

<p>1 Thursday, 8 November 2018</p> <p>2 (10.00 am)</p> <p>3 (Proceedings delayed)</p> <p>4 (10.15 am)</p> <p>5 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Good morning, everyone. Welcome to</p> <p>6 today's hearing.</p> <p>7 We are going to hear more evidence today from those</p> <p>8 who were present in the tower at the time of the fire.</p> <p>9 Yes, Mr Rawat.</p> <p>10 MR RAWAT: Good morning, Mr Chairman.</p> <p>11 Mr Chairman, can I thank you for the additional time</p> <p>12 you allowed us this morning just to sort out some</p> <p>13 matters.</p> <p>14 Can I now please call Natasha Elcock.</p> <p>15 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes, thank you.</p> <p>16 NATASHA ELCOCK (sworn)</p> <p>17 Questions by MR RAWAT</p> <p>18 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Thank you very much, Ms Elcock.</p> <p>19 Sit down and make yourself comfortable.</p> <p>20 THE WITNESS: Thank you.</p> <p>21 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes, Mr Rawat.</p> <p>22 MR RAWAT: Thank you, Mr Chairman.</p> <p>23 Good morning.</p> <p>24 A. Hi, Bilal.</p> <p>25 Q. Can you give the inquiry your full name, please.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 1</p>	<p>1 IWS00000310, page 1, please.</p> <p>2 Just to help you, Ms Elcock, that's the first page</p> <p>3 of your first statement to the inquiry.</p> <p>4 I think you know, because you have attended in the</p> <p>5 past, how it all works, but as we go through your</p> <p>6 statement, it will come up on the screen in front of</p> <p>7 you. If you prefer hard copies, there's a bundle there</p> <p>8 on the table.</p> <p>9 A. Mm-hm.</p> <p>10 Q. If we go, then, to page 8, the last part of that page,</p> <p>11 there's a statement of truth. It's dated 15 May 2018,</p> <p>12 and it carries a signature.</p> <p>13 Can you confirm that that's your signature?</p> <p>14 A. It is, yes.</p> <p>15 Q. Have you had a chance to go through the statement</p> <p>16 recently?</p> <p>17 A. Yes.</p> <p>18 Q. And are the contents of this statement true?</p> <p>19 A. Yes.</p> <p>20 Q. What I need to say and put into the record is that the</p> <p>21 statement is accompanied by five exhibits, which are</p> <p>22 labelled NE/1 to NE/5, and the reference for those is</p> <p>23 collectively IWS00000306.</p> <p>24 You've also made a supplementary statement. If we</p> <p>25 could have Ms Elcock's supplementary statement up on the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 3</p>
<p>1 A. Natasha Elcock.</p> <p>2 Q. Ms Elcock, thank you very much for coming to give</p> <p>3 evidence today. The help that you're continuing to give</p> <p>4 to this inquiry is very much appreciated.</p> <p>5 A. Mm-hm.</p> <p>6 Q. As you'll be aware, most of my questions today are going</p> <p>7 to focus on the night of the fire itself. In fairness</p> <p>8 to you, we should make clear that you limited your</p> <p>9 statement to this inquiry thus far to Phase 1 issues, so</p> <p>10 I'm not going to be asking you about Phase 2 issues such</p> <p>11 as your dealings with the TMO.</p> <p>12 A. Mm-hm.</p> <p>13 Q. But that said, we all appreciate that asking any witness</p> <p>14 to relive the events of the night of the fire is</p> <p>15 a difficult task, and it's important, therefore, that</p> <p>16 you take your time, and if at any time you need a break,</p> <p>17 just let me know and we'll stop.</p> <p>18 I'm trying, as I hope I will do, to keep my</p> <p>19 questions short and simple, but if I do ask you</p> <p>20 a question that you don't understand, please just tell</p> <p>21 me and I'll ask the question in a different way.</p> <p>22 A. Mm-hm.</p> <p>23 Q. The first thing that we need to do is to formally put</p> <p>24 the statements that you've made to the inquiry into the</p> <p>25 record. If I may first of all have on the screen</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 2</p>	<p>1 screen, page 1, please.</p> <p>2 If we go to page 2, again we see at the bottom the</p> <p>3 statement of truth. It's dated 28 August 2018.</p> <p>4 Can you confirm that is your signature?</p> <p>5 A. It is, yes.</p> <p>6 Q. Are the contents of that statement true?</p> <p>7 A. Yes.</p> <p>8 Q. That statement is also accompanied by one exhibit, which</p> <p>9 is labelled NE/1.</p> <p>10 Before I start asking my questions, Ms Elcock, can</p> <p>11 I start, just for the benefit of those who are present</p> <p>12 here or who may be following the hearing elsewhere,</p> <p>13 I will be showing a series of photographs to you.</p> <p>14 A. Mm-hm.</p> <p>15 Q. They are all images which have been displayed before</p> <p>16 and, although some are taken after the fire, they're not</p> <p>17 in themselves distressing, but I wanted to say this now</p> <p>18 because I do appreciate there are others here for whom</p> <p>19 any image can be upsetting. When I come to that and</p> <p>20 I give the reference, they may just want to look away at</p> <p>21 that point.</p> <p>22 Can I take you, then, back to the first page of your</p> <p>23 first statement, which is IWS00000310, page 1, please,</p> <p>24 and can we just begin with a few questions of</p> <p>25 background.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 4</p>

<p>1 A. Yes.</p> <p>2 Q. In June 2017, you lived in flat 82 on the 11th floor of</p> <p>3 Grenfell Tower; is that right?</p> <p>4 A. That's correct, yes.</p> <p>5 Q. By that date, how long had you been living in the tower?</p> <p>6 A. By that date -- sorry, just trying to think -- 21 years.</p> <p>7 Q. In June 2017, who was living in your flat with you?</p> <p>8 A. So it was myself, my partner and my three children.</p> <p>9 Q. Is it right that, on the night of the fire, you were</p> <p>10 obviously at home, but with you was your partner and</p> <p>11 your youngest daughter?</p> <p>12 A. That's correct, yes.</p> <p>13 Q. Could we go, please, to IWS00000306_0001, please.</p> <p>14 Just a few questions, please, about your flat.</p> <p>15 A. Mm-hm.</p> <p>16 Q. The layout of the flat.</p> <p>17 A. Yes.</p> <p>18 Q. That's a marked plan of your home.</p> <p>19 A. Mm-hm.</p> <p>20 Q. You've marked on there your bedroom is the bedroom that</p> <p>21 would have been next door to flat 83, wouldn't it?</p> <p>22 A. Yes, it's the one closest to the door.</p> <p>23 Q. As you say, opposite the front door; yes?</p> <p>24 A. Yes.</p> <p>25 Q. The second bedroom would have been the bedroom that</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 5</p>	<p>1 A. Yes.</p> <p>2 Q. And then there's one which is just by the toilet; do you</p> <p>3 see that?</p> <p>4 A. That's correct, yes.</p> <p>5 Q. What are those intended to indicate?</p> <p>6 A. So I think when I was going through my statement with my</p> <p>7 solicitor, I was explaining my actions. So at certain</p> <p>8 points during my statement I was saying, "Look, I went</p> <p>9 there and then I went back there", so --</p> <p>10 Q. Just your movements during the night?</p> <p>11 A. Yes.</p> <p>12 Q. I follow, thank you.</p> <p>13 Maybe we can use this plan. Can you just tell us,</p> <p>14 did you have smoke alarms in your flat?</p> <p>15 A. Yes.</p> <p>16 Q. Where were the smoke alarms?</p> <p>17 A. So I had one on the wall in the kitchen. So as soon as</p> <p>18 you came through the kitchen, there was one directly</p> <p>19 above you. It wasn't in the ceiling, because it</p> <p>20 couldn't be installed in the ceiling because of the</p> <p>21 asbestos in the ceiling, so they put it actually</p> <p>22 physically on the wall.</p> <p>23 Then there was one in the hallway. So between the</p> <p>24 bathroom and the toilet there's a wall that you can</p> <p>25 see -- obviously it's 3D, so you can't really see it,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 7</p>
<p>1 would've been used by your children?</p> <p>2 A. Yes.</p> <p>3 Q. We can see that you've marked the front room and the</p> <p>4 kitchen. Can you just tell us, was there a divide</p> <p>5 between the kitchen and the front room?</p> <p>6 A. Yes, there's four wooden moving doors.</p> <p>7 Q. So you had sliding doors --</p> <p>8 A. Yes.</p> <p>9 Q. -- that you could walk through?</p> <p>10 A. Yes.</p> <p>11 Q. So if you were wanting to access your kitchen from the</p> <p>12 hallway, you could either go through a door into the</p> <p>13 kitchen directly --</p> <p>14 A. Yes.</p> <p>15 Q. -- or via the living room through the sliding doors?</p> <p>16 A. Yes, there was two glass -- like a double door that led</p> <p>17 in from the hallway on the right-hand side, or you could</p> <p>18 go via the kitchen and around into the front room.</p> <p>19 Q. What we can also see on the plan is that if you look in</p> <p>20 the hallway, there are two sort of asterisks; can you</p> <p>21 see those?</p> <p>22 A. Mm.</p> <p>23 Q. There's one just in the middle of the hallway between</p> <p>24 your bedroom door and the part of the passage that led</p> <p>25 to the front door.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 6</p>	<p>1 but there's that grey area, the dark grey area, there</p> <p>2 was one on that wall as well.</p> <p>3 Q. I describe them as smoke alarms and you agreed that they</p> <p>4 were smoke alarms, but how did you know they were smoke</p> <p>5 alarms?</p> <p>6 A. Because, as I say, they were installed probably about</p> <p>7 maybe a year before, and I remember distinctly, like,</p> <p>8 why does it need to be on the wall? And it kind of had</p> <p>9 trunking that ran from -- would've been from where the</p> <p>10 electric cupboard is by the front door, kind of ran</p> <p>11 through and it had to be installed on the actual wall</p> <p>12 itself because of them saying there was asbestos in the</p> <p>13 ceiling.</p> <p>14 Q. So somebody actually told you, "We are putting smoke</p> <p>15 alarms into your flat"?</p> <p>16 A. Yes.</p> <p>17 Q. You said they had trunking, so these were not</p> <p>18 battery-operated?</p> <p>19 A. Yes, I'm pretty certain they were. I mean, yes, I'm</p> <p>20 pretty certain. But then because of some of the other</p> <p>21 stuff where I had electrical issues, when the gas</p> <p>22 situation happened, there was also some trunking there,</p> <p>23 so that could be quite -- merged a little bit, but --</p> <p>24 they could've been battery-operated. But I remember</p> <p>25 them saying they couldn't install it on the ceiling, it</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 8</p>

2 (Pages 5 to 8)

<p>1 had to be on the wall, and I think the trunking may or</p> <p>2 may not be, I'm not sure.</p> <p>3 Q. Before June 2017, did you ever set off either of these</p> <p>4 two smoke alarms?</p> <p>5 A. No.</p> <p>6 Q. Did you know whether they were working in June 2017?</p> <p>7 A. Can't say -- yeah, I've never really tested them, and no</p> <p>8 one came to test them.</p> <p>9 Q. Presumably you, like other residents, had new windows</p> <p>10 fitted as part of the refurbishment.</p> <p>11 A. Yes.</p> <p>12 Q. In your statement -- I'll take you to it if you want to</p> <p>13 look at it, but I would like to keep the map up on the</p> <p>14 screen.</p> <p>15 A. Mm-hm.</p> <p>16 Q. The plan, rather.</p> <p>17 You refer to a gap --</p> <p>18 A. Yes.</p> <p>19 Q. -- between the wall and the windowsill --</p> <p>20 A. Mm-hm.</p> <p>21 Q. -- which was in your bedroom, and you say in your</p> <p>22 statement you'd actually raised a complaint about that.</p> <p>23 A. So after they installed the windows, before kind of</p> <p>24 Rydon left the block, I suppose before they signed it</p> <p>25 off, as such, there was a number of draughts that would</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 9</p>	<p>1 got slim fingers, so I could get my fingers in there.</p> <p>2 Q. And you could feel the draught?</p> <p>3 A. Yes. And there was also a kind of draught around the</p> <p>4 ceiling. So as I say, there's a wood panel. The</p> <p>5 windowsill went up over it and you could feel like</p> <p>6 a slight -- if you put your hand like that, you could</p> <p>7 feel a slight draught coming up against your hand.</p> <p>8 Q. So that's your bedroom.</p> <p>9 A. Yes.</p> <p>10 Q. You've got a second bedroom. Did you have a problem</p> <p>11 with the window in the second bedroom?</p> <p>12 A. Personally, I didn't spend much time in there, but all</p> <p>13 of them you could feel the draught in that gap on the</p> <p>14 wood panels.</p> <p>15 Q. When you say in that gap, are you talking about the gap</p> <p>16 around the frame --</p> <p>17 A. Yes.</p> <p>18 Q. -- rather than underneath?</p> <p>19 A. Yes.</p> <p>20 Q. If we go to the front room --</p> <p>21 A. Mm-hm.</p> <p>22 Q. -- you've got two windows that are going to face</p> <p>23 south --</p> <p>24 A. Yes.</p> <p>25 Q. -- and then two windows that are facing east.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 11</p>
<p>1 come through. So where you see -- so the window --</p> <p>2 where it says "Fire" at the bottom, that first window in</p> <p>3 the front room, there was a really bad draught coming</p> <p>4 from that one.</p> <p>5 Q. Can I pause you there for a moment.</p> <p>6 A. Oh, sorry, yes.</p> <p>7 Q. Because I think what I'd like to do is take it in</p> <p>8 stages, if I may.</p> <p>9 A. Oh, okay, yeah, yeah, sorry.</p> <p>10 Q. So we'll start off with your bedroom?</p> <p>11 A. Oh, yeah, yeah, so there was one in the bedroom and --</p> <p>12 yeah.</p> <p>13 Q. Let's start off with your bedroom. So you had a problem</p> <p>14 with your bedroom window. Can you just tell us what the</p> <p>15 nature of that problem was?</p> <p>16 A. So when they installed the windows, they installed new</p> <p>17 windowsills, but it had clearly been placed on the old</p> <p>18 wooden -- so there was like a wooden windowsill before,</p> <p>19 and what it then did was created a gap between the</p> <p>20 actual windowsill, the wall and then the draught would</p> <p>21 come under.</p> <p>22 Q. From inside your bedroom, could you actually see that</p> <p>23 gap?</p> <p>24 A. Yes, yes, the gap was probably about a centimetre and</p> <p>25 a half, yes. So you could get your finger -- well, I've</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 10</p>	<p>1 A. Yes.</p> <p>2 Q. Taking the southern-facing windows first.</p> <p>3 A. Yes.</p> <p>4 Q. Did you notice any problems with those?</p> <p>5 A. Yes, so that one, the one I was about to say earlier,</p> <p>6 that very first one, was the one that was really, really</p> <p>7 significant, and that was actually the one they came and</p> <p>8 used mastic to reseal when I made the complaint.</p> <p>9 So that was the only one that they could really do</p> <p>10 anything about. They put a bit of mastic around it, you</p> <p>11 know, to -- but that, again, was on the wood bit. There</p> <p>12 was nothing they could do about the gap on the actual</p> <p>13 ledge.</p> <p>14 Q. So in the front room, could you feel a draught coming in</p> <p>15 from underneath?</p> <p>16 A. Yes.</p> <p>17 Q. Were there sort of particular times of the year when</p> <p>18 that was more prominent or was it --</p> <p>19 A. So being so high up, and even pre-refurbishment, the</p> <p>20 wind obviously swings around the building quite fast, so</p> <p>21 if it's a windy night, you would kind of hear it</p> <p>22 howling.</p> <p>23 But after the refurbishment, it was more of a -- you</p> <p>24 didn't hear the wind as much, you just kind of felt the</p> <p>25 draught, because the windows were obviously a lot --</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 12</p>

