 123:4 original 11:4 166:17 ought 140:22 outside 17:15 26:20 34:14 37:3,4 43:1 52:19 59:17 63:11 75:9 76:7 77:2 |
|--|---|--|---|---|

| | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|--|
| 80:22 81:7 126:14 127:5 128:24 131:6 132:6 136:2 139:10,11 142:11 142:12 153:25 154:1,18 169:18 183:16,17,21,22 overspeaking 60:16 62:6 163:8 163:10,11 165:7 165:12 overwhelmingly 176:19 oxygen 96:25 97:9 | 163:23 164:13 165:8 166:18 167:3,22,22,23 170:9 177:4 184:12 pages 3:25 61:8 79:8 106:8 pain 97:21 painful 101:2 102:10 panic 65:15 81:9 88:4 89:12 91:25 panicked 59:8 162:11 panicking 17:20,25 18:3 86:6 87:24 91:16 paper 3:7 125:3 paragraph 5:11 13:5 17:8,14 18:16 19:3,7,24 22:24 23:4 26:13 26:14 27:23 31:9 33:2 34:7,12 35:23 36:1,2 37:22 53:1,3,17 54:7,18,21 55:6,6 55:11,15 56:25 69:2 82:10,10,25 84:2 85:3 96:16 96:18 98:5 109:2 109:17 110:24 113:9,15 114:16 121:4 123:10 124:24 126:7 128:11 131:5 132:20 133:10,11 133:13 134:2 136:6 138:12 139:25 142:13 147:20 148:4 149:3 150:7 151:7 151:19 153:19 156:16 157:3 170:9,12 171:5 | 177:4 180:10 184:12 187:11 paragraphs 15:21 26:19 87:5 paramedic 184:3,5 184:10 paramedics 183:18 Pardon 166:23 parent 23:8 parents 107:24 part 2:8 5:13 7:6 11:5 37:8 50:11 67:22 73:9 125:5 152:9 189:15,15 participants 2:3 particular 5:19 50:11 53:21 131:25 132:2 156:20 160:7,20 179:11,22 particularly 13:15 14:8 40:6 132:10 172:25 partner 4:7,15 8:20 15:24 18:17 40:25 58:6 parts 57:5 87:6 189:14 pass 77:17 passage 158:14 passed 129:8 passing 75:24 169:12 patience 188:16 patient 99:18 Paulos 1:11,13,24 82:14,16 83:2,10 157:6,8 162:4 169:16 170:16,21 172:2 173:13,15 173:17 174:16,22 176:2 190:10 Paulos' 83:11 169:20 172:14 Paulos's 175:22 | pause 36:13 38:19 55:3 58:18 82:6 89:16 95:12 98:15 186:17 pausing 138:1 170:23 peel 119:13 peeled 118:22,23 peephole 109:11 people 1:7 18:7 23:24 24:20 32:22 41:22 48:14 79:12 104:17 128:24 140:17 142:11 149:18 182:8 183:10 186:5 people's 100:4 period 14:16 129:7 129:8 person 45:13 123:5 141:23 167:10 personal 47:23 personally 148:9 Phase 189:15 phone 18:15 39:3 41:21 69:6 70:13 77:25 86:16 126:17 129:22 137:12 139:22 142:10,11 146:14 165:17 phoned 82:17 144:4 photograph 13:20 13:22 35:12 121:20 124:8,9 photographic 13:11 photographs 124:2 physical 97:16 132:2 135:22 145:20 156:14 physically 158:23 178:24 pick 18:1 21:21 | 82:13 84:18 picked 126:17 180:7 182:3 picture 123:25 124:1 piece 138:11 pilot 42:11,21 place 40:6 103:16 104:19 117:16 120:9 156:21 places 56:4 plan 5:24 6:1,10 7:3,6,20,24 11:4,5 11:8,12 12:1,18 64:11 89:17 107:3 115:10,14 155:10 155:14 157:11,14 plastic 132:1 145:18 plasticity 117:8 playground 38:16 pleaded 83:6 please 1:23 2:14,20 3:1,13 4:3 5:25 6:7,21 7:7 11:5,7 12:19 13:2,19 15:19,21 17:9 19:4 22:24 26:13 31:9 33:17 34:5 35:3,6 36:1 37:13 48:10,13 53:19 54:18 55:11,14 57:8,8 61:9 68:4,9 69:1,2,25 73:8 76:22 78:5 82:4 82:25 85:2,3,23 89:20,22 95:11 96:16,17 101:3 103:3 105:9,17 106:7,11 109:3 121:3,18 133:10 140:21 141:7 143:16 152:12 166:10 167:5 170:8 189:7 |
|--|---|---|---|--|

| | | | | |
|--|---|--|---|--|
| <p>pleased 101:10 Plus 38:15 pm 68:10,12 99:9 99:11 103:4,6 141:11,13 190:5 point 18:19 23:3 34:3 45:7 46:9 61:11 64:3,6 65:16 67:25 68:1 76:24 86:24 96:5 115:14 125:17 130:2,25 132:13 132:16 135:8 138:17 140:9,10 149:6 151:12 156:6 157:25 158:6 168:19 171:10 178:11,18 179:4,12,16 181:19 pointed 74:20 pole 111:2,6,12,16 111:17 police 38:2,7 69:18 69:20 70:16 100:14,17 142:14 policeman 39:1,4 position 95:21 possible 12:4 37:9 38:11 49:25 66:12 66:14 78:8 81:21 141:7,9 189:8 190:3 possibly 59:17 99:13 potential 136:15 powerful 150:25 practical 117:14 predicament 83:8 164:9,10 prefer 98:18 pregnant 137:6 147:24,25 165:4,5 prep 173:18 preparing 83:12,19</p> | <p>85:9,12 86:6,11 87:13 173:8 present 126:5 preserve 104:18 pressure 150:14,22 150:25 151:2 171:24 presumed 148:18 pretty 129:22 previous 27:2 37:6 72:1 78:12 171:6 previously 71:25 88:19 107:18 prior 13:7 140:2 145:8 prioritise 97:2,3 prioritised 101:15 prioritising 189:19 priority 97:3,3,5 184:15 private 12:9 probably 9:9 22:23 43:14 47:13 55:24 98:18 118:6,7 126:20 139:14 154:7 170:17 171:11 177:2,3 179:13 181:13,14 183:4 184:3 187:9 problem 5:17,19,22 7:9 8:1,6,9 9:3 10:9,12,18,23,25 18:6 48:6 51:10 65:23 115:17 116:13,22 117:22 119:21 171:25 problems 5:14 10:20 114:25 Proceedings 1:3 professional 51:15 progress 40:19 41:17 50:24 51:1 54:10 progressively 160:4</p> | <p>proper 65:2 113:20 114:2 124:1 properly 10:21 89:10,13 90:2 115:1 119:22,24 property 80:3 89:25 protect 169:10 provided 2:5 PT/1 3:24 PT/7 3:24 pull 112:3 158:23 pulled 46:23,24 pump 109:8 pure 65:1 purpose 2:7 push 175:10,10 pushed 39:7 120:9 pushing 93:5 put 2:24 8:3,18,24 9:8,11,17,20 10:6 10:9 15:7 17:19 17:20 53:17 59:11 61:8 65:16 76:3 77:19 82:20 85:5 87:6 93:12,12 95:10 96:9 98:15 100:9 116:25 117:10 119:13 122:25 143:3 150:8 158:5 159:4 163:3,7,16 165:15 168:9,12 183:24 187:22 putting 9:10 79:8 80:23 puzzled 107:10</p> | <p>141:20 153:8 154:20 163:24 181:8 185:8 186:25 187:1 questions 1:14 2:8 2:9,18 4:4 5:9,23 23:2 33:6 34:9 35:5 57:6 63:2 65:19 66:1,6 72:25 79:10 98:11 98:13,14,23 99:5 99:19,23,23 103:19 104:7,21 107:14 108:24 126:4 153:4 182:17,20,22,25 183:11 186:2,4,15 186:22 188:5,17 190:11,12 queue 185:2 quick 52:15 quickly 130:3,7,14 141:6,9 144:15 151:10 154:15,16 155:22 169:25 189:8 190:3 quite 62:25 69:16 114:13 159:7 165:24 175:17 179:22 181:10,20 189:2</p> | <p>49:3 65:18,20,23 66:5 67:25 68:2 68:18,19 98:9,22 99:8,12,14,16 102:23,24 103:2 190:11 reach 92:2 reached 41:18 92:22 reaches 170:1 read 2:4,7 54:19 72:8 82:9 100:23 105:9,23 106:18 113:19,25 122:21 156:16 165:24 168:22 170:10,13 189:13,14 reading 62:25 122:19 171:3 189:19 reads 34:12 ready 80:10 85:12 130:21 141:14 173:9 175:1 realise 92:20 149:8 realised 103:9 really 15:6,7 17:20 23:25 41:3,7 42:5 44:11 47:6,15 48:4 50:23 51:22 52:15 56:14,23 61:6,6 64:25 73:19,23 86:14,17 87:2 90:20 91:16 92:8,17 93:1 98:3 179:2 188:24 reason 4:25 30:18 38:5 39:24 70:10 77:18 79:8 159:16 170:5 recall 12:22 22:23 64:22 69:9 81:9 117:21 140:3 146:9 147:6 recalls 83:15</p> |
| R | | | | |
| <p>Rabia 20:8,9 75:4 81:6,11 103:15,18 104:6 190:12 radio 163:19 182:9 Ralph 26:15 ran 42:6,7 43:3,3 183:23 rang 24:25 rare 183:14 Rawat 1:9,10,14,20 1:21 13:13,17 25:25 26:4,12 33:5 34:1,2 38:22</p> | | | | |
| Q | | | | |
| <p>quarter 26:9 166:18 question 2:20,22 6:25 12:19 25:10 34:15 67:11 74:10 99:13,17 100:3,10 104:23 122:11,20</p> | | | | |

| | | | | |
|----------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| receive 96:21 | relief 93:11,13 | 125:14 126:16 | 84:25 85:5,20 | 167:19 169:11,11 |
| received 13:8 25:3 | reliving 2:12 | 127:6,17 128:4,5 | 170:15,20 | 171:21 174:10,21 |
| 31:13 143:24 | reluctant 51:14 | 128:8 129:13,20 | rescued 25:8 38:13 | 175:25 176:13 |
| receiving 86:10 | remain 82:19 | 130:23 131:2,2,21 | 41:8 47:18 84:17 | 180:2 182:19 |
| recognised 29:5 | remember 4:9,17 | 132:1,15,17 | 101:10 171:10 | 183:3,5 184:9 |
| recollection 18:25 | 7:13 8:3,6 9:15,19 | 133:23,25 134:16 | residents 184:17 | 186:16,21 188:14 |
| 70:19,23 71:7 | 10:6,8,12,17,25 | 134:17 135:8 | resistance 109:9 | right-hand 152:9 |
| 75:7 129:10 | 12:2,14,21,23 | 136:11 138:1,4,8 | respond 170:19 | ring 66:15 137:10 |
| 138:25 150:3 | 13:24 14:1,1,2,4 | 138:22 139:9 | response 66:24 | 165:9 |
| record 2:25 8:14 | 14:25,25 15:8,18 | 141:22,24 142:3 | 74:9 85:1 142:23 | rise 186:6 189:5 |
| 37:2 69:17 80:1 | 16:3,18 17:19 | 142:15,17 144:23 | 163:24 165:8 | road 127:12,14 |
| 82:9 105:10 | 18:2,11 22:6,21 | 145:14 147:8,10 | rest 97:24 109:16 | 128:17,17 137:1 |
| 129:25 140:1 | 27:9 28:21,22 | 147:11 154:6,21 | 141:10 190:2 | role 187:2 |
| 189:13 | 29:23 30:11,17,21 | 155:17 156:1,3 | result 143:22 | rolling 91:18 |
| recording 69:4 | 34:10,17 36:6,7 | 161:10,14,21 | 170:24 | room 5:19 6:18 7:3 |
| 70:20 | 39:5 44:14 45:6 | 162:4,7 166:14 | resume 68:7 | 33:11 55:24 56:1 |
| records 18:15 | 46:12,13,15,24,25 | 168:22,25 169:4 | 140:16 | 60:14,15,19,21 |
| red 95:10,11 158:1 | 47:15,21,22,24 | 169:12,14,16,19 | retained 70:20 | 66:17,20 67:6,9 |
| 158:5 | 48:1,19,21 49:24 | 169:20 170:14 | return 51:24,25 | 73:4 76:21 79:20 |
| redacted 23:8 88:3 | 53:12,14 54:5 | 171:1,2,8,9,16,19 | right 4:19 6:18 | 104:17,18 115:5 |
| 91:17 97:20 | 56:9,10,15,16,20 | 172:2,5,13,17,25 | 8:12 16:1 26:10 | 115:18 116:23 |
| redacted]'s 93:10 | 56:24 59:9,10,24 | 173:3,13,14,21,25 | 28:2 29:5,9 33:14 | 117:1 119:6 |
| refer 18:16 63:19 | 60:1,5,23 61:5 | 175:3,4,12,20,23 | 33:17,21 38:21 | 126:23,23 127:1 |
| 133:3 138:9 | 63:2,6 64:4,5,18 | 176:19 178:11,14 | 39:16 45:15,20 | 137:16 140:23 |
| reference 3:2 13:18 | 66:25 67:18,18,19 | 181:21,23,24,25 | 47:5 49:1 54:20 | 141:6,8 142:8 |
| 20:7 35:23,24 | 67:21 69:19 70:4 | 182:1,11 184:19 | 58:1,5 59:1 66:13 | 147:15 150:17 |
| 59:4,17 60:4 73:4 | 70:14 71:10,16,20 | remembered 69:21 | 68:7,9,13 69:6 | 155:10,11,12 |
| 73:6 76:8 84:6 | 71:23 72:3 73:24 | reminded 171:9 | 70:21 78:10,21,25 | 158:3 162:6 |