<p>1 well, I assumed double glazed, but, yeah. So they</p> <p>2 weren't as thin as the previous windows and they weren't</p> <p>3 on metal frames, so you didn't hear it, but you could</p> <p>4 feel it more post-refurb.</p> <p>5 Q. You raised a complaint.</p> <p>6 A. Mm-hm.</p> <p>7 Q. You mentioned that somebody came and did something with</p> <p>8 mastic.</p> <p>9 A. Yeah.</p> <p>10 Q. Taking you forward to June 2017, was there still</p> <p>11 a problem with draughts and gaps?</p> <p>12 A. Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Yeah, that was evident on the</p> <p>13 night.</p> <p>14 Q. I'm going to obviously go to the detail of the night in</p> <p>15 due course, but one of the things that you mention in</p> <p>16 your account of the night is that at some point when the</p> <p>17 Fire Brigade were using water on the building, water was</p> <p>18 coming into your property.</p> <p>19 A. Yes.</p> <p>20 Q. The phrase that you use -- again, if you want me to take</p> <p>21 you to the paragraph, I'll take you -- is you say it was</p> <p>22 coming through gaps in the walls.</p> <p>23 A. So --</p> <p>24 Q. What did you mean by gaps in the walls?</p> <p>25 A. So on the right-hand, south-facing window, there was</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 13</p>	<p>1 20 years, sorry.</p> <p>2 Q. Was this a self-closing door?</p> <p>3 A. Initially it was. So when they first put them in, it</p> <p>4 was a door that had the self-closing. It was so much so</p> <p>5 that I -- my daughter, the youngest one, was a baby at</p> <p>6 the time, I had a pushchair, and it became a bit of</p> <p>7 an obstacle course to try and get out the door because</p> <p>8 it would actually push you out of the door with a pram</p> <p>9 or -- I had a pram, so it used to push you out.</p> <p>10 So, yeah, it self-closed when they first put them</p> <p>11 in, yes.</p> <p>12 Q. What then happened to the self-closing mechanism?</p> <p>13 A. So it was the August Bank Holiday weekend, and</p> <p>14 I remember it because it was the carnival weekend, and</p> <p>15 I was going out and it literally just dropped off its</p> <p>16 hinges, and you therefore couldn't close it back.</p> <p>17 Obviously I made a call to the TMO to say that but,</p> <p>18 obviously, being a Bank Holiday, there was not much they</p> <p>19 could do. I remember it vividly because it was carnival</p> <p>20 weekend.</p> <p>21 Q. Can you remember which year that was?</p> <p>22 A. Yeah, no, I'd like to say maybe a year after, so not</p> <p>23 long after it had been installed. So if it had been</p> <p>24 installed early 2012, it would've been August 2012.</p> <p>25 It wasn't very much longer after it had been</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 15</p>
<p>1 a vent at the top. So there was like a little vent that</p> <p>2 you could -- it's like a flap you could open up. When</p> <p>3 they were shooting the water from Grenfell Walk --</p> <p>4 because that's as far as the water could get, basically,</p> <p>5 from Grenfell Walk, and they were shooting it up, and</p> <p>6 therefore it would come through that gap. The pressure</p> <p>7 would push that gap open, so that's how the water was</p> <p>8 coming in.</p> <p>9 Q. So it wasn't a gap caused by workmanship --</p> <p>10 A. It was a vent.</p> <p>11 Q. -- it was part of the window that was pushed open by the</p> <p>12 force of the water?</p> <p>13 A. Yes.</p> <p>14 Q. Thank you.</p> <p>15 Just a few questions about front doors.</p> <p>16 A. Okay.</p> <p>17 Q. The front door to your flat, was that also replaced at</p> <p>18 some point?</p> <p>19 A. It was replaced prior to the refurbishment. I think it</p> <p>20 was around about 2012.</p> <p>21 I -- yeah, it was replaced, yeah.</p> <p>22 Q. I should've asked you this earlier: when did you move</p> <p>23 into flat 82?</p> <p>24 A. I moved in there in May 1997. So, yeah, it was 21 --</p> <p>25 20 years, sorry. I said 21 earlier, but it's actually</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 14</p>	<p>1 installed, they were new. And nothing could be done</p> <p>2 about it that weekend because it was carnival weekend,</p> <p>3 and then someone came out and took out the self-closing</p> <p>4 mechanism that was in the -- it was like a chain, kind</p> <p>5 of quite heavy chain, I think it was, or pole or</p> <p>6 something, and he took it out and they never come back.</p> <p>7 Q. Were you there when this job was done on the door?</p> <p>8 A. Yes. Yeah, yeah, yeah.</p> <p>9 Q. Did you know what they were removing? Did you know what</p> <p>10 the purpose of that mechanism was?</p> <p>11 A. I didn't know at the time, but once he'd taken it out,</p> <p>12 the door no longer closed by itself, so longer knocked</p> <p>13 you out as you left.</p> <p>14 Q. Did the person who came to deal with the problem explain</p> <p>15 to you what he or she was doing?</p> <p>16 A. So it was clearly broken and the door needed to close</p> <p>17 back. At that point it was no -- you couldn't pull it</p> <p>18 shut.</p> <p>19 He took that out and said someone would be back to,</p> <p>20 I assume, replace it, but that never really</p> <p>21 materialised.</p> <p>22 Q. Did you ever kind of chase someone about that or --</p> <p>23 A. Not really because I know, like, when the doors were</p> <p>24 installed, that was a complaint, you know, the doors are</p> <p>25 really heavy, you know, they were quite -- for people</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 16</p>

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1 **that had pushchairs or the elderly, they were really**
 2 **quite forceful when they shut back. It wasn't a slow**
 3 **closing mechanism or even medium; it was quite -- bam,**
 4 **you know, that was how it pushed you out -- it literally**
 5 **pushed you out the door.**
 6 **So there wasn't a follow-up, as such. I can't**
 7 **remember following it up, to be honest.**
 8 Q. Just describe the front door to me as it was
 9 in June 2017. I mean, did it have a letterbox in it?
 10 **A. It had a letterbox.**
 11 Q. Did it have a spyhole you could look out through?
 12 **A. It did indeed, yes.**
 13 Q. Aside from the closing mechanism -- so taking you
 14 forward to June 2017, you have a front door that doesn't
 15 have a closing mechanism on it.
 16 **A. Mm-hm.**
 17 Q. Did you have any other issues with the door?
 18 **A. So not -- maybe a few weeks before that I had an issue**
 19 **with actually the handle locking, and a carpenter came**
 20 **out maybe a couple of months before that and done**
 21 **something. I'm not really sure what he did, but fixed**
 22 **the locking mechanism.**
 23 Q. Did you ever notice a draught coming through the door at
 24 all?
 25 **A. I can't say I did, no.**

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1 Q. Could I have, in the same exhibit, just the next page in
 2 the exhibit, so page 2 of IWS00000306, please.
 3 This is I think a plan that you've marked. Is that
 4 your handwriting?
 5 **A. Yes, it is, yes.**
 6 Q. It's --
 7 **A. Apologies. I would've tidied it up if I'd known it was**
 8 **going to be ...**
 9 Q. It's still neater than mine!
 10 So we have now the layout of your floor.
 11 **A. Yes.**
 12 Q. We can see marked flat 82.
 13 **A. Yes.**
 14 Q. And also the communal area.
 15 **A. Mm-hm.**
 16 Q. Which, just to alert you, Ms Elcock, occasionally
 17 I might call the landing or the lobby or the communal
 18 area.
 19 **A. That's fine.**
 20 Q. We've heard from other witnesses that there was lighting
 21 in the communal area.
 22 **A. Mm-hm.**
 23 Q. Do you remember if the lights on your floor were always
 24 on?
 25 **A. Yes, yes.**

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1 Q. So no matter what time of night you came back --
 2 **A. Yes.**
 3 Q. -- you'd find a light on on the floor?
 4 **A. Yes.**
 5 Q. We can see -- and it might be that you were illustrating
 6 a movement there -- your front door and then there's
 7 a line going to a sort of asterisk again, and that's by
 8 the door to the stairwell, isn't it?
 9 **A. That's correct, yes.**
 10 Q. So you're flat 82.
 11 **A. Mm-hm.**
 12 Q. On a normal day or normal night, if you wanted to go
 13 from your front door to that stairwell door, how many
 14 steps would it take you?
 15 **A. Eight/nine. Not many.**
 16 Q. Can you just visualise it -- I mean, maybe you can use
 17 the room -- the distance from your front door to that
 18 stairwell door?
 19 **A. From here to probably the end of the slope, maybe.**
 20 Q. So to the end of the ramp --
 21 **A. Yes, sorry, yes.**
 22 Q. -- that we've installed for witnesses who need to use
 23 it.
 24 Did you ever use the stairs yourself?
 25 **A. Yes. You would have to use the stairs when the lifts**

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1 **were out of order, especially on the school run in the**
 2 **morning. If there was only one lift, you had no chance.**
 3 **So, yes, and I very rarely -- I tried not to walk up**
 4 **them. Living there for 20 years, I've done it many,**
 5 **many times, but if I knew the lifts were out, I used to**
 6 **go around to a friend's and have a cup of tea until they**
 7 **were fixed.**
 8 **But, yeah, I've used them. I mean, I've used them**
 9 **pretty much -- I know the layout of the stairs from the**
 10 **age of about 5.**
 11 Q. You said a few moments ago you tried not to use them;
 12 was there any reason that you avoided using the stairs?
 13 **A. To walk down them is always fine because you're going**
 14 **down, it doesn't take long, but to walk up them with**
 15 **shopping and pushchairs and children is never the**
 16 **easiest thing to do.**
 17 **Just more to do, I suppose, with laziness.**
 18 Q. We've got there --
 19 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: I don't think it's laziness! There
 20 are a lot of stairs, aren't there?
 21 **A. There was, yes.**
 22 MR RAWAT: We have the stairwell door there.
 23 **A. Yes.**
 24 Q. Do you remember -- I'm thinking specifically of
 25 around June 2017 -- the door from the communal area into

Page 20

1 the stairwell, did that close automatically?
 2 **A. Yes, both that one and the bin chute were quite -- they**
 3 **weren't changed, so they used to shut back on them, make**
 4 **a bit of a bang.**
 5 Q. I know, with a young child, probably the prospect of the
 6 stairs wasn't appealing, but if you had to use the
 7 stairs -- you explained the difficulty you had with your
 8 flat door when you were negotiating that with a pram.
 9 **A. Mm-hm.**
 10 Q. How was the stairwell door by comparison with your flat
 11 door?
 12 **A. It was self-closing, so it would close back, but it was**
 13 **not -- it was a real -- it was a thick door. I mean, it**
 14 **had been there the whole time I lived in the tower. But**
 15 **it would close back, but it wouldn't be like a forceful**
 16 **close-back, it would naturally just shut back.**
 17 **The bin chute was probably a lot faster than the**
 18 **stairwell one, but they both closed themselves straight**
 19 **back in once you came out of them.**
 20 Q. You mentioned that the lifts were sometimes out of order
 21 and you've in fact marked on there --
 22 **A. Yes.**
 23 Q. -- that a lift was out of service.
 24 How often were the lifts out of order?
 25 **A. So they were replaced back in 2005, and I think from**

Page 21

1 **pretty much then, yeah, they were kind of constantly --**
 2 **if one wasn't out, the other one was, you know. And**
 3 **then some weekends you'd just have none.**
 4 **There seemed to be more problems post-refurb because**
 5 **the contractors were using the lifts, so they'd use**
 6 **one -- they'd basically caused a problem where grit**
 7 **would get into the mechanisms and that would knock the**
 8 **lifts out. So they were constantly out of order.**
 9 Q. Just taking you slightly out of sequence, but we're
 10 going to June 2017.
 11 You've marked the lift on that night is out of
 12 service. Can you remember how long that lift had been
 13 out of service?
 14 **A. No, so the whole reason I've marked it out of service --**
 15 **and it relates to my statement -- is because when I woke**
 16 **up and -- well, when I was awake the second time, not**
 17 **the first time, as my statement says, when I was talking**
 18 **to my neighbours, which is why it's quite detailed in**
 19 **that picture, I remember looking at one of the lifts**
 20 **actually had the ticker-tape where it says "Out of**
 21 **service".**
 22 **So it's quite difficult because you haven't got to**
 23 **that bit yet in my statement, but --**
 24 Q. Would it help you if I deal with it when we get to that
 25 bit?