| 86:24 106:5 121:9 | 74:2,24 75:11,15 | remove 111:16 | 79:4 92:3,3,4,18 | 172:19,21,21,23 |
| referred 68:22 | 76:9,11 79:17 | removed 111:6 | 94:14,16,17 95:3 | 172:25 189:6,7,12 |
| referring 47:22 | 80:15,15,17 83:23 | 112:6 | 95:3,17,20 97:18 | 189:18,23 190:2 |
| 53:3 55:6 59:7,19 | 85:14,17 86:5,9 | renumbered | 99:1,8 102:23 | rooms 5:21,22 6:17 |
| 63:16 65:4,8,13 | 86:10,21,24 87:16 | 113:17 | 107:5,15 108:8 | 14:24 |
| 74:11 77:5 124:10 | 88:6,18 89:3 | repeat 104:23 | 113:1,4,14 115:23 | roughly 175:18 |
| 133:13 136:8 | 90:16,21 91:3 | 153:8 | 116:3 119:11 | round 124:12,13,15 |
| refers 83:18 | 92:5 93:4,16 95:8 | replaced 114:19,23 | 124:2 126:1 | 154:24 163:17 |
| refurb 118:8 | 95:15,16 96:1,8 | replicated 6:3 | 127:13 132:5 | routine 125:5 |
| refurbishment | 96:11 97:4 108:1 | reply 169:1 | 136:20,24 140:15 | Royal 184:18 |
| 108:25 109:4 | 109:12 110:5,7 | report 11:1 117:22 | 140:16,21 141:9 | 187:12,17 |
| 113:2,6,18 114:10 | 111:8 112:9,10 | reported 42:12 | 141:14 142:25 | running 135:10 |
| 114:19 117:5 | 113:13 116:12,21 | 110:25 117:24 | 143:19,20 144:7 | Russ 86:14,19 |
| 118:4 125:14 | 116:21,23 118:25 | representatives 2:3 | 145:5 149:24 | Rydon 111:1 |
| related 59:14 | 119:1,7 120:3,4 | rescue 25:6,23 37:7 | 155:12 158:3 | 114:19 117:24 |
| relates 34:4 | 121:5,12 122:7,8 | 48:7 50:1 72:20 | 160:14 163:2,15 | 118:12,15,16,20 |
| relaxed 50:15 52:1 | 122:10,13 123:17 | 77:20,25 78:17 | 164:17 165:3,5,20 | 119:15,16 |

| | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|---|
| S | 175:24 179:23 180:18 | 16:23 20:10,15 22:9,16,19 26:20 27:19 28:1,7,12 28:14,19 29:16,17 34:11,13 35:7,10 35:11,12,12,14 36:8 37:5,9 38:12 38:15 41:17,19 42:14 45:17,21,22 46:1 47:1 57:14 57:14,17,24 59:16 60:12,20 61:18 63:10,18 64:8,14 64:17,23 65:4 66:10 67:7 73:13 74:22 75:4 76:17 76:24 78:3,12 81:7 83:9 84:13 86:19 87:20 89:5 90:5,12 92:9 93:22 94:2,3,4,24 96:24 97:2 99:4,8 105:19 111:17 115:7,23 119:4,16 121:23 122:4 126:15,17 128:12 128:13,15,17,19 128:22 130:18 131:7,11,13,14,15 132:13,17,17 134:3 135:4 136:14,17 143:9 145:4,5,11 146:25 147:2,3 152:8,25 153:17 155:4 158:1,21 159:3,4 159:14 161:19 162:12 173:8 174:19 175:6 179:15,19 180:25 | 138:23 169:7,7,10 169:20 172:2 173:25 175:3,4 181:21,23 187:8 seen 9:16,16 29:6,7 29:11,13 42:11 46:2 47:21 93:25 121:21 139:19 143:3 146:17 152:2 154:23 157:2 166:8 170:25 184:1 seep 172:15,17 self-closing 110:20 112:17,19 send 32:24 112:12 118:11 119:18 143:16 167:5 Senior 69:20 sense 45:8 79:5,7 90:15 95:19 154:20 156:22 159:21 173:19 176:10 sensible 186:11,12 sensitive 132:10 sentence 21:16 34:11 136:8 156:17 171:5 sequence 39:16 54:20 72:4,16 77:22 serious 23:21,22,25 24:8,13,16,17 25:18 seriousness 97:4 service 72:22 78:6 78:18 79:3 86:2 96:23 services 71:5 set 57:10,17 70:24 88:25 98:5 sets 144:13 seven 3:23 106:8 182:22 | Shah 132:22 133:3 133:16,24 134:3,6 134:8,14 135:15 138:18,23 140:2 Shah's 133:17 138:18,22 Shahid 133:3 136:4 142:6 146:3 shaking 55:20 shape 64:25 share 170:2 she'd 22:3 56:18,21 she'll 33:13 sheet 87:7 89:14 sheets 163:16 shocking 101:18 short 2:18 33:19 68:3,11 85:25 91:6 98:21 99:10 103:5 104:22 139:13 141:5,12 182:19 185:24 186:1,13 188:2 shortly 82:17 shoulder 92:18 shout 180:16 shouting 142:20,21 179:25 180:17,23 182:5 show 5:24 35:3 42:20 44:13,22 57:1 89:16 94:5 105:9 123:25 151:18 showed 92:7 125:21 136:6 shower 150:20,21 151:3 showing 49:20,20 shown 13:13 109:3 115:9 121:18 124:2 133:9 137:10 143:25 157:11 170:11 shows 35:6 42:19 |
| safe 49:6,24 50:14 50:19 51:2,3,22 134:22 137:18 158:20 163:16 safely 163:12 safer 143:1 safest 60:15 safety 13:9,22 110:1,3 112:17 121:16,19 sat 54:22 59:20,22 83:22 save 90:19 saves 93:1 saw 2:11 24:9 28:3 28:25 31:5 36:5 42:21 45:24 60:10 64:7,9 67:24 88:2 88:12 89:17,24 90:23 93:19,24 96:13 99:24 100:1 100:7,11 122:5 123:18,20 128:23 131:22 139:8 149:5 151:17,24 153:23 154:22 155:8 157:3 168:23 176:25 179:17 182:2,12 183:23 188:10 Sayeda 133:19,24 133:25 134:6,7,14 135:15 136:4 142:6 146:3,15 saying 9:15 30:3 38:2,10,16 39:6 41:2 42:21 47:8 47:20 48:2 51:5 51:13 59:5,10 69:21 70:9 73:17 83:21 87:22,25 88:9 136:22 164:3 165:18 168:23 169:1 170:14 | says 45:19 57:15 60:13 61:13 66:10 73:13 76:25 77:7 77:20 79:2 82:13 83:1 94:24 107:12 143:10 149:16 156:17 158:3 163:1,14 166:17 167:3,23 181:1 scared 137:5 158:19 schedule 5:1 16:12 screaming 59:10 169:9 screen 3:3,10 79:9 82:4 103:11,12 105:2,11 106:7 141:4 170:12 scroll 58:17 60:11 seal 109:12 118:17 118:20 119:5,8 sealed 118:24,25 sealing 118:21 second 27:5,12 30:22 31:10 34:16 40:3 54:24 55:1 57:24 60:2,9 81:25 82:3 83:18 84:3,4 115:11 134:13 136:6,19 137:14,15 138:12 138:13 139:25 143:4 151:22 162:18 Secondly 118:15 seconds 25:19 47:14 52:14,17 69:15 136:21 176:7,8,10,11 see 3:4,7,15 6:3,8 6:21,25 7:20 11:10,13,14,17,23 12:1,1,2 13:11 | seeing 13:24 14:2 19:24 27:23 34:10 60:5,17,24 95:15 122:7,8,10,13 123:17 131:23 | | |

| | | | | |
|---|---|--|--|---|
| 95:21 shut 52:23 61:24 62:1,2,3 67:19,20 144:14 side 9:23,25 20:17 34:21,22,23 41:19 44:24 45:16,19 51:3,4,6,10 59:25 60:20 61:8,8,16 67:8 76:18 89:9 92:16,18,25 93:1 94:17 95:17,20 96:9 100:9 111:23 116:2 127:19,21 127:25 131:17 152:9 156:22,23 sides 76:17 83:7,10 156:1 sight 11:21 sign 14:12 24:6 121:21 122:13,24 125:3 signature 3:11,13 105:20,21 106:8 106:14,15 signed 121:6 signs 14:15 113:18 113:20 128:8 134:25 135:2,4 sill 7:18,19 similar 125:20 156:11,13 157:16 simple 2:18 50:3 104:22 simply 103:11 sink 150:20 SIR 1:5,12,15,19 13:15 26:2,5,9 33:3,8,16,21,23 33:25 38:18,21 49:1 65:18,21,25 66:3 68:1,3,13,15 68:17 98:17 99:1 99:3,7,12 102:5 102:19,23,25 | 103:3,7,17,20 107:10 140:7,9,12 140:15,19,24 141:2,14,16 182:20,24 183:3,8 183:13 185:25 186:7,13,19,21,24 188:14,20 189:5 189:16,24 siren 127:10,11 sit 1:16 25:7 37:1,1 59:14 101:2 102:25 104:12 147:16 186:9,15 site 117:25 118:2 119:16 sited 13:22 sitting 12:10 36:8 37:2 38:15 40:10 41:16 42:9,15,19 60:5 115:5 142:9 155:10,11 162:7 situ 183:11 situation 73:22 165:9 six 34:12 size 11:4 61:1,4 sizes 114:4 sleeping 126:22 slide 92:21,22 93:16 98:2 sliding 92:23 93:7 155:13,15 slightly 16:11 86:11 91:24 107:10 141:4 181:11 slipped 101:22 175:15 slow 154:20 small 61:1 97:9 130:16 150:24 151:1 186:20 smell 20:19,21 27:20,22,22 44:13 | 90:20,21 131:25 132:1 136:1 145:16,18 156:9 156:11,11 160:7,8 160:9 177:2,9 smelling 145:14 smelt 132:1 136:1,3 145:17 156:12 188:11 smoke 15:4 19:13 19:15 20:15,21 27:8,19 30:9,9,13 30:16,19 31:20,21 32:3 34:10,14,21 35:1,23 41:14,14 41:15 44:13,19,21 44:23,25 46:19 49:21 50:5,13 52:25 58:25 59:1 59:6,23 60:5,7 61:15 62:4,13 63:6,10 64:2,4,17 64:18,18,19 66:18 66:21 74:7 75:2 75:22 76:5,6,10 76:13,19 77:1,4,8 80:6,8,11,13 81:3 88:16,17 89:2 90:21,21 92:9 93:5 94:5 96:6 125:2,6 128:8 131:7,11,13,20,23 132:10 134:25 135:3,5,6,9,14 136:1,3 137:22,23 137:25 138:9,16 138:24 139:1,5,8 139:20 144:16,24 144:25 145:11,14 146:24,25 147:5 151:12 156:5,6,7 156:25 158:22,25 159:25 160:7,9 161:16,17 163:18 164:3 168:4,10 | 169:17,20 172:15 173:1 175:17 176:14 177:11 180:5 181:18,20 185:9 smoke-free 161:16 smoky 174:8 soaked 150:14 solved 10:25 somebody 166:21 son 15:23,25,25 30:2 31:20 88:3,3 88:5,5 91:17,21 91:21,22 92:11 93:17 96:9,24 97:1 98:6 101:5 101:16,18,21 102:14 145:23 180:3,11 181:19 182:3 183:21,23 185:4 187:6,7,18 187:23 son's 101:14,16,23 185:9 sons 37:10 40:14 90:19 175:24 sons' 8:12 soon 37:25 38:10 66:12,13 81:20 86:24 109:14 144:13 153:20,20 165:14 183:22 189:23 sorry 15:13 49:8 58:13 75:17 81:1 81:1 88:3 97:12 102:7,13 107:7,12 141:2 153:8 163:6 180:21 sort 76:23 114:2 119:8 120:8,8 123:20,21,23 125:20 127:24 136:15 149:12 173:18 175:18 | 179:7 183:10 sound 17:23 135:9 sounds 18:4 72:18 south 6:9 7:21,23 60:22 67:7,8 76:18 116:6 south-east 157:21 south-facing 8:15 south-west 6:6 10:19 157:24 sparks 146:25 147:2,3,7 151:8 151:17,24 153:17 153:23 154:2,17 155:4 161:19 speak 31:4 78:17 162:15 167:10,10 173:9 186:10,10 speaking 39:4 71:4 134:1,6,6,7 138:17,22 142:17 specifically 48:17 49:3 71:20 spoke 21:17 51:12 54:5 56:12 71:8 78:6 79:4 82:2 83:2 100:14 117:25 119:16,16 133:17,23,25 135:20 141:23 142:16 spoken 22:10 25:1 54:2 70:11 78:7 79:6 82:18 83:16 spotted 42:9 spray 114:3,3 spread 38:9 54:16 83:9 134:16 spreading 151:10 stage 19:15 24:18 26:6 38:9,13 41:18 42:13 44:14 45:6 48:7 50:4 67:20 76:9,12 82:1 87:14 92:1 |
|---|---|--|--|---|

| | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|---|