Page 22

1 **A. Yeah, yeah, then it makes sense, yes.**
 2 Q. Okay. So let's move on to a different topic.
 3 **A. Yes.**
 4 Q. Next question is: were you aware of gas pipes on the
 5 11th floor landing?
 6 **A. Yes.**
 7 Q. Can you remember where those pipes ran?
 8 **A. So the gas pipe -- because I was the flat that was**
 9 **affected. So the gas pipe ran from out of the**
 10 **stairwell -- so it ran through the stairwell, it ran out**
 11 **of the top of the stairwell, came around number 81,**
 12 **which is the flat to the right of me, round the top of**
 13 **my flat and then into my cupboard.**
 14 Q. In fact, let me --
 15 **A. Oh, sorry, yeah, you'd have to go back to the other**
 16 **picture to see my cupboard, yes.**
 17 Q. Can I do it this way: I'm going to try and show you
 18 a photograph which is taken by another witness. It's of
 19 a different floor and it's taken before the fire, but it
 20 just might help you.
 21 Can we have IWS00001001 and then page 5 of that
 22 document, please.
 23 **A. Yes, exactly like that.**
 24 Q. Just to assist those who are watching, it's a different
 25 floor, so we have flats 111 and 112, so a higher floor

Page 23

1 than yours, but we can see piping running across above
 2 that.
 3 Was that the same arrangement on your floor?
 4 **A. Exactly the same, and I've actually got a picture that**
 5 **was taken two days before of me standing outside the**
 6 **front door with gap pipes like that.**
 7 Q. Can I move on to a different topic, please.
 8 **A. Mm-hm.**
 9 Q. I'm going to show now, Ms Elcock, the fire safety notice
 10 sign that we've shown before, just to alert those who
 11 may be following.
 12 Can we have, please, INQ0000093, please.
 13 Just to explain, you may very well be familiar with
 14 this, Ms Elcock, but it's a photograph of a sign that
 15 was by the lifts on the 3rd floor.
 16 **A. Mm-hm.**
 17 Q. And it's a photograph taken by one of our experts.
 18 Do you remember seeing a sign like this by the lifts
 19 on your floor?
 20 **A. Yes.**
 21 Q. It was sited by the lifts as well, was it?
 22 **A. I'm pretty certain, yeah, it was on the left-hand lift,**
 23 **yeah. So from me looking out my front door, it's on the**
 24 **left. And there was also one in the lobby on the ground**
 25 **floor.**

Page 24

<p>1 Q. So the two places you remember it is the lobby and 2 ground floor? 3 A. Yes. 4 Q. You'd lived in the tower for 20 years. 5 A. Yes. 6 Q. You knew people in the tower who lived on different 7 floors, didn't you? 8 A. Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah. 9 Q. Do you remember seeing signs like that on other floors 10 by the lifts? 11 A. Can't say, yeah. 12 Q. Can you remember when, taking your floor as the example, 13 that sign first appeared by the lifts? 14 A. I couldn't give you an exact timescale, but it would've 15 been sometime in the 12 months prior to the fire. It 16 wasn't there any longer than that. 17 Q. So what we've got is -- you know, you're a working 18 mother in June 2017 and before. So what you've got is 19 a sign by the lifts, and you use the lifts to come and 20 go -- 21 A. Mm-hm. 22 Q. -- when they're working. Would you have read that sign? 23 A. I would've noticed it when it went up because it 24 wouldn't have been there before. But, yeah, I would've 25 kind of -- when you're waiting for the lift, it gives</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 25</p>	<p>1 Q. Nothing like that on your floor? 2 A. No. Other than that, no. 3 Q. So by June 2017, what was your understanding about what 4 you, as a resident of the tower, should do if there was 5 a fire? 6 A. I've lived there long enough to know that there have 7 been fires that haven't -- you know, you didn't even 8 know that they'd happened until the next morning. So 9 there was, how I saw it, no threat, you know. Fires 10 happen and generally they're brought under control 11 pretty quick, so I never, ever thought that this would 12 be something that you would kind of have to do. 13 Q. Thank you. 14 Can I turn now to the events of 13 and 14 June. 15 A. Mm-hm. 16 Q. Can we have side-by-side, please, page 2 of Ms Elcock's 17 first statement, and, particularly, if we could just 18 expand paragraph 8. 19 Well, that may not work for what I'm planning to do, 20 Ralph, because what I would like is could we have 21 IWS00000306, page 2, the plan and the layout of the 22 floor. 23 On the night itself in your statement, you describe 24 that you fell asleep on the sofa that night. 25 A. Mm-hm.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 27</p>
<p>1 you something to do. 2 Q. If we expand slightly at the top there, just under the 3 heading of the notice, there's a line which says: 4 "There is a 'stay put' policy for residents unless 5 the fire is in or affecting your flat." 6 A. Mm-hm. 7 Q. Before June 2017, did that phrase mean anything to you? 8 A. I'd heard it previously, not kind of from a council 9 point of view, but just other stuff that's happened in 10 block fires and stuff like that. So, yeah. 11 Q. Aside from this notice, did you have any information 12 from any other organisation or individual as to what you 13 should do if there was a fire in the tower? 14 A. No. 15 Q. Sticking to your floor again, we've talked about the 16 stairwell door. 17 Do you remember if there were any exit signs on your 18 floor indicating what route you might need to take if 19 there was an emergency? 20 A. No. 21 Q. Is that, "No, I don't remember" or "No" -- 22 A. There was no green, "Fire exit this way". Where I work, 23 we have loads of them. I know they need to be high and 24 visible so that people can see them. Yes, 110 per cent, 25 no.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 26</p>	<p>1 Q. Then later on you describe being woken up by the sound 2 of sirens. You then went to bed and then you were woken 3 up again by the sound of voices. 4 A. Mm-hm. 5 Q. That's the point when you then went to your door and you 6 saw your neighbours from flat 86. 7 A. Mm-hm. 8 Q. They told you that there was smoke, and you can see on 9 the plan that you're in 82, 86 is the top flat on the 10 plan as we see it on the same side, but you've marked 11 smoke with a dot; do you see? 12 A. Mm-hm. 13 Q. So was that where you saw smoke? 14 A. So, yeah, I woke up, I kind of opened the door a little 15 bit. They were standing where the dot was, and they 16 were saying that there's smoke. You could see like 17 a really thin wisp of smoke in that corner, so that's 18 why it's kind of highlighted, now this makes sense. 19 And -- yeah, and then I went on to tell them, "Okay, 20 go", and I closed back the door of my flat. 21 Q. So taking that in stages a little bit. 22 A. Yes. 23 Q. So you must have had to come out of your flat and walk 24 across the lobby towards their door; is that right? 25 A. Yeah, so pretty much kind of where that asterisk is,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 28</p>

7 (Pages 25 to 28)

1 I've kind of come out and looked -- I didn't come like
 2 all the way out into the hallway; I kind of come around
 3 and had a look -- you could kind of lean your head
 4 around and see, and you could see just like from the
 5 other side of the cupboard a tiny bit of smoke. It was
 6 like a really light grey cigarettey-type smoke, but
 7 a little bit thicker than that. And they were standing
 8 at that corner, so number 86, the father and the
 9 daughter.
 10 But I wasn't, like, in a position to leave at that
 11 point, so I said to them -- because I didn't really
 12 understand what they were trying to say, but I realised
 13 they said that there was smoke, so I was like, "Okay,
 14 you guys go", and I closed back the door and shouted
 15 through to my partner to find out what was going on.
 16 Q. So looking at it, would you say that you probably went
 17 as far into the hallway as sort of the area of the
 18 stairwell?
 19 A. A little bit back. To be fair, you could come out and
 20 just go left of the door and see straight ahead.
 21 Q. So on that plan, where we see the word "smoke" and then
 22 a dot, that's where your neighbours were?
 23 A. Yes. So they were kind of in between the cupboard, the
 24 bin chute door and their side.
 25 Q. From your position, was there anything sort of affecting

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1 your visibility at all?
 2 A. No.
 3 Q. From where you were, could you see whether the door to
 4 flat 86 was open or not?
 5 A. No. I didn't go that far to see the door.
 6 Q. So you couldn't see inside the flat at all?
 7 A. No, because they were outside. They were on the
 8 landing.
 9 Q. In your statement, you described yourself at that point
 10 as confused. What did you think was going on?
 11 A. To be honest, as I say, I was asleep, heard the sirens,
 12 completely nothing uncommon for where Grenfell -- you
 13 know, Fire Brigade gets called for all sorts of reasons,
 14 so I didn't pay any attention to it.
 15 But what was really unusual for me is noises on the
 16 landing. It's a quiet landing, you know. Especially at
 17 that time of night, you wouldn't expect it. So I was
 18 more confused that something -- they were out on the
 19 landing and there was a little bit of smoke, but I still
 20 didn't kind of put -- oh, Fire Brigade are here --
 21 I didn't, I suppose because I've just kind of woken back
 22 up, I wasn't really -- I was a bit confused by what was
 23 going on. So it was more about finding out what's going
 24 on when I get back in.
 25 Q. You told them to leave.

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1 A. Yes, I told them to leave because they looked worried
 2 and, again, you know, that's the only thing I can tell
 3 them to do, because if you're worried, then leave. But
 4 I weren't sure.
 5 As I say, it was complete confusion. I weren't sure
 6 what was going on, you know. But it was just them
 7 saying, "Oh, smoke, smoke", and that was kind of how
 8 they were saying it to me, there wasn't no description,
 9 "There's fire in my flat", anything like that, so it was
 10 more, "Smoke, smoke". And I just said, "Okay" --
 11 I remember looking at the lifts and one of them being
 12 out of service. That wasn't me telling them to get in
 13 the lift, I just need to add that, but it was more about
 14 like, oh -- because there is a little bit of context to
 15 why I would look at the lift. When I looked at the
 16 lift -- it now makes sense why I looked at the lift,
 17 because -- it's quite difficult to -- I want to try and
 18 explain what I'm talking about, but when the -- and the
 19 problem is I know that you may come on to it at a later
 20 date, but I'm going to say it anyway.
 21 So the vent things that we had, any time they were
 22 opened or activated, as such, the lifts would go out of
 23 order. So I think in my head, when I looked at the
 24 lift, I kind of looked to see what was going on. So
 25 I could see one of the lifts was out of order and said

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1 "Do not use" or -- I don't know what it said, but it was
 2 doing the ticker thing, and that's when I needed to
 3 establish what's going on, because clearly there's some
 4 sort of correlation.
 5 But it's not until after you think about your
 6 thought process that night, but that's why I said,
 7 "Look, okay, go" and shut back the door.
 8 Q. Were your neighbours trying to tell you what to do?
 9 A. No.
 10 Q. So they were just saying "Smoke"?
 11 A. Yes, literally that was kind of the words that came out,
 12 "Smoke, smoke."
 13 Q. You told them to leave; at that time, did it come into
 14 your mind that you should be leaving as well?
 15 A. So at that time, again, it was like the lights are on,
 16 okay, there was a tiny bit of smoke, but it wasn't
 17 like -- for me it didn't seem like a huge -- it's really
 18 difficult to describe, but I still had to go back in, my
 19 daughter's still inside, my partner's still inside, so
 20 I could say to you, "Go", but I need to go back in,
 21 establish what's going on and then work it out from
 22 there, and that basically was my thought process.
 23 Q. Let's talk lifts and vents.
 24 A. Yes.
 25 Q. The lift is out of service.

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1 **A. Mm-hm.**
 2 Q. So that night, when you got back home, was that lift
 3 working?
 4 **A. Yes, both of them were.**
 5 Q. Can you remember what time you got home that night?
 6 **A. I'd say about 8.00.**
 7 Q. So at 8 o'clock, when you're getting into your flat,
 8 both lifts are working?
 9 **A. I'm pretty certain they were, yes.**
 10 Q. Tell us how you would know that a lift was out of
 11 service.
 12 **A. They've got like digital signs which tells you where the**
 13 **lift is going, up and down, what floor it's on now, but**
 14 **when it went out of service, it says, "Out of service".**
 15 **It'd just keep running across, "Out of service, out of**
 16 **service, out of service."**
 17 Q. You mentioned vents.
 18 **A. Yes.**
 19 Q. I'm going to show you two images now which we've seen
 20 before, so can we have BLA00002513 and BLA00002514.
 21 You may well be familiar with these images,
 22 Ms Elcock, because we've shown them to other witnesses,
 23 but they're two photographs taken on floor 6, after the
 24 fire.
 25 **A. Mm-hm.**

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1 Q. And they are views north and south. So we can see in
 2 the image on the left-hand side of the screen there are
 3 two vents high up on the wall.
 4 **A. Yes.**
 5 Q. On the right-hand side, they are there at the lower end
 6 of the wall.
 7 Is that what you're talking about when you refer to
 8 vents?
 9 **A. Yes.**
 10 Q. Tell us, then, what link you noticed between these vents
 11 and the lifts not working.
 12 **A. So there was a weekend when I recall coming home, and**
 13 **when you came in through the new doors, the new entrance**
 14 **to the lobby, the vents would be to your left-hand side,**
 15 **and there was just one weekend where they were like**
 16 **really, really loud. So I'm assuming that's what --**
 17 **this was never there before, so this noise, this vent,**
 18 **this was a whole new system. It literally spent -- the**
 19 **whole weekend, it didn't switch off. It was really**
 20 **quite a warm weekend, so you had your windows open, so**
 21 **you could hear the kind of really loud -- because it's**
 22 **on that side of the block. And I remember the lifts**
 23 **actually not working.**
 24 **I think they managed to get one lift working that**
 25 **weekend, but it wasn't until that noise -- for me, I saw**

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1 **it as a correlation. I don't know if it was, but for me**
 2 **I saw it as that when that activated, for whatever**
 3 **reason -- and that weekend it was just because it**
 4 **activated -- one of the lifts or both lifts would go out**
 5 **of service.**
 6 Q. When you're talking about -- that was hearing vents on
 7 the ground floor lift lobby?
 8 **A. On the lower, yeah. Lower, yes. And it was really,**
 9 **really loud and the whole weekend.**
 10 Q. Can you just help us with (a) what year it was and (b)
 11 what time of year?
 12 **A. It was definitely in the summer months. Well,**
 13 **definitely in -- I say summer months, but it weren't**
 14 **like autumn or winter. It was definitely summer/spring.**
 15 **It was a time when you had no choice but to have your**
 16 **windows open because it was warm, and it was a weekend**
 17 **of just constant whirling of this machine.**
 18 Q. Was this after the refurbishment, this happened?
 19 **A. Yes, they weren't there before.**
 20 Q. So on a hot weekend after the refurbishment, that's when
 21 you hear this noise and the lifts go out?
 22 **A. Mm-hm.**
 23 Q. After that, did you ever make that link again?
 24 **A. I can't say I did, no, but I remember this particular --**
 25 **because as I say, the noise was, like, quite unbearable**

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1 **for a whole weekend. It was -- yeah, and I remember the**
 2 **lifts having an issue. And you'd call up about the**
 3 **lift, "The lift's not working again", and then they**
 4 **would send someone out.**
 5 **I think they fixed one of the lifts. Obviously they**
 6 **couldn't fix both of them at the time. But that noise**
 7 **was still going until the Monday morning, and when**
 8 **I came home from work the Monday, it was off.**
 9 Q. So after that occasion, do you remember ever hearing
 10 such a loud noise from that system again?
 11 **A. No.**
 12 Q. You got similar vents on your floor, haven't you?
 13 **A. Yes. So my ones are the lower ones next to my house.**
 14 Q. On a normal day, on your floor, what did you hear from
 15 those vents?
 16 **A. You didn't, really. I don't recall hearing anything**
 17 **from them.**
 18 Q. What was the temperature like on floor 11 in the
 19 communal area?
 20 **A. As normal as it's ever been, so just normal.**
 21 Q. Is that normal bearable or normal unbearable? Was it
 22 uncomfortable ever?
 23 **A. No. No, no, no. It's just normal hallway temperature.**
 24 **It wasn't as cold as the stairs. So the stairs would**
 25 **have a bit of a draught, but the hallways never really**