| 94:2 108:5 126:19 128:9 133:24 138:7 139:4 147:5 148:2 164:7 169:21 183:5 stages 131:24 144:22 stair 178:5 staircase 11:25 51:19 92:2,7,23 182:12 stairs 12:5,13,15 50:5 92:4 94:5,14 94:16 96:4 100:25 114:11 134:23 135:7 138:7 148:25 176:25 179:5 stairwell 11:22 12:3 51:18 74:14 94:10,18,25 95:1 95:7,14,18,22,25 96:7,12 97:15 113:19 138:10,19 138:19,20,23,24 139:2,6,8,13,15 139:17,20 148:23 159:18,19 175:5,7 175:10,14 176:24 177:3,6,12,18,19 177:23,24 179:16 181:7 182:13 stairwells 168:12 stand 87:12 94:12 97:19,22 standing 11:20,23 28:2 29:2,3,4 45:4 83:12 89:8 90:25 91:22 94:10 122:18 138:18,21 139:9,14 155:8 184:13 start 4:3 9:4 15:5 32:22 44:3 52:24 53:9 56:13 85:7,9 | 85:11,18 92:21 104:4 122:19 126:3 146:25 started 26:3 99:22 110:19 126:20 131:23 136:21 151:9,13 153:24 156:18 172:12 178:12,18 starting 172:15 starts 136:22 statement 2:4,8,25 3:1,5,8,10,17,20 3:23 4:6,7 5:12,13 13:2,7 14:5 15:20 15:22 17:9,12 18:14 23:15 24:25 26:14 32:16 34:6 34:7 35:19 37:20 38:2 45:18 46:14 47:21 53:1 55:12 57:13 69:1 72:9 72:21 73:1 77:23 78:20 82:8,9 85:2 85:23 87:4,6 96:17 98:4,12 100:9 101:14,20 105:14,18,23 106:4,19,24 108:14 109:2 113:9,16 114:16 115:7,11 120:17 121:2 123:10,11 126:7 128:11 129:15 130:4 131:4,20 132:20 133:10,13 134:2 134:13,13 136:7 138:12,13 139:25 142:14 144:9 146:8 147:20 149:19 151:7,16 151:19 152:2 153:19 157:8 170:8,24 177:4 | 180:10 184:12 187:11 statements 105:6 188:7 189:13 stay 4:23 21:2,22 25:17 28:4 71:2 71:18 80:22 82:20 83:17 84:13,16 101:7 111:11 120:10 122:25 129:18 130:12 134:22 142:24 143:1,3,11 144:5 176:11 183:11 189:6 stayed 144:2,3 147:11 149:11 159:13 177:20 staying 30:14,18 stencilled 113:20 113:22 114:2 step 13:17 21:2 41:1,1 stepped 21:4,7 steps 92:15 94:24 98:5 stood 147:19 stop 2:15 76:4 119:25 140:15 stopped 46:7 storage 85:16,17 straight 43:4,5 71:14 96:22 118:22 129:7 152:6 153:22 155:2 165:10 175:2 183:19 straightaway 129:1 strange 18:4 streaming 179:3 stressing 42:22 strong 94:6 145:18 stronger 136:3 160:8 177:3 struggle 158:18,23 | 187:8 struggled 164:6 struggling 185:11 185:13 stuck 33:1 83:3 166:20 stuff 4:11 119:23 subject 114:17 subside 179:11 substantially 157:16 succeed 118:21 sudden 88:2 suddenly 122:15 suffering 37:11 suffers 185:5 suggest 176:9 189:5 suggested 27:20 summarising 10:11 177:25 summary 78:6 summer 9:2,3 120:20 summer's 161:2,4 161:5 179:9 sunrise 131:17 sunset 127:21 supplemental 133:9 151:15 152:1 170:8 supplementary 106:4,19 suppose 89:21 157:22 supposed 104:21 120:13 143:21 166:2 sure 7:19 8:5,8 9:7 10:9 14:23 16:9 20:18 21:23 39:12 39:23 44:20 54:4 55:25 59:15 60:9 64:20 72:2,11,12 72:18 75:4 80:17 | 80:17,23 81:10,12 94:22 97:8 99:25 100:6 112:24 129:6 131:18 142:5 146:11,21 150:1 163:16 174:5,6 surprised 97:25 surrounded 73:21 76:17 suspect 102:12 189:1 sworn 1:13 103:18 190:10,12 symptoms 184:13 system 135:9,10 <hr/> T <hr/> tab 3:7 take 2:17 5:11 11:4 12:11 13:2,5 15:20 16:11 17:8 23:17,18,19,20 33:2,6 34:3 36:14 38:18,22 52:3 53:1 57:4,21 60:3 61:10 65:19 66:3 66:8 77:22 78:16 78:23 84:21 88:1 88:1,4,10,10 91:20,20 93:10,11 93:18 96:8,16 104:10,11,11,12 104:13 111:2 133:2 134:5 143:7 158:17 162:16 166:13 175:21,24 182:19 take-away 122:23 taken 13:21 121:20 124:8 155:24 184:18 187:15,16 187:23 takes 11:6,15 123:23 talk 33:10 44:1 |
|---|--|--|--|---|

| | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|---|
| 49:25 50:21 52:2 53:10,11,13 56:23 56:23 71:25 102:8 162:14 173:19 talking 21:20 31:5 34:21 43:14,25 45:5 53:9,12 60:1 70:13 71:10 81:11 82:1,11 127:9 162:9 175:4 182:21 tall 68:5 91:6 tap 150:23 taps 151:5 Tekle 1:11,13,15 1:24,25 3:4,18 6:1 11:8 13:3,20 15:22 19:5 26:13 33:9,21 34:2,8 35:6 40:10 45:23 53:3 57:10,25 65:21 68:3,13,20 73:3 76:24 78:10 81:14 82:7 89:24 96:18 98:4,17 99:17 102:5 162:4 169:16 176:2 190:10 Tekle's 157:6 telephone 37:17 38:22 82:12 83:2 83:11 142:4 tell 2:21 10:4 22:2 25:3 30:4,7,20 31:17 32:10 38:7 41:1 43:24 45:2,3 49:6 50:17 51:17 53:20 54:13,14 56:6,18,21 67:22 73:10 76:13 87:1 89:17 100:12,17 101:8 110:2 112:6 123:15 124:20 134:14 145:10 147:22,25 157:2 | 163:19 164:18 165:6,6,14,19 166:4 182:7,25 185:7 188:25 telling 48:14,19 54:12 82:16 101:2 101:7 120:23 122:24 138:1 139:1 169:17 188:23 tells 30:13 57:18 73:7 80:19 temperature 20:23 90:15,20,22 160:20 176:18 177:20,22 178:6 178:18 179:4 181:9 tenancy 4:15,17 121:6 terminates 168:18 terms 26:16 120:22 122:23 129:6 151:15 177:11 182:21,22 189:20 terrible 2:13 102:6 102:14 104:9 test 37:8 thank 1:12,15,19 1:25 5:8 14:17 17:7 26:12,15 28:17 31:8 33:16 33:25 34:2 68:7 68:17,19,20,21 86:14,19,20 99:7 99:16,18 102:4,17 102:18 103:2,17 103:20 104:1 105:5 106:3,17,23 141:10,16,18 143:20 185:22 186:3 188:4,15,19 189:3,4,24 190:1 190:4 thanks 33:22 | 188:20 they'd 39:7 118:11 119:12 153:13 thick 131:21,23 135:14 137:25 138:9,23,25 139:8 139:20 144:15 145:11,17 164:3 168:4 181:20,20 thickness 177:11 thing 2:24 24:9 37:11 40:3 51:20 67:24 71:16 72:2 72:10 74:2 89:8 92:5 100:22 119:8 124:12,13 130:17 130:23 134:17 135:24 149:11 154:25 182:18 187:5 things 24:1 36:14 40:9,25 63:21 72:1 90:18 146:25 149:3 160:4 169:7 think 3:6 4:18 8:19 9:7 10:25 11:2 18:3 20:6,16 21:20 24:3,12,16 26:9 27:11 29:2 32:13,22 33:9 34:21 37:22 39:7 39:9 40:5 42:8 44:20 54:1 55:24 59:13,17 60:8,20 61:10 65:14 66:5 68:3 75:3 76:9,12 76:21 77:13,18 78:22 80:15 81:5 82:1 84:9,17 86:18 88:10 89:13 92:22 94:25 98:18 98:22 99:12 100:12,18 105:6 106:9,24 107:5,15 107:18,22,22 | 108:14 113:1,6 117:5 120:22 122:5,24 123:21 130:1 131:9,16,16 133:19 135:19 137:12,13 139:3 140:5,13 141:1 142:13,24 143:21 144:4 146:6,18 151:23 152:24 153:10 157:8 158:2 164:10 166:1,6,9,12 170:19 171:11,16 173:5,5,8,14 175:9,15 176:19 177:13 178:21,23 181:23 182:2,18 183:4 184:3 185:2 185:4,25 186:22 187:4 188:12 thinking 38:13,17 48:24 52:5 72:8 73:20 90:19 170:24 187:5 third 138:15 151:22 164:14 thought 25:19 32:22,24,25 33:8 37:5 48:6 49:22 50:15 52:4 88:5 100:24 107:11 123:12,18 124:18 130:13 140:24 151:13 156:18 158:20 159:13 182:23 thoughts 32:21 171:1 threatening 170:16 170:21 three 10:2 48:22 53:17 55:18 58:10 110:22 126:6 134:20 137:5 | 147:23 164:23 175:13 178:13 181:23 tie 89:11 93:3 time 1:7 2:14,17 4:20 9:2 10:7 12:10 18:12,21,23 20:1,11,23 22:13 22:21 23:23,24 24:3,5,9 25:15 26:1 27:3,12 30:6 30:22,22,24 31:10 31:14,23 32:18,21 33:7 34:4,11,16 34:18 36:6,18,20 37:15 39:8,12,18 40:5,9,20 41:11 42:4 43:2,11 44:16,25 45:5 47:16 50:1,4 51:18 52:6,6,10 53:7,10,11,23 54:24 55:1,7,17 55:23 57:18 58:5 59:8 60:2,2,3,6,7 60:9,10 63:3,5,7 65:14 67:1 68:4 69:5 72:6 73:5,20 73:24 74:17,20,22 75:7 78:2,14,16 78:19,23 79:16,22 80:6,16 81:6,9,25 82:3 83:9,25 84:3 84:4,14,15 85:24 86:8,14 87:2 88:10 89:13 91:25 93:11 97:7 101:9 104:10 107:24,25 108:6,7,20 114:9 118:16 122:19 126:18 129:4,8 134:24 136:20 140:17 144:15 146:3,10 147:9 152:24 154:9 |
|--|---|---|--|---|

| | | | | |
|--|--|---|---|--|
| 157:15 159:1 160:24 163:9,19 170:1,3 175:16 179:24 180:22 182:21,22 185:20 187:16 188:1,1,2 189:20 timed 152:8 times 16:13,25 29:17 37:25 48:18 48:18,19,21,21,22 48:22 49:5 50:22 53:5,18,20 56:1 83:22,22,24 93:14 102:2 188:23 timing 129:6 136:15 151:15 timings 122:12 174:21 176:5 TMO 4:18 109:22 110:2,25 112:6,16 117:23,24 118:9 119:15 today 2:1,7 42:18 86:20 99:19 100:10 101:6,17 102:8 188:18 today's 1:6 told 7:8 11:1 15:14 18:23 19:17 21:17 22:4,5,6 23:16 25:1,5,8 27:19 28:10 29:3 30:5,5 31:19,23,24 32:4 32:17 37:16 39:25 40:15,16,21 45:24 49:13 50:10,19 51:12,12 53:14 54:5,6,8 55:19 56:5 61:11 67:2 69:13,16 70:2,8 70:20 71:1,18,24 76:10 78:24 80:8 81:4,22 82:19 83:3,4,6,16,17,25 | 84:13,15 85:9,25 86:7 87:18 88:21 89:10 93:9 100:15 109:25 112:8,9,16 117:25 120:18 130:12 133:1,14 134:4 142:13,16 142:24,24 143:1,2 143:3 144:4,5,14 144:23 147:23,24 149:17 150:8 159:20 162:10 164:12 167:18 170:20 174:12 184:24,25 187:15 187:23 188:8 top 38:9 57:14,22 73:4,9 79:1 101:19 115:23 123:20 136:18 155:25 162:25 167:3,22 topic 5:9 14:18 25:10 26:16,17 33:4,5,6 67:11 72:19 torch 46:12 92:7 94:4,5,8 95:21,23 179:18,18,20 torches 174:19 torching 96:2 totally 86:9 towel 8:3,18 9:7,8 9:10,10,12,12,14 9:16,16,17 10:7 10:10,16 32:1 50:3 79:22,23 85:10,12,18 86:7 87:10,23 89:6,7 89:11,12,12,14 91:25 92:12,12,14 93:2,10,12 96:9 96:10 160:17 towels 8:24 9:6,20 85:14 117:1,10 | 163:3,7,15,16 168:9,9 171:18,20 171:23 172:7 tower 1:7 6:2 13:9 14:6,12 21:18 22:14 23:16 31:14 31:18 53:16 71:2 73:15 78:11 83:5 83:10 96:19,21 97:17 98:7 107:4 107:16,19 108:1,6 114:9 122:2,9 124:1,3 125:16 128:18 136:9 137:2,3 157:14 166:19 183:16 tracing 166:17 trampled 101:2 transcript 57:1,2,5 57:12 66:9 69:5 77:24 78:22 84:21 85:6 116:5 129:3 136:17 138:5,14 143:3 152:2,11 166:11 168:17,22 168:24 170:10,13 170:25 171:4,9 transcription 8:23 transcripts 72:24 151:20 treated 183:17,24 treatment 96:21 97:8 tried 12:4 31:19 32:7 39:7 49:25 59:11 63:16 95:16 118:17 119:25 137:24 138:2,6 trigger 132:11 156:15 triggers 132:11 trip 183:14 trouble 66:3 114:20 truck 127:9,12 | 128:12,15,23 trucks 130:17 132:19 true 3:21,22 52:17 106:1,21 149:7 truly 101:17 trust 158:20 truth 3:11 try 2:17 12:6 21:22 22:16 29:18 36:14 40:2 41:4 50:13 50:21 59:11 63:1 63:15,24 69:10 72:4,15 73:22 80:10 81:20 82:16 92:20 104:12 138:11 143:12 150:17 151:5 163:12 170:21 171:19 trying 38:6,25 48:6 63:19 65:16 77:17 118:20 119:5 169:8 175:16 Tuesday 1:1 turn 3:7 92:18,23 104:22 107:2 108:23 126:2 158:12 183:15 184:25 185:3 turned 150:23 154:3 159:2 turning 108:3 twice 32:19 two 4:8 6:8 7:23 10:8,19 14:21,25 15:14 16:8 17:16 18:9 26:19 32:20 35:13 37:25 44:2 48:3,22 49:3 79:8 83:15,24 87:10 88:21 92:24 99:18 105:6 108:4,7,24 110:22 115:18,20 124:14 144:11 | 146:4,8,22 147:11 159:11 161:24 182:4 184:16,22 187:17 188:7 two-thirds 76:23 <hr/> U Uh-huh 13:10 unable 77:10 unconscious 92:19 180:5 182:3 underneath 117:10 128:18,19 understand 2:20 47:7 48:4 51:8,9 83:11 96:20 101:14 102:5 168:16 understanding 164:9 168:19 understood 39:24 164:10 unfair 100:6 unfortunately 18:13 69:13 109:14 unit 164:18 165:6 165:19 187:13 United 25:21 unusual 19:18,19 update 189:22 updating 54:11 use 10:16 12:8 16:23 52:3 53:20 90:7 96:10 119:9 168:11,11 171:22 usher 33:13 68:6 99:4 ushers 140:19 <hr/> V vaguely 170:13 175:23 178:14 valuable 189:14 value 102:11 vary 114:4 |