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<p>1 did.</p> <p>2 Q. Can I take you back to the night itself.</p> <p>3 A. Mm-hm.</p> <p>4 Q. You've already mentioned this -- well, let's go back to</p> <p>5 your statement, page 2 of the first statement, please.</p> <p>6 It's paragraphs 9 and 10, just to help you,</p> <p>7 Ms Elcock, but what you tell us is that after the</p> <p>8 encounter with your neighbours, you go back into the</p> <p>9 flat to speak to your partner.</p> <p>10 A. Mm-hm.</p> <p>11 Q. You both then looked out of a window facing east.</p> <p>12 A. Yes. Just with this, there's just a little bit that --</p> <p>13 it's kind of been a bit muddled up. But, yeah,</p> <p>14 I couldn't -- just the end bit, the bit about</p> <p>15 spraying -- the cherry-picker, it kind of come a little</p> <p>16 bit after that, sorry, so I think when I gave it, it was</p> <p>17 a bit --</p> <p>18 Q. No, let's clear it up. You mention in paragraph 9 that</p> <p>19 you saw a fireman on a cherry-picker --</p> <p>20 A. Yes.</p> <p>21 Q. -- and spraying the tower. But now, thinking about it,</p> <p>22 do you think that occurred later on in time?</p> <p>23 A. So it happened after I've made the call. So it would</p> <p>24 need to be at the end of 10 rather the end of 9.</p> <p>25 Q. It's the call that I want to ask you about, because it's</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 37</p>	<p>1 A. So if I explain to you what happened. So we looked out</p> <p>2 of the window. I made the call -- so, no, yeah, we were</p> <p>3 looking out the window, and I remember obviously there's</p> <p>4 a fire -- I'm pretty certain -- is that my first call?</p> <p>5 Q. It is.</p> <p>6 A. Oh, right, okay. Sorry, brain's --</p> <p>7 Q. Do you want to see the transcript, if that helps?</p> <p>8 A. Yes, that would probably be easier.</p> <p>9 Q. Let's go, please, to LFB00000307.</p> <p>10 Ms Elcock, if at any time you want to see a</p> <p>11 transcript -- because you've dealt with the calls in</p> <p>12 detail in your statement, but if you do, just ask me and</p> <p>13 I will take you to the transcript.</p> <p>14 A. Okay.</p> <p>15 Q. If you look at the very top line, there's a bit called</p> <p>16 "Event".</p> <p>17 A. Yes.</p> <p>18 Q. Do you see there's a black square that's been put on and</p> <p>19 next to that, if you're moving towards the left, you</p> <p>20 have a row of numbers where the red dot is now. So that</p> <p>21 always gives us the time. So that's at 01.28, as you</p> <p>22 put in your statement.</p> <p>23 A. Mm-hm.</p> <p>24 Q. If you go to the next page, you're the person identified</p> <p>25 as "CALLER", and my question is directed just to what</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 39</p>
<p>1 your first call. You address it in paragraph 10, and</p> <p>2 it's a call which is handled by the London Fire Brigade</p> <p>3 and it's timed at 01.28.</p> <p>4 A. Mm-hm.</p> <p>5 Q. So leave the fireman on the cherry-picker aside, but are</p> <p>6 you clear in your mind that you made that call after you</p> <p>7 and your partner had looked out of the window?</p> <p>8 A. Yes, yes. So we looked out -- so I walked back to the</p> <p>9 front room and said, "What's going on?" and my partner</p> <p>10 was still watching TV. He then got up and walked to the</p> <p>11 window which is on the east side, which overlooked the</p> <p>12 sports centre, and he went, "Oh, it looks like there's</p> <p>13 a fire." So I went and had a look as well. I could</p> <p>14 clearly see it was really low down because it was</p> <p>15 shooting out from the bottom, but it was on the 6s</p> <p>16 side -- I'm on the 2s, it's on the 6s side -- and</p> <p>17 I naturally picked up the phone and called the Fire</p> <p>18 Brigade.</p> <p>19 Q. When you made that call, you begin by saying:</p> <p>20 "... I'm stuck on the 11th floor and I don't know</p> <p>21 how to get out."</p> <p>22 So what was it that made you feel as if you were</p> <p>23 stuck?</p> <p>24 A. On my first call?</p> <p>25 Q. Yes.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 38</p>	<p>1 you say there about being stuck?</p> <p>2 A. Okay.</p> <p>3 Q. Because what has happened to you so far is the</p> <p>4 interaction with your neighbours --</p> <p>5 A. Yes.</p> <p>6 Q. -- in the lobby and looking out of the window.</p> <p>7 So my question is: what was it that made you feel as</p> <p>8 if you were stuck on your floor?</p> <p>9 A. So obviously now reading it in its entirety, it makes</p> <p>10 a little bit more sense. So I think when I called,</p> <p>11 because I could see the Fire Brigade were here, so</p> <p>12 I could see them now outside the window, I don't know</p> <p>13 whether that word "stuck" is more a case of, "I'm on the</p> <p>14 11th floor, what do I need to do?" kind of thing. That</p> <p>15 was kind of my angle now thinking back. It wasn't a --</p> <p>16 at this point, we haven't attempted to leave.</p> <p>17 So just trying to clarify why -- yeah. So now I've</p> <p>18 seen it in its entirety, what I said, it's more a case</p> <p>19 of, "We're on the 11th floor", kind of letting them know</p> <p>20 that's where we are.</p> <p>21 Q. Would it be fair to say at that time you didn't feel you</p> <p>22 were trapped on your floor?</p> <p>23 A. Not yet, because we haven't attempted to leave yet.</p> <p>24 Q. If we go to the next page, please -- and this something</p> <p>25 you mention in your statement -- can you see at the top</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 40</p>

<p>1 the control room operator says: 2 "OPERATOR: Right, I'll let the crews know where you 3 are, okay?" 4 A. Mm-hm. 5 Q. Did you take anything from that? 6 A. I suppose, you know, naturally you call the Fire 7 Brigade. For me, I know they're there, I'm telling you 8 where I am, I await your instructions. That would've 9 been my thought process at that point. 10 MR RAWAT: Thank you. 11 We've been going, Mr Chairman, for 55 minutes. 12 I think -- 13 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes, I had my eye on the clock. 14 I didn't want to interrupt you. 15 MR RAWAT: No. We're moving on to another topic, so it may 16 be a good point to ask for a break. 17 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes. Well, probably it is 18 convenient to have a break at this point. 19 THE WITNESS: Thank you. 20 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: I am going to ask you please not to 21 talk to anyone about your evidence while you're out of 22 the room, and we'll come back at 11.20. 23 THE WITNESS: Okay. 24 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: If you would like to go with the 25 usher, she'll look after you.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 41</p>	<p>1 So where we are, Ms Elcock, is the ground floor lift 2 lobby. 3 A. Mm-hm. 4 Q. We can see that there's a poster, but next to the poster 5 there appears to be a grille. 6 A. Yes. 7 Q. When you were answering questions earlier before the 8 short break, you mentioned that hot weekend when you 9 heard a noise. 10 Does that photograph help you at all to tell us 11 where that noise was coming from? 12 A. It wasn't from them. It was outside the actual 13 entrance. On the right-hand side there was some sort of 14 grille thing. 15 Q. Was it in the foyer area? 16 A. No, actually outside the building on the right. 17 Q. I follow. I see. So outside the tower itself? 18 A. Yes. 19 Q. I follow, thank you. 20 Let's go back to your account, please, and your 21 statement at page 3. Let's expand paragraphs 11 and 12. 22 A. Mm-hm. 23 Q. You've dialled 999 once -- 24 A. Mm-hm. 25 Q. -- at 01.28.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 43</p>
<p>1 THE WITNESS: Thank you. 2 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: All right? Thank you very much. 3 Right, 11.20, then, please. 4 (11.10 am) 5 (A short break) 6 (11.23 am) 7 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: All right, Ms Elcock? 8 THE WITNESS: Yes. 9 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Ready to carry on? 10 THE WITNESS: Yes. 11 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Good, thank you. 12 Yes, Mr Rawat. 13 MR RAWAT: Thank you, Mr Chairman. 14 Ms Elcock, before we carry on with your account, 15 I just want to go back and pick up on something you said 16 earlier. It involves showing you a photograph from the 17 night itself, which is one that we've shown, and it 18 shows Nadia Jafari coming out of the lift. 19 A. Mm-hm. 20 Q. Are you all right seeing that image? 21 A. Mm-hm. 22 Q. Others may wish to just look away. 23 It's INQ00000426, please. 24 Could we just expand the left-hand side of the image 25 so that we can see what's on the wall.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 42</p>	<p>1 In these two paragraphs, you tell us you get 2 dressed. You see neighbours on the grass below and you 3 speak to your sister. 4 A. Mm-hm. 5 Q. Then if we pick it up at 01.33, in paragraph 12 you say 6 you called the Fire Brigade again -- 7 A. Mm-hm. 8 Q. -- and speak to them. 9 Now, 01.28 and 01.33, if my maths is right, is 10 5 minutes. So what had happened to make you call 11 a second time? 12 A. So, as it says, I obviously got dressed, woke up my 13 daughter. I was looking out -- so we were kind of 14 looking out to see -- I've already called them, so they 15 know that there's a fire, they told me they're in 16 attendance, and then I'm looking downstairs and 17 I actually see, as I put here, Youssef from flat 85, and 18 he's the one that prompted me to say: something's not 19 right here, why is he down there? 20 I then called my sister, just to tell her, "Look, 21 we're okay, but there's a fire. As soon as we get out, 22 I'm going to bring my daughter to my mum's." 23 And then at that point, I believe -- yeah, no, not 24 I believe, I know -- when I saw Youssef, after calling 25 my sister, I looked at my partner and I said to him,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 44</p>

<p>1 "You know what, I think" -- Youssef was my prompt, so 2 I kind of said, "You know what, I think it's time we 3 went, let's not wait." 4 So we went to go out. He was in front. He opened 5 the door, and with that -- it was pitch black. He went 6 out, come back in, and he said "Look, we're not going to 7 get out." 8 Q. Can I take you back, then, to your account and that part 9 of it with your partner going out through the door. 10 A. Yes. 11 Q. Let's go, please, back to page 3 and look at 12 paragraphs 13 to 15. 13 So you've set out -- just so that we can get the 14 context -- in paragraph 12 the detail of that call. 15 A. Yes. As I say, a little bit of this is jumbled up from 16 when I've done it. 17 Q. Hopefully I can help you to unjumble it. 18 A. Yeah. 19 Q. But it is important that we get your answers and your 20 narrative. 21 A. Mm-hm. 22 Q. So feel free to stop me and tell me what the sequence of 23 events were. 24 A. Yes. 25 Q. Because what we see, first of all, is that having made</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 45</p>	<p>1 something's gone on and I've obviously called back the 2 Fire Brigade. 3 Q. So is this a jumble? 4 A. Yes, that's what I'm saying. It's all a bit back to 5 front, sorry. 6 Q. Let's park that bit of the jumble then and do it this 7 way to try and get the sequence right. 8 A. Yes. 9 Q. We've had your second call. 10 A. Yes. 11 Q. And your partner -- it's at the tail end of 12 paragraph 13. 13 A. Yes. 14 Q. Is that what you're referring to, your first attempt to 15 try and leave? 16 A. Yes. 17 Q. So what you say is that he opens the front door, shuts 18 it quickly and says, "We can't." 19 A. Yes. 20 Q. So at that time -- 21 A. Mm-hm. 22 Q. -- and I'm going to come on to the blue flame -- what 23 did he tell you about what he saw? 24 A. He didn't. He just said, "We're not going to get out of 25 here." And I could see by his reaction, his face,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 47</p>
<p>1 that call in paragraph 13, you speak about receiving 2 phone calls from friends on the ground. 3 A. Yes. 4 Q. One of my questions is this: if you look at 5 paragraph 13, you say: 6 "At 01:40 I received a phone call from my 7 friend ..." 8 A. Mm-hm. 9 Q. My question is directed also to other parts of your 10 statement. 11 You're able to give very precise times for calls 12 that you received; is that because you've been able to 13 take it from your phone records? 14 A. Yes. So, weirdly enough, someone a few days after the 15 fire said to take a screenshot of all the calls you 16 made, I don't know why, I can't even remember who said 17 it to me, and that's been how I've been able to piece 18 together what I did and how I did it. 19 Q. You speak of one particular friend, and you refer to 20 sensing the nervousness in his voice. 21 A. Yes. 22 Q. What information were you getting from friends outside 23 at the time? 24 A. So at that particular time, when I spoke to him, we'd 25 already attempted to leave, so I knew obviously</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 46</p>	<p>1 that -- you know, I trusted him -- there's something 2 seriously wrong out there. I didn't know until later 3 why he said that. 4 So then before I received the call from Jim, the 5 next paragraph, the 14 bit, comes before the Jim call. 6 But, yeah, it's just a bit back to front, sorry. 7 Q. Did you go to the front door with Anthony at all? 8 A. I'm behind him. So I'm there with my daughter, yes. So 9 he would be at the front, he would've gone out the front 10 door. So he's gone to check that everything's okay, 11 let's go, but I'm in the hallway, probably around near 12 my bedroom area. He's gone out. I can see it -- the 13 smoke comes in a little bit. Not a lot, but it's dark 14 out there now. The lights are no longer on. 15 Q. Just to break down your answer a little bit. 16 A. Yes. 17 Q. So you're standing behind Anthony. From your position, 18 could you see the conditions in the lobby at that time 19 at all? 20 A. I could see it was dark. That was about as much as 21 I could see. There's no longer no light out there. 22 Q. You refer to smoke coming in. 23 A. Yeah. 24 Q. Was that the first smoke that got into your flat? 25 A. It was quite a quick -- he's gone out, come back in,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 48</p>

1 very, very quickly.

2 Q. Did he actually step out into the lobby?

3 A. Yes. Well, yeah, kind of half step, yeah.

4 Q. Can we put it this way: he opens the door, half steps

5 out into the lobby and then steps back in and gives you

6 his --

7 A. I could see from his reaction to whatever's gone on out

8 there, he doesn't deem it safe and I take his judgement,

9 or took his judgment.

10 Q. How much smoke came in at that point?

11 A. Not a lot. Not a lot.

12 Q. Do you remember what that smoke looked like?

13 A. Not really, no.

14 Q. After the door was shut, did any more smoke come in?

15 A. No, not at that point. No, no, no.

16 Q. Before we leave paragraph 13, one thing you do mention

17 is that your partner later told you that he saw a blue

18 flame on the landing when he opened the door.

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. Did he tell you anything else about that blue flame?