|--|--|---|---|--|

| | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|---|
| ventilation 135:9 Vibrant 156:4 view 67:16 103:12 140:11 virtually 4:20 visibility 95:24 96:1 visible 113:25 147:1 visit 14:14 visited 150:8 visiting 4:22 14:11 vital 188:21 vocal 179:25 180:13 voice 17:20 18:4,10 43:1 46:4 48:9 52:22 63:20 77:24 78:11,14 voicemail 78:14 86:17 voices 17:15,16 18:2,4,5,7 43:1 46:3 52:21 127:15 127:16,16 174:14 174:14 <hr/> W <hr/> wait 101:24 143:23 149:13 170:11 184:19,25 185:3 waited 149:5 184:2 waiting 25:8 122:18 wake 23:17 waking 130:1,20 131:9 walk 11:18 12:11 16:7 93:1 108:19 108:20 142:15 158:14 160:1 walked 92:15 127:18 walking 16:22 92:21 96:1 walkway 128:19 | wall 11:14,14,15 35:13 45:16 90:13 92:16 95:10 159:7 170:2 walls 113:21 wandered 122:21 wanders 122:18 want 5:9,24 14:19 23:1,18 26:16 28:4 39:17 48:9 57:1,4 64:11 65:15 66:1,2 82:10 84:25 87:25 88:1,6,7,11 91:17 91:18,21 92:17 100:6 102:9,19 104:23 107:8,13 108:24 132:8 136:14 158:22 166:20 169:9 176:9 183:15 185:8 188:15 wanted 11:17 30:7 130:2 153:11,14 162:13 183:25 wants 186:10 warm 117:2 151:13 156:18 warmth 156:20 wasn't 24:11 58:8 69:9 70:20 110:13 114:1 117:14 120:7,25 126:10 130:16,16 131:23 135:16,16,23 146:11 149:13 150:1,14,25 180:17 181:13 184:15 waste 122:19 watch 42:20 154:13 watched 42:10,18 watching 42:22 64:8 89:9 169:8 water 97:11 150:14 | 150:22,24 151:2 171:24 way 2:22 9:17 10:12 12:11,13 15:7 17:21 37:1 38:9,12 40:5,21 41:6 49:16 54:12 54:16 56:13 58:11 63:14 79:21 85:10 87:1,12 89:14 92:13 93:15,25 95:22 98:2 99:18 101:19 104:23,24 119:25 128:18 138:15 141:10 147:9,15 157:17 164:11,14,25 166:18 168:1,11 168:14 175:13,16 175:19 we'll 4:2 11:2 14:8 18:15 33:11 59:1 66:13 68:3,6 99:4 102:25 129:24 140:15,15 148:13 148:15 159:14 173:24 we're 21:7 26:24 33:3 34:21 52:15 71:11,16 72:3 87:14 88:5 90:5 91:25 97:8 98:21 104:12 137:4 138:12 163:2,12 163:19 164:3 166:19,19,20 167:4,24 168:2,5 182:24 186:13 we've 13:13 25:25 30:22 39:23 73:21 84:13 89:10 90:10 94:2 99:19 102:7 129:3 140:5 141:4 143:3 146:17 157:2 166:8 | 177:25 182:16 wearing 46:16 91:11 144:12 weather 9:4 Wednesday 190:6 week 4:10 42:15,20 101:13 119:14 189:21 weeks 122:14 Welcome 1:5 went 16:13 17:13 19:9 21:5,20,22 22:5 29:25 30:4,5 31:21,21 36:4,9 39:10,18 42:8 52:1,1 54:24 56:17 64:10 76:9 91:23 92:11 93:15 94:13 95:18,24 96:19 111:25 125:16 126:14 127:25 142:8 150:1 153:22 155:21 159:1 160:21 161:15,19 161:22 162:5,11 171:10,18 173:11 173:17 175:3,4,7 175:9 176:16 178:1 187:18 weren't 113:19 149:9 187:23 west 7:21 9:23,25 10:2 36:24 60:22 60:23 127:19 131:16 wet 8:18,24 9:6,7,8 9:10,12,14,16,17 9:18 32:1 50:3 79:22,23 85:10,12 85:18 86:7 87:7 87:10,23 89:6,7 89:11,11,12,13 91:24 92:12,12,14 93:2,10,11 96:8 | 150:13,15,17 160:17 168:9,12 171:18,19,23 172:7,8 wheeze 132:3 wheezing 185:20 185:21 wheezy 185:11 whereabouts 116:19 179:19 whilst 4:19 6:10 13:18 Whistles 43:5 white 86:14,19 117:8 wide 43:13 44:7 widely 43:15 44:3 wife 31:20 83:11 133:1,16,17 134:4 138:18,22 162:10 willingness 2:1 window 6:9 7:10,14 8:3,14,15,19 9:21 10:13,16 36:8,11 36:16,19,21,23 37:3 42:8,16 43:4 49:12 54:22 59:14 59:20,22,25 60:4 60:6,18,19,20 61:18,19,20,23 62:1,2,3 63:11,12 63:12 64:9,10,14 67:13,16,19,21 75:14 77:9,9 83:12 84:7 115:17 115:18 116:6,7,14 116:19 117:4,5 126:15 127:17,18 127:23 128:1,7,14 128:16 131:7,10 132:7 137:7,20 143:13 146:24 147:4,5 151:9,11 153:18,21,24,25 154:1,4,5,11,17 |
|---|--|--|--|---|

| | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|