21 A. No, he just said -- because afterwards he had like

22 a burn mark on his arm, and I said, "Oh, where did that

23 come from?" That's when he mentioned the blue flame.

24 Yes, I can't tell you where he saw it. Yeah. Yeah.

25 Q. Paragraph 14, the bath.

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1 A. Yes.

2 Q. Again, I think it's important we get the sequence.

3 A. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

4 Q. So you've tried to go out, you've shut the door. Was it

5 then that you started the bath running?

6 A. Yes. So literally as it says there -- I'm not going to

7 repeat it -- I walk into the bathroom, plugged the bath.

8 Anthony was just like, "What the hell are you doing?"

9 And then I replied in -- I'm not going to repeat it, but

10 that's what I said.

11 Q. You expressed a strong view.

12 A. Yes, and then it was a case of then the phone calls

13 started to come through and then I've called back, and

14 now I'm at this point where I can't see that we're going

15 to get out, so ...

16 Q. We know from your account, from reading your statement,

17 that your partner, Anthony, used the water from the bath

18 later on.

19 A. Mm-hm.

20 Q. But did you just keep the taps running then?

21 A. So I left it running. It overflowed, as it naturally

22 would once it gets to a certain point, and then at some

23 point, yeah, Anthony went in and switched them off.

24 Q. Thank you.

25 If we look down at paragraph 15 now, this is now

Page 50

1 your third 999 call.

2 A. Mm-hm.

3 Q. The time -- and it's right from the transcript as

4 well -- is 01.43.

5 A. Mm.

6 Q. You tell the control room operator there's smoke coming

7 into your house, and you use the word "house".

8 Where was the smoke coming from at that time?

9 A. So ... I think it's possible from where the window may

10 have been opened. It was -- yeah, I think a lot of that

11 early conversation is more to say, "Look, just hurry up

12 and come and get me". You kind of say stuff to prompt

13 people to do stuff, and I think that might be where --

14 I mean, when I think about the levels of smoke that was

15 in my house at that point, it didn't have a major

16 effect. So if I did say that, and, again, I'm a bit

17 blurry on that one, but probably just more to say,

18 "Look, you need to come and get us". You kind of say

19 whatever you can to make people react, and that might be

20 more about me trying to get them to react a bit quicker

21 than anything else.

22 Q. The fact that you needed to say things like that --

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. -- how does that reflect your understanding of how the

25 situation was developing?

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1 A. Oh, I knew now it's real serious. I know we can't get

2 out. I can see what's going on down -- so I had a very

3 good view of everything that's going on out in the

4 front. We are in the front room at this point. I can

5 see that the police are kicking in the doors on Grenfell

6 Walk, telling people to get out. I can see firefighters

7 on Grenfell Walk shooting water up. I can see the

8 cherry-picker at the front of the building. He's

9 looking at me, I'm looking at him, but nothing's

10 happening and no one's coming.

11 So I know at this point that it's exceptionally

12 serious.

13 I can also tell that the calls are coming in and

14 people are saying: this is what's going on.

15 I think for me at that point it was more

16 around: where is it now? Where is the fire now?

17 Because I know it's serious, but I'm trying to say to

18 whoever I was talking to on the phone, "Hurry up",

19 basically, in the nicest possible way.

20 Q. You mention the calls coming in, and the one call that

21 you specifically cite in your statement is the call from

22 your friend Jimmy.

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. So we can be clear about the chronology, did Jimmy call

25 you before or after this third call at 01.43?

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1 A. Before.
 2 Q. Right.
 3 A. That's literally to my phone records. You can see it.
 4 I think you've got my phone records, but that is how it
 5 went. He spoke to me -- so I've called the Fire Brigade
 6 a couple of times, spoken to Taneesha. He then calls me
 7 and I can hear it in his voice, but all I'm saying to
 8 him is, "Where is it? Tell me where the fire is." He
 9 said, "It's not on your side", and that is what he kept
 10 saying to me.
 11 He was probably the only person -- I mean, I spoke
 12 to many people that night, but him and another friend of
 13 mine who actually used to live in the block were the
 14 only two people that night I was kind of listening to,
 15 "Tell me where it is now, tell me where it is now", and
 16 they were telling me, "Look, yeah, you're okay for the
 17 moment", whatever the case may be.
 18 Q. The advice you're given -- and this call is
 19 an example -- is to block up the bottom of the door, and
 20 in fact you say you'd already done that.
 21 A. Yes.
 22 Q. Had you by then blocked up the front door?
 23 A. Yes.
 24 Q. Obviously you've told us that you and your family have
 25 already made one attempt to leave.

Page 53

1 A. Mm-hm.
 2 Q. Now you've blocked up the front door. How effective was
 3 the blocking?
 4 A. Yeah, relatively effective, I suppose. I mean, for me,
 5 the smoke only really got in later, later on in the
 6 evening, or the night, or the morning, whatever.
 7 Q. What you also say in the call -- and I hope you'll take
 8 it from me but I'll show you the transcript if you
 9 want --
 10 A. Yes.
 11 Q. -- is that the stairs will be completely full of smoke
 12 by now.
 13 A. So --
 14 Q. Was there anything you base that piece of information
 15 on?
 16 A. I assume -- it would've been an assumption for me,
 17 because at that point I know the fire's on the lower
 18 ground, I've told them it's on the lower ground because
 19 I could see it's coming from the lower. I've also been
 20 told by those I'm speaking to on the ground that it's
 21 spreading up.
 22 I think I at some point during the night was put on
 23 the phone to a police officer, but no one could actually
 24 say what's going on on the stairs.
 25 Now, my thought process in all of this was: I'm high

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1 up, the fire's low down, I'd be leaving and going into
 2 the fire which started at the bottom.
 3 So my natural reaction was if someone could let me
 4 know what was going on on the stairs, I think, you know,
 5 because at that point I still felt relatively safe.
 6 Q. The next 999 call you make is at 02.02 and I do want to
 7 show you the transcript of that.
 8 A. Yes.
 9 Q. So can we have please LFB00000338 and let's take page 1,
 10 please.
 11 I want to show you page 1 just so that you can see
 12 the time of the call for yourself. So with that
 13 introduction, could we go to page 2.
 14 I just want to highlight for you, Ms Elcock, there's
 15 an answer from the control room operator which begins:
 16 "OPERATOR: On the 11th floor."
 17 So you've given your flat number, and you're asked
 18 what floor you are on, and you say:
 19 "CALLER: Yeah, I think -- on the 11th."
 20 If we can expand that, it's in the middle.
 21 A. Mm-hm.
 22 Q. What the operator says is that:
 23 "OPERATOR: ... What we're doing is we're passing all
 24 the messages over to the crews on the scene and they're
 25 going along and they're getting the people out of the

Page 55

1 flats, okay? I know it's really scary."
 2 What, if anything, did you take from that piece of
 3 information?
 4 A. That they knew where we were and that they were coming.
 5 So that they were sending people to all the flats that
 6 they were aware people were in.
 7 Q. In the same call -- we're now at 2 o'clock in the
 8 morning -- on the next page, what you say -- do you see
 9 the second caller down, you begin by saying the smoke
 10 alarm hasn't gone off.
 11 A. Yes.
 12 Q. Then you refer to:
 13 "CALLER: ... when we had opened the door before cos
 14 we thought the fire brigade was out there -"
 15 So the first question is: the smoke alarm hasn't
 16 gone off in your flat yet.
 17 A. Yes.
 18 Q. So at that time -- and we are at 2 o'clock in the
 19 morning -- what were conditions like in your flat?
 20 A. Still relatively clear. Like, it wasn't -- yeah, it was
 21 quite damp because, as I say, there was obviously the
 22 water that came from the bath. There was also the added
 23 water that had been shooting through from the Fire
 24 Brigade, so the front room was absolutely drenched. So
 25 any smoke that was coming kind of died down pretty

Page 56

1 quick.

2 I think there's a bit here that suggests that

3 potentially this might have been the second attempt

4 where we may have tried to go again, because I know we

5 did try again, but I can't be certain of that.

6 Q. But are you certain in your mind, trying to piece it

7 together, that, firstly, there was a second attempt

8 where you tried to go again?

9 A. Yes, yes, there was definitely more than one, there was

10 definitely more than the first one.

11 The second -- yes, this would make sense now because

12 the smoke only came in when the door was opened, at that

13 point, and I think it had come in, but it hadn't set the

14 fire alarm off because it literally came in and kind

15 of -- obviously it's quite a quick reaction to opening

16 and shutting the door, because I think we thought the

17 fire -- yes, I mean it kind of makes sense now, the Fire

18 Brigade were outside. So we opened to kind of go,

19 obviously realising they weren't, and shut back the

20 door, and then whatever was on the floor just made the

21 smoke disperse at that point. So it was still

22 relatively clear.

23 Q. So what was it that you heard that made you think the

24 Fire Brigade were outside your flat?

25 A. I'm thinking back now, and I can't be 100 per cent

Page 57

1 certain, it's probably that Anthony may have said to me

2 that they're outside. I can only assume that, you

3 know -- he was taking the lead in terms of us leaving.

4 So he would've been at the door and might have said that

5 they were there, "Let's go", and they weren't. So

6 that's kind of probably where that comes from.

7 Q. At that point, do you remember going to the door

8 yourself?

9 A. I would've always been behind him. I was behind him

10 until the moment we left.

11 Q. Do you remember what the conditions were like in the

12 communal area at that time?

13 A. In the hallway?

14 Q. Not in your hallway, but on the landing.

15 A. I didn't go that far. He was always in front.

16 Q. You say that when you opened the door some smoke came

17 in.

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Can you describe that smoke at all?

20 A. It was thick, black smoke. But, again, it was so quick,

21 the door shutting back, that it wasn't a kind of --

22 I don't know what you call it. It wasn't a plume of

23 smoke came gushing in. It would've been a kind of open,

24 quick, shut back.

25 Q. Can you remember what colour it was?

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1 A. It was black at that point, yes.

2 Q. Although I think you've said not very much came in, did

3 it have any physical effect on you or Anthony or your

4 daughter?

5 A. Can't even -- I don't know. I don't know.

6 Q. Could I take you to page 4 of this transcript, please.

7 If you look at your answer at the very top --

8 A. Mm-hm.

9 Q. -- you're told that they are aware, and that's about

10 passing information on.

11 A. Mm-hm.

12 Q. But you say:

13 "CALLER: Okay. I just think it's spreading above my

14 flat, that's the only problem now."

15 A. Mm-hm.

16 Q. Can you remember now what you were referring to about

17 what was spreading above your flat?

18 A. That would've been about the fire, because I'm getting

19 calls to say it's spreading. So it's obviously going

20 up, I assume. I haven't seen it, so -- but I'm getting

21 calls to say it's going up the building.

22 Q. Was your information the calls coming in from outside

23 rather than something you could see from your flat

24 window?

25 A. Yes, yes, yes.

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1 Q. Okay.

2 Can I have now, please, on the screen LFB00000343

3 and page 1 of that document, please.

4 If you look at the top, this is another 999 call,

5 the next one in sequence. So we have the time there as

6 02.13.

7 A. Mm-hm.

8 Q. At the end, we have the word "ESSEX".

9 A. Mm-hm.

10 Q. We know from other information that that call was put

11 through to Essex Fire and Rescue Service.

12 Were you aware at the time that your call was being

13 routed to a fire and rescue service other than the LFB?

14 A. I didn't know it had gone to Essex. I am pretty certain

15 one of them went to Glasgow, but, yeah --

16 Q. If we go to the next page, that might help you just with

17 that?

18 A. Oh, yes, Glasgow.

19 Q. Again, this is based on other evidence, but just to help

20 you, Ms Elcock, Glasgow would've been one of the areas

21 where the BT call operators would have -- so your call

22 would've gone to a BT operator in Glasgow who would've

23 connected it to Essex.

24 A. Okay.

25 Q. But you have a memory of Glasgow in your mind?

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1 **A. Yes, yes, and that's exactly what they said, because**
 2 **there's delays in London.**
 3 Q. Did it surprise you to be speaking to someone in
 4 Glasgow?
 5 **A. Absolutely, yes.**
 6 Q. What did you think at that time about that?
 7 **A. I kind of got why. So I suppose, you know, them saying**
 8 **to me, "Glasgow connected because of the delays from**
 9 **London", I get the reason why, because obviously we're**
 10 **in a point where a major incident is happening, so I can**
 11 **only assume that, you know, they're taking lots of**
 12 **calls.**
 13 **So, yeah, I think I was a bit set back by it, but**
 14 **for me it was more after, the afterthought after I got**
 15 **out. I was like, "Why the hell was I put through to**
 16 **Glasgow?" But obviously it makes sense as to why.**
 17 Q. If you go to the next page, on this page you're asked
 18 your name and you give your name, and then what you say
 19 is:
 20 "CALLER: It looks like it's spreading quite rapidly,
 21 that's why I'm just getting a bit concerned now."
 22 Again, what was this information based on?
 23 **A. Again, a lot of that would've been -- and I suppose to**
 24 **a degree I need to see the bit in my statement that then**
 25 **correlates with this conversation, but --**

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1 Q. I can take you to that if you want.
 2 **A. Yes, if you wouldn't mind, so that I can just work**
 3 **out --**
 4 Q. Yes, let's go to page 4 of your statement, please, your
 5 first statement, so IWS00000310.
 6 If we expand paragraph 17 and 18 for Ms Elcock.
 7 So this is paragraph 17, if you want to remind
 8 yourself. It's a paragraph that you deal with this
 9 call.
 10 **A. Mm-hm.**
 11 **Oh, okay, yes, it doesn't really clear up ...**
 12 **Okay, no, I probably need to see my calls as to who**
 13 **I spoke to.**
 14 Q. Can I try and put it this way.
 15 **A. Yes.**
 16 Q. I mean, you've got two sources of information.
 17 **A. Yes.**
 18 Q. You've got what you are able to see from your lounge
 19 window, haven't you?
 20 **A. Yes.**
 21 Q. Then you've got the information that friends are --
 22 **A. On the floor.**
 23 Q. That are calling you on the phone.
 24 **A. Mm-hm.**
 25 Q. The bit I showed you, you're talking about something

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1 spreading rapidly.
 2 **A. Yes.**
 3 Q. I suppose my question really goes to: it's 02.13, and in
 4 your flat, what was your primary source of information?
 5 **A. A lot of it at that stage would've been what I was being**
 6 **told by people from downstairs. I think one of the**
 7 **questions I kept asking who I spoke to that night was,**
 8 **"Where is it now? Just tell me where it is now." And**
 9 **that's how I probably knew that it was above.**
 10 **Obviously on the next paragraph we come to why**
 11 **I know it was beside, but my primary thought was, "Where**
 12 **is it now? Where is it now? Just tell me where it is."**
 13 **And just kind of getting the reassurance from those on**
 14 **the ground, really.**
 15 Q. Could we keep that page -- I don't know whether we could
 16 do this, Ralph -- but if we could have next to it
 17 LFB00000360_0005, please.
 18 So just to set context for you, Ms Elcock, we have
 19 on one side paragraph 18 in particular where you deal
 20 with this call.
 21 **A. Mm-hm.**
 22 Q. On the left-hand side is the actual transcript itself,
 23 and the reason I wanted that page is because I just
 24 wanted to ask you questions about that particular part
 25 of the transcript.

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1 **A. Yes.**
 2 Q. What you're saying now -- and this is now at 02.32.
 3 **A. Mm-hm.**
 4 Q. First of all, you describe flames at a window.
 5 **A. Yes.**
 6 Q. Can you remember which window you could see flames at?
 7 **A. So at this time now -- where are we? Oh, God. I'm**
 8 **assuming we are now in the bedroom. Yes, yes, we are**
 9 **probably in the bedroom. It would've been from the**
 10 **bedroom window. So --**
 11 Q. Is that your bedroom?
 12 **A. Yes, yes, yes. Yes, yes, it would've been. Yeah, yeah,**
 13 **yeah.**
 14 Q. What you say, if you look at the tail end of
 15 paragraph 18:
 16 "I asked Anthony if there were flames coming into
 17 the flat and he told me he thought that the fire had
 18 spread to the flat next door ..."
 19 **A. Okay, yes.**
 20 Q. And you continue:
 21 "Flames were starting to enter the kitchen through
 22 the window and Anthony was putting them out with water
 23 from the bath."
 24 **A. Mm-hm.**
 25 Q. What you actually say to the operator on page 5 is --

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<p>1 you're asked, "Is there flames coming", and then, can 2 you see, you speak to Anthony? 3 A. Mm-hm. 4 Q. You say: 5 "CALLER: ... Don't freak out, I need you to stay 6 calm. It's next - it's in the flat next door ..." 7 A. Mm. 8 Q. Just above that, you say: 9 "CALLER: ... it's actually coming into my house 10 now." 11 A. Yes. 12 Q. Putting all those together -- 13 A. Yes, so that's Anthony telling me that he's putting -- 14 I'm in the bedroom now with my daughter. He keeps 15 coming out of the bedroom, checking what's going on 16 around the flat. He then goes into the kitchen, puts 17 out -- so it's the little window in the kitchen, he puts 18 out a fire there. And that's when he tells me that he 19 felt the wall which adjoins flat 81, and he then -- 20 well, he knew that it was next door. 21 So that's kind of, yeah, how that all mixes up, 22 really. 23 Q. So Anthony's dealing with a fire coming through the 24 kitchen window. 25 A. Yes, yes.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 65</p>	<p>1 "OPERATOR: You can't see outside. 2 "CALLER: Yeah, I can't - I don't, I don't even, I 3 don't even know what I'm doing." 4 Then you say there isn't smoke coming into your 5 flat. 6 The question the operator asks you is whether you 7 can leave. 8 A. Mm-hm. 9 Q. My question is: what was it that you couldn't see past? 10 A. The smoke, the darkness. I mean, whatever was going on 11 outside, really, I think, out in the lobby. 12 Again, a lot of these calls, or a lot of what I said 13 in these calls is more about a reaction of not really 14 knowing what was going on. 15 But, yeah, I mean, as I say, we've attempted and it 16 was pitch black. Yeah, so I assume that's kind of where 17 I'm going with that. 18 Q. I mean, I know it's a difficult question to answer. 19 A. Yes. 20 Q. But if you put yourself back, you've made, with Anthony 21 and your daughter, two attempts to leave the flat. 22 A. Mm-hm. 23 Q. You've told us how far the distance was from your front 24 door to the stairwell. 25 A. Yeah, yeah, yeah.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 67</p>
<p>1 Q. Does he successfully get rid of that? 2 A. Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. 3 Q. You've then got heat on the wall between your flat and 4 flat 81. 5 A. Yes. 6 Q. Then you've got flames at the window of your bedroom? 7 A. No, no, sorry, I got that muddled up. The flames at the 8 window are a bit later on in the bedroom. But now it 9 kind of makes sense. So me and him having that 10 conversation and me having a conversation with her is 11 saying that he's telling me that the kitchen is on fire, 12 he's just put it out, but next door is -- so the flames 13 from next door are obvious coming around and have caught 14 on the window. But he put that fire out. 15 Q. Was that the first time that you were aware of flames 16 being that close to your flat? 17 A. Yes. 18 Q. If we just, on LFB00000360, go a couple of pages back to 19 page 3. 20 Can we just expand the bottom half of that page. 21 If you look at the top of the expanded bit, 22 Ms Elcock, you're asked by the operator: 23 "OPERATOR: ... but at the moment would it be safer 24 for you to leave on your own or not? 25 "CALLER: No, no, I can't see past -</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 66</p>	<p>1 Q. So my question is about putting yourself back to that 2 time -- and we're now talking about 2.30 am that you're 3 making this call -- 4 A. Yes. 5 Q. -- what was your sense of what conditions were like in 6 the lobby? 7 A. For me, at that point, as I say, a lot of my judgement 8 was around what Anthony was doing or his reaction to 9 what was going on outside. You know, I trusted that his 10 judgement was that we weren't getting out. For me, 11 dealing with that level of smoke or fire, whatever the 12 case may be, is not something that we can deal with. 13 You know, I was scared. I wanted the Fire Brigade to 14 come. That's their role in this matter, really, and 15 I think that's why we didn't go. 16 I had a big fear about the stairs, about what was 17 going on on the stairs. Had I known what I know now, 18 yeah, I probably would've left a lot earlier. But no 19 one could actually tell me there was nothing going on on 20 the stairs, no one, and that was people that had got to 21 the command unit, all sorts. No one could tell me what 22 was going on on the stairs. 23 So, yeah, I think it was more about the fear of not 24 knowing what was going on outside. 25 Q. Can I come back to that point about what was going on on</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 68</p>

17 (Pages 65 to 68)

<p>1 the stairs --</p> <p>2 A. Mm-hm.</p> <p>3 Q. -- a little later, if I may.</p> <p>4 A. Yeah, yeah.</p> <p>5 Q. If I don't, just remind me.</p> <p>6 A. I will.</p> <p>7 Q. But I just want, before we leave paragraph 18, just to</p> <p>8 draw your attention to the last sentence of it, because</p> <p>9 you say:</p> <p>10 "I could see the fire brigade outside the window and</p> <p>11 I was shouting for help."</p> <p>12 A. Mm-hm.</p> <p>13 Q. Where were the firefighters that you were shouting to?</p> <p>14 A. So they were literally -- the cherry-picker was on the</p> <p>15 east side, opposite the sports centre. There was</p> <p>16 another one down by the sports centre. There were</p> <p>17 firefighters on the roof of Grenfell Walk. Yeah, they</p> <p>18 were kind of spread around. You could see, yeah, them</p> <p>19 down on the ground, really.</p> <p>20 Q. You're shouting.</p> <p>21 A. Mm-hm.</p> <p>22 Q. Did you get any response?</p> <p>23 A. No.</p> <p>24 Q. Okay, let's go back to page 4 of your statement, please,</p> <p>25 paragraphs 19 and 20 at the bottom.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 69</p>	<p>1 A. No, I think I'm talking about the second attempt, where</p> <p>2 he's gone out and shut back the door.</p> <p>3 Q. What you also mention is the spraying of water against</p> <p>4 the wall of the flat and water coming through.</p> <p>5 A. Mm-hm.</p> <p>6 Q. Again, just so that we can be clear, is that water</p> <p>7 coming through --</p> <p>8 A. The vents.</p> <p>9 Q. -- the vents in the windows themselves?</p> <p>10 A. Yes.</p> <p>11 Q. When you started off, as you've told us, you were in the</p> <p>12 front room.</p> <p>13 A. Mm-hm.</p> <p>14 Q. In due course -- there's no dispute over this -- you</p> <p>15 then move into the hallway of your flat.</p> <p>16 Was it the water coming through that pushed you away</p> <p>17 from the front room?</p> <p>18 A. Yes, yes.</p> <p>19 Q. If we can put up paragraph 20, please, which continues</p> <p>20 over to the next page.</p> <p>21 You're now on your eighth call, it's 02.44, and what</p> <p>22 you explain here is that you've ended up in the bedroom</p> <p>23 closest to the front door.</p> <p>24 A. Mm-hm.</p> <p>25 Q. Am I right, that's your bedroom, isn't it?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 71</p>
<p>1 We're moving through your 999 calls. Again, if you</p> <p>2 want to see the transcript, just let me know, but</p> <p>3 I think we can deal with this using the summary that</p> <p>4 you've provided, because if we look at paragraph 19,</p> <p>5 this is the next call in the sequence of calls. You've</p> <p>6 given the time at 02.37, which tallies.</p> <p>7 A. Mm-hm.</p> <p>8 Q. But what you've told the operator that you speak to is</p> <p>9 the fire was on your landing.</p> <p>10 A. Mm-hm.</p> <p>11 Q. In the transcript, you used it's flames, but -- so</p> <p>12 you've told us a few moments ago about your sense of</p> <p>13 what was going on earlier.</p> <p>14 A. Mm-hm.</p> <p>15 Q. What was it now that made you believe that the fire was</p> <p>16 on the landing?</p> <p>17 A. Because of flat 81. So flat 81's my landing, so I now</p> <p>18 know the fire's on the landing. It's in one of the</p> <p>19 flats on the landing.</p> <p>20 Q. You say:</p> <p>21 "I told them I hadn't been outside but Anthony had."</p> <p>22 You told us a little earlier that Anthony and</p> <p>23 yourself -- you'd made those two attempts.</p> <p>24 A. Yes.</p> <p>25 Q. Had Anthony made a third attempt to try and investigate?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 70</p>	<p>1 A. Yes, yes.</p> <p>2 Q. But in this call, what you say is that the front door</p> <p>3 keeps popping and it's hot.</p> <p>4 A. Yes, yes.</p> <p>5 Q. Just help us with this, please, Ms Elcock: what did you</p> <p>6 mean by popping?</p> <p>7 A. It was like it was buckling. So it's quite difficult</p> <p>8 to -- yeah, I suppose what I mean by popping is</p> <p>9 something's pushing against it to make it kind of buckle</p> <p>10 or pop or -- it's quite --</p> <p>11 Q. Whereabouts on the door was that happening?</p> <p>12 A. In the middle, yeah. By the time -- I remember when we</p> <p>13 went to the door, it had pushed itself back, but it</p> <p>14 wasn't actually locked in anymore, if that makes sense.</p> <p>15 It wasn't -- so ultimately it was jammed but still in --</p> <p>16 I can't -- it's difficult to explain. So the middle was</p> <p>17 kind of buckled out, but the actual out bit of it is</p> <p>18 still in, locked in, if that makes sense.</p> <p>19 Q. So the door was still sat in its frame?</p> <p>20 A. Yeah, but the middle bit's kind of come out -- yeah,</p> <p>21 I don't know how to explain it, but yeah.</p> <p>22 Q. Well, the words you used a moment ago was it was as if</p> <p>23 someone was pushing against it.</p> <p>24 A. Yes, pushing in the middle bit.</p> <p>25 Q. Just give us a sense of the size of the bulge. I mean,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 72</p>

1 is it comparable to a fist being pushed against --

2 **A. No, no, it's quite a big bit. The frame, the actual**

3 **square bit of the frame, was still in the outer frame,**

4 **but the middle bit is being pushed in.**

5 Q. So as if the door was bulging inwards?

6 **A. Yes.**

7 Q. So the door was bulging inwards into your hallway?

8 **A. Absolutely, yes.**

9 Q. Was that visible you?

10 **A. Yes, you could see it coming in, and that's the kind of**

11 **popping thing. You could see, like, the pressure was**

12 **pushing it back.**

13 **SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Was it making any sound? When**

14 **I read your statement referring to popping, I had**

15 **an impression there was some sound.**

16 **A. I couldn't -- yeah, I think I meant bulging, but**

17 **popping/bulging, they're kind of the same thing for me.**

18 **But I can't say whether there was sound. I can't really**

19 **remember, to be honest.**

20 **SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: All right, thank you.**

21 MR RAWAT: Were you aware of any sounds coming from the

22 communal area at all?

23 **A. No. I remember seeing the door bulging in. I don't**

24 **recall going -- I think at one point I did go close to**

25 **the door enough to see kind of -- yeah, I mean, it's all**

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1 **a bit of a blur and it kind of gets muddled up, but,**

2 **yeah, I don't really recall much going on. Like I don't**

3 **really remember hearing anything outside, no.**

4 Q. The other thing you say about the door is it's hot.

5 **A. Yes, hot to touch.**

6 Q. Hot to the touch?

7 **A. Yes.**

8 Q. Which part of it did you touch?

9 **A. The middle bit.**

10 Q. So you actually put your hand up against the door

11 itself?

12 **A. Yes. So at some point I've gone close enough to the**

13 **door to -- but I can't remember in timescales what point**

14 **that was.**

15 Q. What you also describe in this call is smoke coming into

16 the house again.

17 **A. Right, okay.**

18 Q. I can show you it on the transcript if that will help,

19 but if you can help us without that first.

20 Can you remember where at that point smoke was

21 coming into your house?

22 **A. I think probably at this point it's coming through the**

23 **kitchen window, because -- oh, God, I've lost myself**

24 **a little bit.**

25 Q. Let me help --

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1 **A. It's easier probably just to show me the transcript,**

2 **that way I kind of work it out from there.**

3 Q. Let's take a look at LFB00000377, page 1, please.

4 So we have the time again, so 02.44, that's the call

5 we're talking about.

6 Go to page 3.

7 So just to give you context --

8 **A. Oh --**

9 Q. -- Ms Elcock, on page 2 is where you mentioned that the

10 door is popping, it's popped.

11 **A. Yes.**

12 Q. If you look at the top there, the operator says:

13 "OPERATOR: That means there's probably a fire on the

14 other side so you need to stay away from it ..."

15 **A. Mm-hm.**

16 Q. The operator then asks:

17 "OPERATOR: Where are you at the moment?"

18 "CALLER: I'm in the hallway because they're spraying

19 the outside of the building, it's coming through the

20 window.

21 "OPERATOR: They're spraying it, okay. What, what

22 side of the room -- the flat would be safer for you to be

23 in? Is there a room that isn't -- that hasn't got smoke

24 in it?

25 "CALLER: Huh?

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1 "OPERATOR: Is there a room that hasn't got smoke in

2 it?

3 "CALLER: There's smoke right outside my windows

4 coming in my house, please.

5 "OPERATOR: Have you shut your window?"

6 "CALLER: Yeah, yeah, yeah ..."