| 154:22,25 155:3,5 155:5,7,9,18,20 155:23 156:2 162:8,11 169:8 170:17,22 172:23 172:25 windows 5:15,16 5:19 7:9,21,22,23 8:2,8 9:5,20,23 10:2,4,8,19 22:22 60:22,22 71:24 77:2 114:17,20,20 114:22 115:4,5,15 115:18,20 116:10 116:23 117:19,22 118:10 119:5 128:3 147:1,3 153:25 169:18,21 172:22 windowsill 7:15,17 117:6,8 winter 9:4 wish 13:17 18:23 withdrew 102:22 witness 1:18 20:4 26:7,11 33:15,22 33:24 45:18 65:24 66:1 68:14,16 82:8 98:25 99:2,6 99:15 102:18,21 102:22 103:10,15 105:6 121:18 140:11,14 141:3,8 141:15 144:9 149:19 183:2,7 186:8,23 188:7 189:4,13 witnesses 2:9 13:14 189:20 woke 22:20 133:14 139:23 154:10 187:21 woken 17:14 18:19 27:14 Woldesilassie 1:24 | woman 110:25 women 18:9 women's 17:16 wonder 26:1 69:14 89:16 133:7 154:21 161:1 186:7 wondering 53:19 65:21 word 21:21 49:22 49:23 51:2 59:7 73:5 90:7 136:19 words 49:12 71:3 73:16 80:25 82:20 work 5:1,3 16:8,12 17:1 115:1 119:4 119:12 164:11 180:15 worked 125:3 working 8:4 16:4 90:2 114:15 125:7 worried 37:4,5 38:8 53:24 54:13 54:14 119:22 123:22 134:20 worse 66:15 111:10 145:21 160:4,5,9 165:9,11,13,14 177:1,6,12 178:6 178:7 would've 174:9,12 wouldn't 6:15,23 79:6 98:19 110:12 111:9,10 114:7 119:22 121:12 135:24 147:9 wrong 10:12 78:22 84:6 X X 190:9 Y Yahya 20:8 81:6 103:15,18,22 104:6 107:7 121:3 | 126:3 141:18 157:13 183:15 186:3,9,25 188:5 188:15 190:12 yeah 17:2,2 18:4 27:15,15,15,15,15 51:3 59:3 61:18 61:22 64:18 76:6 76:6 80:4,4,25 81:16,18,18,19,19 107:6 112:3 115:19 119:16 136:24 163:4 164:21,24 166:25 167:12,18,20 years 49:16 164:23 Yehualashet 27:24 young 137:5 younger 15:25 youngest 88:3,5 91:17,20 92:11 164:22 Z 0 01.30 129:23 01.32 18:17 01.33 139:19 143:4 146:18 01.33.55 129:4 143:6 01.34 18:17 01.49 31:14 37:18 53:15 013355 136:20 016 78:13 02.05 53:5 02.07 58:11,14 68:22 02.11 53:5 02.13.12 78:19 02.30 53:5 151:17 151:23 153:1 02.32 57:1,19 63:5 02.34 166:8 | 02.34.42 152:9 162:18 02.48 166:9 02.51 73:7 74:20 02.54 78:2 02.56 78:21,21 79:19 85:5 023230 57:18 025100 73:6 03.02.35 85:24 1 1 3:7 4:10,12 97:5 106:25 126:13 136:21 189:15 190:10,11 1.00 126:16 1.02 99:9 1.05 99:4,8,11 1.15 103:4 1.32 23:5 136:5,9 1.34 23:5 10 15:21 109:2 110:24 113:24 149:12 151:19 10.00 1:2 190:7 10.08 1:4 10.10 26:3 10/15 176:11 100 54:4 55:25 72:11,17,18 75:4 146:11 150:5 174:6 103 190:12,12 11 85:2 113:15,17 164:20 11.00 33:18 11.10 33:12,17,20 111 35:7 112 35:8 12 5:25 87:4 89:20 107:23 157:12 12-year-old 29:16 12.05 68:10 12.10 68:7,9,12 13 6:7 15:19 96:17 | 114:16,19 14 15:19 61:10 126:13 136:12 15 184:4 15-minute 104:13 151 35:11 152 6:14,19,22,24 7:4 19:25 21:12 21:17 22:6,9 35:11 55:2,11,17 56:21 58:7 63:13 63:15,15,16,25 64:9,12,15 65:11 65:12 67:15,17,23 74:3 77:6 84:4 107:3,16 108:2,12 121:10,11 125:16 157:18 167:4 153 4:8,20 5:14 6:8 16:15 42:11,12,21 42:21 61:14 62:22 63:16 73:11,14 152:19 153:7,14 157:4,21 158:11 159:9,17 160:1 161:6,21 162:23 166:25 167:1,4 173:22 176:16 185:16,19 187:2 154 62:21,23 63:14 155 29:12,15,20,21 156 132:21 133:5 15th 113:7,8 16 3:9,10 17:8,14 105:19 17 3:25 19:3,7 126:7 128:11 18 61:14 69:2 106:10 131:5,6 170:9,12,13 18th 4:8 6:4,8 12:12,14,15 13:25 14:16 16:4,19 40:10 81:17,19,24 82:15 83:3 96:6 |
|--|--|--|--|--|

| | | | | |
|---|--|--|---------|--|
| 107:4,16 112:25 143:16 144:16 152:16 166:19,22 166:24,25 168:2 19 22:24 142:13 19th 40:23 84:14 101:9 | 62:16 65:5 177:4 177:6 26 66:8 27 53:1 73:1,2 180:10 29 54:18 55:6 76:22 | 5 5 35:4 69:1 98:22 126:7 131:4 132:24 133:10,12 147:13 149:2 164:13 182:22 | 172:2,4 | |
| 2 2 5:12 6:21 79:25 84:13 97:6 121:3 136:7 137:17 143:8 144:11 152:18 158:6 166:18 167:14,15 167:20 168:4 2.00 36:3 37:23 146:9,10 2.15 103:1,3,6 2.40 151:8 20 26:13,14 34:7 35:23 52:14,17 131:6,8 132:20 134:2 20/25 146:15 2008 108:4 121:13 121:15,16 125:15 2016 4:13 2017 5:10,17 10:23 12:25 15:19 107:15 112:25 122:13 126:13 136:12 2018 1:1 3:15 105:19 106:10 190:6 21 3:15 26:14 27:23 136:21 144:11 147:20 150:7 22 31:9 82:10 151:7 151:8 153:19 156:16 22nd 24:21 23 33:2 36:1 83:2 24 5:6 57:9 61:8,11 25 57:8,21 61:8 | 3 3 6:6,21 7:6 11:6 13:2 15:20 52:13 69:15 89:22 97:5 97:5,6 109:2 113:9,16 121:19 123:11 124:24 136:6 138:14 139:25 162:25 164:22 167:3 3.07 141:11 3.20 140:16,21 141:13 30 1:1 184:12 31 55:13,15 77:23 187:11 190:6 32 55:11,13 56:25 33 78:16 34 79:1,25 35 80:19 37 85:23 39 3:25 85:3 3rd 13:23 179:14 | 6 6 5:11 26:14 31:9 34:6,6 35:18 124:8 144:9 165:8 170:9 6.00 126:9 60/70 155:24 600 69:22 | | |
| | 4 4 11:6 133:13 151:18 163:23 167:23 4.30 190:5 40 87:5 41 87:5 44 23:10 45 25:25 38:3 39:9 104:13 107:18,21 121:9,12 140:6 46 96:16,19 98:5 49 69:15 4th 6:2,7 107:19 129:17 157:15 | 7 7 33:2 36:1 106:11 121:4,5 138:12 177:4 7.00 126:9 7th 14:9,16 16:1 23:6,10,11 41:9 179:21,23 180:3,6 180:7,8,11,19,25 181:1,3,5,9,15,18 181:21,25 182:2 | | |
| | | 8 8 37:20 38:6 53:2 82:5 107:1 115:10 123:10,12 184:12 | | |
| | | 9 9 13:5 54:18 105:18 124:24,25 90 69:17 999 57:1 69:3,9 71:13 129:1,3,7,9 130:9,10,11,21 133:12 136:10,11 136:14 139:22 140:2 141:20,22 143:2,4 144:5 146:17 153:7,9 162:22 169:13,16 | | |