7 So the first question, then, is: you're in the

8 hallway.

9 **A. Yes.**

10 Q. So --

11 **A. This is all now happening around the kitchen/front room.**

12 Q. So --

13 **A. So all the smoke's coming from there. Yeah,**

14 **everything's coming from that side. Because we haven't**

15 **moved into -- the reason we're in the hallway is because**

16 **of the pressure from the hose, so that's the reason**

17 **we're in -- when I've made that call. Because it was so**

18 **powerful that it would knock you -- it's come through at**

19 **such a force, it pushed open kind of the vent and the**

20 **window.**

21 **So we've moved into the hallway because now the**

22 **smoke is all the way round the kitchen/front of the**

23 **house.**

24 Q. You're asked if you shut the windows and you say yes.

25 I mean, do you remember having the windows of the front

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<p>1 room and the kitchen --</p> <p>2 A. They were all closed other than that vent bit.</p> <p>3 Q. So does that help you to tell us how the smoke was</p> <p>4 getting in?</p> <p>5 A. Because I think by now the kitchen window had popped, so</p> <p>6 it was coming in. So the little kitchen window has now</p> <p>7 got no glass on it because that's the one where the fire</p> <p>8 got in, the one Anthony put out. So I think that's</p> <p>9 where the smoke was coming in from.</p> <p>10 Q. What about in the front room, how was smoke getting in</p> <p>11 there?</p> <p>12 A. I'm actually not sure. When I say to you that there's</p> <p>13 a possibility that it could've been the vent the first</p> <p>14 time, yeah, I'm not going to say to you that it</p> <p>15 100 per cent pushed the window open, but it could've</p> <p>16 pushed the window open. I'm not sure.</p> <p>17 Q. So that we can keep the chronology going, if you go to</p> <p>18 page 5 in this call.</p> <p>19 It's in the middle, I'll read just it out. You say:</p> <p>20 "CALLER: Please tell them to hurry now. Please,</p> <p>21 please, I've got a daughter. I'm going into the back</p> <p>22 bedroom which is near the front door."</p> <p>23 A. Mm-hm.</p> <p>24 Q. The operator confirms that. Then the operator says:</p> <p>25 "OPERATOR: And you think there's fire outside of the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 77</p>	<p>1 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Just for my benefit, Mr Rawat, how</p> <p>2 are we getting on?</p> <p>3 MR RAWAT: Well, we might go over lunch, I think, but I'm</p> <p>4 going to try and cut it down a little bit if I can.</p> <p>5 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: That's helpful. Thank you very</p> <p>6 much.</p> <p>7 12.20, please.</p> <p>8 (12.10 pm)</p> <p>9 (A short break)</p> <p>10 (12.20 pm)</p> <p>11 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: All right? Happy to carry on?</p> <p>12 THE WITNESS: Yes, thank you.</p> <p>13 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Thank you very much.</p> <p>14 Yes, Mr Rawat.</p> <p>15 MR RAWAT: Thank you, Mr Chairman.</p> <p>16 Ms Elcock, thank you for coming back.</p> <p>17 A. Thank you.</p> <p>18 Q. Could we please have your statement now, IWS00000310,</p> <p>19 page 5, please.</p> <p>20 Could we have paragraphs 22 to 24.</p> <p>21 Moving forward in time now, Ms Elcock, to 3 o'clock,</p> <p>22 you make another call to the emergency services.</p> <p>23 Again, tell me if you want to go back and look at</p> <p>24 the transcript, but you've summarised that call in</p> <p>25 paragraph 22.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 79</p>
<p>1 front door?</p> <p>2 "CALLER: Yeah, it looks like — I don't know</p> <p>3 (inaudible) the front door is hot. Please, the window</p> <p>4 is getting hot, everything (overspeaking) —</p> <p>5 "OPERATOR: Okay, okay. I'm going to tell them</p> <p>6 exactly where you are."</p> <p>7 A. Mm-hm.</p> <p>8 Q. Which window was getting hot?</p> <p>9 A. Again, I think that's probably the -- yeah, I can't tell</p> <p>10 you which one I'm talking about at that point because</p> <p>11 we've left the front room. So, yeah, again, it could be</p> <p>12 just a reaction kind of thing saying, "Look, hurry up."</p> <p>13 MR RAWAT: What you've also -- sorry, I'll leave that. I'll</p> <p>14 come back to it.</p> <p>15 Mr Chairman, I'm just going to go on to another</p> <p>16 call, but I think I've been going for 50 minutes. I see</p> <p>17 Ms Elcock nodding that I've been going for 50 minutes</p> <p>18 and she could do with a break.</p> <p>19 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes, it's quite tiring. Sorry about</p> <p>20 that. Would you like a break now?</p> <p>21 THE WITNESS: Yes, please, if that's okay.</p> <p>22 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: We shall have a break then.</p> <p>23 Ten minutes until 12.20. Please don't talk to anyone</p> <p>24 about your evidence, and off you go with the usher.</p> <p>25 THE WITNESS: Thank you.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 78</p>	<p>1 What you say is:</p> <p>2 "... the fire was outside of my front door and there</p> <p>3 was smoke in the flat."</p> <p>4 What you said actually to the call operator was that</p> <p>5 there was smoke everywhere, "There's smoke in my house</p> <p>6 everywhere".</p> <p>7 So we've moved about 16 minutes forward in time from</p> <p>8 the last call. How had the smoke conditions changed in</p> <p>9 your flat in that time?</p> <p>10 A. So I think at this point we are in the bedroom, and if</p> <p>11 I'm right in believing, on the previous call I was told</p> <p>12 to get some air, so we was opening the bedroom window.</p> <p>13 And that's probably how the smoke came in that kind of</p> <p>14 area that I was in, yeah.</p> <p>15 Q. Do you still have a recollection of smoke coming in</p> <p>16 through the kitchen?</p> <p>17 A. No, because I think -- so all the doors were shut, so</p> <p>18 everything was shut and only opened as and when we kind</p> <p>19 of went through that way.</p> <p>20 It's possible that the smoke was in the hallway due</p> <p>21 to it coming from wherever, but I know that there was</p> <p>22 points when we were in the bedroom that -- and I'm</p> <p>23 pretty certain I was told to get some air from the</p> <p>24 bedroom window, and that's what was letting in a lot of</p> <p>25 the smoke that was now outside, and we were opening the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 80</p>

1 **window to call out, to let them know that we were there.**
 2 Q. At that time -- it's 3 o'clock in the morning -- was the
 3 level of smoke in your property such that you couldn't
 4 see through it or --
 5 **A. No, it was definitely grey, but it wasn't -- you could**
 6 **still see, yeah, you could still see. It was smoky,**
 7 **really like smoky, but it wasn't that I couldn't see**
 8 **where I was going or it didn't obstruct what was going**
 9 **on, yeah.**
 10 Q. Were the lights in your flat still working?
 11 **A. So this is -- I think so, yeah. I mean, I know, and**
 12 **I say at the end, that just before we get out, the TV**
 13 **switches itself off. But I think the electric was still**
 14 **working. But I don't recall having the lights on, if**
 15 **that makes sense. So they could've been on, but I can't**
 16 **remember.**
 17 Q. Your daughter's in the bedroom, isn't she?
 18 **A. Yes.**
 19 Q. Did you spend most of your time in the bedroom?
 20 **A. Yes.**
 21 Q. Was it Anthony who was really moving around the flat?
 22 **A. Yes.**
 23 Q. The smoke that there was in the flat, did it have any
 24 physical effect on you?
 25 **A. A lot of the time, especially when I was in the bedroom,**

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1 **I was laying on the floor with my daughter, just trying**
 2 **to keep her calm, really.**
 3 **It probably did, but it wasn't something that I can**
 4 **say to you here and now that I remember. I would've**
 5 **coughed but not fitting cough or anything like that,**
 6 **so ...**
 7 Q. What the operator tells you -- and you say:
 8 "She asked if I could get out because they were
 9 advising everyone to leave their flats."
 10 And then you set out the advice that you were given?
 11 **A. Mm-hm.**
 12 Q. Then you say:
 13 "Anthony opened the door and said we couldn't get
 14 out but I told him that the call handler had told me we
 15 had to try."
 16 We see the redaction, it's a reference to your
 17 daughter's name:
 18 "I told [redacted] to put something over her head
 19 and approached the door. The call handler wished me
 20 good luck."
 21 Just set out for us the preparations you were
 22 making, you and Anthony, to leave at this point?
 23 **A. I assumed the towels that we would've had. Yeah,**
 24 **following that instruction, really, I suppose, to put**
 25 **something over our heads, cover our faces.**

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1 **At this point, like, everything was being used,**
 2 **clothes, towels, bed sheets, everything. So it would've**
 3 **been a case of grabbing something to cover ourselves**
 4 **with.**
 5 Q. Do you remember going to the bathroom and soaking
 6 anything?
 7 **A. I recall Anthony doing that. I recall Anthony going**
 8 **into the bathroom and basically handing me something.**
 9 Q. Again, you refer to Anthony opening the door. So what
 10 was the sequence of the three of you getting to the
 11 door?
 12 **A. So, again, he would've -- again, this is an assumption,**
 13 **but I'm saying to him, "Look, this is what we've been**
 14 **told to do", he's gone to do that.**
 15 **I think at this point we've already got towels**
 16 **around us. Like I think we were using so much -- as**
 17 **I say, everything was being used in the flat, and**
 18 **I think he's gone to the door.**
 19 **Again, you know, it was more his judgement. I think**
 20 **by now we're so scared, all of us, that -- yeah, yeah,**
 21 **I don't know, I think -- yeah. I'm just relaying what's**
 22 **being said on the 999, to be fair, to him, and he's**
 23 **tried, and that's when he opens the door and that big**
 24 **wave -- at that point now a huge amount of smoke comes**
 25 **in, and as I've put in the next part, that's when the**

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1 **smoke alarms went off.**
 2 Q. Was that the first time the smoke alarm went off?
 3 **A. Yes.**
 4 Q. Do you remember one smoke alarm going off or both?
 5 **A. I'm not sure which one it was, but one of them. It**
 6 **wasn't loud, like it wasn't -- yeah, it wasn't, yeah,**
 7 **like a loud sound, but it definitely did go off. It**
 8 **started to beep.**
 9 Q. You said a few moments ago when the door was opened,
 10 a huge amount of smoke came in.
 11 **A. So at this point, the largest amounts come in.**
 12 Q. Can you describe for us the smoke that came into the
 13 flat at that point?
 14 **A. Oh, yeah, it was black. Yeah, just completely black**
 15 **smoke now, thick, black smoke.**
 16 Q. Were you in the hallway when Anthony opened the door?
 17 **A. I would've been back by the -- because at this point,**
 18 **I knew the door was hot. We weren't sure if there was**
 19 **fire outside the door. And, yeah, I think obviously**
 20 **I stood back, I suppose, I -- yeah, I let him open the**
 21 **door. And that's when that kind of massive wave of**
 22 **smoke came in.**
 23 Q. Did --
 24 **A. And it was just back shutting the door. Like he was**
 25 **scared, I was scared.**

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1 Q. Did that smoke have any physical effect on the two of
 2 you?
 3 **A. Yeah, I couldn't tell you, I don't know. Probably.**
 4 **I probably coughed. I mean, if that kind of -- it comes**
 5 **in at -- you would naturally cough, but I don't think --**
 6 **there was no, like, difficulty to breathe or anything**
 7 **like that.**
 8 Q. You've described a very brief opening of the door at
 9 this point, but did you get a sense of what conditions
 10 were like in the lobby?
 11 **A. It hadn't changed. It was still black. When you opened**
 12 **the door, you could only see a wall anyway if the lights**
 13 **are on, you only see a wall, you don't see -- unless you**
 14 **step out, that's when you see the whole landing, but at**
 15 **that point just ahead was just as black as this**
 16 **microphone is, so, yeah.**
 17 Q. What about the lighting in that area?
 18 **A. There was no lighting. It was completely dark. It was**
 19 **pitch black. I've never in 20 years seen it -- you**
 20 **know, even when we might have had a power cut or**
 21 **something, it doesn't go that dark because the emergency**
 22 **lighting would naturally come on back in the day. But,**
 23 **yeah, it was pitch black. There was no -- yeah.**
 24 Q. Did you know if there was emergency lighting in the
 25 communal area at that time?

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1 **A. Again, it's not something you -- I think years before**
 2 **when we might have had a power cut, you opened the door**
 3 **to see if the lights have gone off, you naturally see if**
 4 **everyone else has got the same issue as you, I think**
 5 **there might have been emergency lighting back in the**
 6 **day. But that night there certainly weren't no lights**
 7 **in that landing.**
 8 Q. If we look at paragraph 24, 3 minutes go by and you're
 9 connected again to the fire service. You say you told
 10 them it was impossible to leave your flat because it was
 11 too hot on the landing.
 12 Just so that we are clear, was that following what
 13 you've just described to us, that brief opening of the
 14 door and closing it, then you dialled 999 again?
 15 **A. Yes.**
 16 Q. You said it's too hot on the landing, so tell us, what
 17 sense did you have of the temperature on the landing?
 18 **A. You could feel it. You could feel that -- when the door**
 19 **opened, the heat was quite intense, like it was hot.**
 20 **I mean, it was fire hot. There's nothing else to**
 21 **describe it but kind of fire hot, heat hot, like --**
 22 **yeah.**
 23 Q. If we look back at paragraph 22, you say again you could
 24 hear the door popping and it was really hot.
 25 **A. Mm-hm.**

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1 Q. You told us before we had the break that it was more
 2 watching the door buckle.
 3 **A. Mm-hm.**
 4 Q. But you use the word "hear", so you could actually hear
 5 something happening to the door.
 6 Can you describe what the door looked like at that
 7 time?
 8 **A. Again, it's bulging inwards. It's no longer flat, it's**
 9 **no longer straight, it's coming inwards, it's bulging**
 10 **inwards, it's, I suppose, buckling. I suppose if**
 11 **I think why I would say I could hear the door popping is**
 12 **you could hear it pushing itself back, I think.**
 13 Q. So, I mean, you could have a picture of a door that has
 14 just buckled and so distorted in shape.
 15 **A. Yes.**
 16 Q. Was it actually changing the shape?
 17 **A. Yes, yes, so it's like expanding kind of inwards, yes.**
 18 Q. Was it always expanding or was it shrinking and
 19 expanding?
 20 **A. I don't know. I know it was expanding.**
 21 Q. If we look at paragraph 24 again, this is the call
 22 swiftly made, and you're told again that the advice is
 23 to leave.
 24 **A. Mm-hm.**
 25 Q. Now, you've had a series of 999 calls where you've

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1 essentially been told to remain in your flat. This is
 2 now the second call -- the first one at 03.00 -- where
 3 you're told you have to leave.
 4 In terms of the advice that you were being given,
 5 what was going through your mind at that time?
 6 **A. By now I am -- yeah, beyond scared now, I -- yeah.**
 7 **I think it's at this call, or maybe the later one where,**
 8 **you know -- why wasn't I told hours ago to leave? Why?**
 9 **Why -- I mean, obviously, as you look at kind of the**
 10 **events of the night, as time goes on, you know, my**
 11 **levels of anxiety have gone through the roof. You know,**
 12 **I'm now absolutely crapping myself that I'm going to**
 13 **die.**
 14 **So, for me, there was no -- I think I was scared to**
 15 **the point of kind of being rooted to where we were, to**
 16 **be honest. I just didn't think I could ... I just**
 17 **didn't have it in me to leave, to be fair. That's the**
 18 **bottom line of it.**
 19 Q. If we go down to the next paragraph as well and look at
 20 25, in paragraph 25 you're calling back again.
 21 **A. Mm-hm.**
 22 Q. So you've had a call that's timed at 03.03. We now have
 23 a call that's timed at 03.04.
 24 **A. Mm-hm.**
 25 Q. In between those two calls -- the 03.03 call, if you

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<p>1 take it from me, lasts for 40 seconds. In between those 2 two calls, did you try and leave again?</p> <p>3 A. No, I don't think so.</p> <p>4 Q. What you say in paragraph 25 about this call, which 5 I think is now your 11th call, is that you told them it 6 wasn't possible to leave because of the heat coming from 7 the landing and you asked them to send a cherry-picker. 8 Why did you ask for a cherry-picker?</p> <p>9 A. I think it's -- so at this point, obviously I'd seen 10 that out there very early on. I knew it was here, 11 I knew it was there, I knew it was -- he was looking at 12 me, I was looking at him. I just actually thought that 13 was the only way I was going to get out of there. You 14 know, no one had come at this point, no firefighters. 15 I'd been told someone was coming, they knew, but it 16 didn't seem like that message was getting anywhere, and 17 I suppose I'm just now at this point where I'm basically 18 begging for anything to happen.</p> <p>19 You know, I'm being told to jump. You know, all 20 sorts of stuff was happening downstairs, and it wasn't 21 something I was prepared to do.</p> <p>22 But, yeah, I think, you know, I'm absolutely in 23 despair now because I'm actually losing the will, you 24 know. This wasn't how it was supposed to happen. This 25 is not -- you know, someone should've come by now, and</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 89</p>	<p>1 26 deals with the next call that you made, which is 2 at 03.13, and you began by saying that: 3 "... I knew I had rung a lot but would they please 4 send someone to come and get us. I told them I couldn't 5 leave because there was fire outside the front door." 6 You've told us about what you had seen when you 7 tried to open the front door. 8 Had you picked up on anything else about what was 9 going on on the landing by this time?</p> <p>10 A. No.</p> <p>11 Q. You're asked also whether you can go down the stairs, 12 and one of the things you say in the call is that you 13 can't go down the stairs. 14 How far had you or Anthony been able to get from 15 your flat?</p> <p>16 A. No, we didn't attempt to go down the stairs. Again, 17 because in my head there was fire on the stairs. So, 18 yeah. And I don't think anyone could tell me otherwise.</p> <p>19 Q. You say in your head there was fire down the stairs. So 20 just help us with this --</p> <p>21 A. So, as I say, I said earlier, the fire was low. I knew 22 from the off the fire was low. I obviously knew it was 23 spreading. I'm on the 11th, the fire was on the 4th -- 24 at that point I thought it was 5th or 6th, but either 25 way I knew it was lower than me -- there was only one</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 91</p>
<p>1 I was losing faith rapidly. So I think I was asking 2 just to do anything, really.</p> <p>3 Q. If you look at the last but one sentence of that 4 paragraph, what you say about the call -- and I can take 5 you to the parts of that transcript if you need it -- 6 but you say: 7 "She also told me that there was more aerial ladders 8 arriving whilst we were on the phone." 9 Did you take anything from that?</p> <p>10 A. I think, because obviously I mentioned the 11 cherry-picker, which obviously is the aerial ladder -- 12 but I think, you know, for me it was like saying, "Look, 13 we're doing -- we're going to get you out."</p> <p>14 You know, at this point I still believed they were. 15 I think I was just really confused. I probably took it 16 as, "Yeah, we're going to send someone and they're going 17 to get you out." I think that's how I took it.</p> <p>18 Q. Again, if you want to see the transcript, tell me, but 19 in the transcript what the control room operator says is 20 that she's going to tell them that you're stuck.</p> <p>21 A. Okay.</p> <p>22 Q. Do you remember her telling you that?</p> <p>23 A. No.</p> <p>24 Q. Could I go, then, to the next page, and let's look at 25 paragraphs 26 and 27, please.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 90</p>	<p>1 way out. If the fire's below and you're above it, 2 you're going into it, and that was my thought process, 3 that there was fire on the stairs.</p> <p>4 Q. If you look at the last part of paragraph 26: 5 "[The operator] asked where we were and I told her 6 we were in the bedroom and she asked if we could open a 7 window for fresh air, I told her the fire was outside 8 the window ..." 9 Is that a reference to the bedroom window?</p> <p>10 A. There was now fire on the cladding on the outside, yeah. 11 You could see it.</p> <p>12 Q. Your daughter's bedroom would've been next to yours 13 anyway, but the two bedrooms face in the same direction.</p> <p>14 A. Yes.</p> <p>15 Q. But was it the window of your bedroom that you recall 16 seeing?</p> <p>17 A. So there's a column that goes outwards in like 18 a triangle, and there was sheets of the material on the 19 side, and that had caught flames by now.</p> <p>20 But, again, because the firefighters were on the 21 walkway, they were able to extinguish it.</p> <p>22 Q. I want to show you one page from the transcript. Can we 23 have LFB00000410, and page 6 of that document, please. 24 If we look at the top part of it. 25 The operator says:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 92</p>

<p>1 "OPERATOR: Yeah, but -- they are trying to get to 2 you, believe me, but our advice is if you can you're 3 just going to have to -- 4 "CALLER: (Overspeaking) in my front room. It's in 5 my house now." 6 A. Mm-hm. 7 Q. So you're in the bedroom. 8 A. Yeah. 9 Q. What's the "it" that's in your house now? 10 A. This is now Anthony relaying that he's -- because he's 11 now in and out, in and out, putting out the fire in the 12 other rooms. So as it was trying to get in, he was 13 putting it out. So that's me saying to her, "Look, 14 I know it's tried to get in at the front room." 15 Again, I suppose in panic I'm saying, "Look, it's 16 here and it's in my house." Yeah, again, it's that 17 principle of, "Hurry up." 18 Q. So was Anthony relaying back to you what he was 19 seeing -- 20 A. Yes. 21 Q. -- what he was dealing with? 22 A. Yes. 23 Q. What information did he tell you about what had happened 24 to the front room? 25 A. He's just saying, "I just had to put fire out in the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 93</p>	<p>1 it's the 13th call you make that night where you are 2 connected to 999. 3 Again, if you need to see the transcript, Ms Elcock, 4 just tell me. 5 A. Mm-hm. 6 Q. I hope you can take all of this from me, but in the call 7 you confirm you're in the room furthest away from the 8 fire. 9 A. Yes. 10 Q. Would that have been your bedroom? 11 A. Mm-hm. 12 Q. You also say that the house is full of smoke -- 13 A. A mm. 14 Q. -- that fire is coming into the bedroom and the front 15 room -- 16 A. Yes. 17 Q. -- and that it's baking hot. 18 A. Mm-hm. 19 Q. You then say it's in your daughter's bedroom. 20 A. Mm-hm. 21 Q. Against that background, could you help us: what was the 22 progress of the fire in relation to your flat at that 23 time? 24 A. The progress of the fire? 25 Q. Yes, in terms of what was happening in terms of fire</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 95</p>
<p>1 front room." 2 Q. Did he tell you whether anything had happened to the 3 windows at that time in the front room? 4 A. No, not really, no. He was just saying obviously it's 5 coming in, I'm assuming, via the windows, and he was 6 putting it out. And that's the same for the middle 7 bedroom as well; he had to put the fire out in there. 8 Q. If you go to page 7 of this transcript -- 9 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Are you all right to keep going? 10 THE WITNESS: Yeah, yeah, yeah, I'm fine. 11 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: If you just need a moment to compose 12 yourself, that's perfectly all right. 13 THE WITNESS: I'm fine. 14 MR RAWAT: You're told: 15 "OPERATOR: But if the fire is coming in, you need to 16 get out." 17 You respond in this conversation: 18 "CALLER: I know, I know, I know. All right, all 19 right, I'm going to try it." 20 Did you try and leave again? 21 A. I'm not sure. I'm really not sure. We may have done. 22 But I don't think so, if I'm really honest. 23 Q. If we go back to the same part of your statement, 24 please, so page 6 of IWS00000310, and paragraph 27. 25 This is now another call that you've made; in fact,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 94</p>	<p>1 getting into your flat at that time, what were you 2 seeing? 3 A. It just kept coming -- so at this point we're in the 4 bedroom. I'm laying low. You can see the stuff flying 5 out of the tower. I'm still taking calls from people on 6 the ground, so I now know it's really spreading. It's 7 in the panelling adjacent to the window. And then 8 I know that it's gone into the next bedroom, my 9 children's bedroom, because Anthony's just put the fire 10 out in there. 11 As I said, he was doing a lot of the moving around, 12 so was able to relay what was going on around, but when 13 I -- yeah, I suppose the fire was -- what I could 14 physically see was it falling from -- you could see the 15 cladding falling from the building, passing the window. 16 You could see it catching on the cladding next to the 17 window. 18 Q. In terms of the temperature in your flat at that time, 19 what was it like? 20 A. It was starting to get warm now, that mixture of 21 where -- because when we were in this bedroom, this is 22 the one that we kept opening the window to (a) get some 23 air in and (b) call for help. 24 Now the smoke was kind of going around the whole 25 building at this point, and that's how it was coming</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 96</p>

1 back in. So now it was getting smokier in the room, and
 2 it actually gets to a point where we have to leave that
 3 room because it is too smoky. But it's starting to get
 4 quite warm as well.
 5 Q. Was the smoke having any physical effect on you or your
 6 daughter?
 7 A. Again, I was on the floor most of the time being in that
 8 room. I had to, yeah, just try and stay calm for my
 9 daughter. So I spent a lot of the time -- I put a duvet
 10 down and we just laid on the floor and I was just
 11 telling her that everything was going to be all right.
 12 Q. Both if we read this paragraph or your statement where
 13 you deal with this call and if we read the transcript
 14 itself, the advice you are given is you have to leave.
 15 A. Mm-hm.
 16 Q. And you say you can't do it.
 17 So what were your concerns about making another
 18 attempt to go out through your front door?
 19 A. My thought process hasn't changed. I am now, by this
 20 point, I suppose, resigning myself to the fact ... you
 21 know, that I'm going to die.
 22 But ... I had to -- I had to beg them to come and
 23 get me.
 24 Q. Can I --
 25 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Shall we just take a quiet moment,

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1 I think.
 2 A. I'm all right, I'm all right. I just --
 3 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes.
 4 A. Yeah ...
 5 For me, you know, at this point, it didn't go the
 6 way it was supposed to go. They was supposed to be
 7 there by now. No matter how many times I called them,
 8 I just felt by now they were just ... they weren't
 9 listening. But I'd given up by now. But I knew I had
 10 to get out because of my children.
 11 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Can I just ask you, would you --
 12 THE WITNESS: No, I'll be fine, I'll be fine, honestly.
 13 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: I know, you're doing really well.
 14 THE WITNESS: I want to get this over with.
 15 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: I do understand the difficulty.
 16 What I was going to ask was we could, if you like, stop
 17 for lunch now.
 18 THE WITNESS: No, I really want to get it over and done
 19 with, please.
 20 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: I thought you might. That's all
 21 right, then.
 22 THE WITNESS: I'll be fine. Sorry.
 23 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: No, no, there's nothing to apologise
 24 for.
 25 MR RAWAT: Ms Elcock, can I also say that I appreciate that

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1 I've asked you a lot of detailed questions and we are
 2 very grateful for the care in which you've shown in
 3 answering the questions and the time you're taking.
 4 Hopefully I won't be very much longer.
 5 Can I just take you to the last call that you made,
 6 and I just want to ask you about one part of it, if
 7 I may.
 8 It's a call that you make -- can we have, please,
 9 LFB00000429.
 10 You deal with this transcript in your supplementary
 11 statement. I won't take you to the supplementary
 12 statement, I just want to ask you about one part of it.
 13 A. Mm-hm.
 14 Q. It tells us the time, it's at 04.33, so we've moved on
 15 an hour, and if we go to page 5 of this document,
 16 please.
 17 Again, just to put it in context, this a call where
 18 you are again given the advice to leave.
 19 If we read it, what you say is about conditions
 20 outside and you express your concern about the
 21 stairwell.
 22 What guidance were you wanting to be given about
 23 conditions outside your flat? What did you want to
 24 know?
 25 A. I think it was a mixture of, you know -- I think if

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1 I had been told there was no fire on the stairs, if
 2 someone could have told me that there was no fire on the
 3 stairs, I doubt I'd be sitting here today. I just think
 4 that because I knew, as I say, the fire was low, I was
 5 high, it was going from somewhere where I felt
 6 relatively safe, because whilst I was scared, I still
 7 had this in my head that someone was going to come, and
 8 that's what they do.
 9 And, yeah, the stairs for me was probably -- it's
 10 one way out, you can only get down the stairs, and if
 11 there's fire on the stairs, I'm likely going to die on
 12 the stairs, and, yeah, I just didn't want to do that.
 13 Q. What you say in the transcript is you say to the
 14 operator:
 15 "CALLER: ... Honestly, I'm safe in my house at the
 16 minute but I need to know if someone's coming to get
 17 me ..."
 18 What was it that made you feel that the conditions
 19 inside your flat were safe?
 20 A. Because at this point, you know, yes, it was -- by now
 21 we've actually moved from the bedroom, we've moved into
 22 the middle bedroom, got stuck in there because there was
 23 no handle on the door. So at some point Anthony comes
 24 and he says, "Let's go into the middle bedroom." We go
 25 into the middle bedroom, shut the door, and this room

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1 was relatively clear. And by now the sun had pretty
 2 much risen, but you could see there was no smoke in
 3 there. The window had gone. There was no longer
 4 a small window there, that had obviously broken. But it
 5 was completely kind of clear, you could see what you was
 6 doing, so we went in there.
 7 But, as I say, the handle on the door was broke. We
 8 locked the door and then realised: oh, God, we're stuck.
 9 So luckily we find some scissors, managed to re-open the
 10 door.
 11 And then obviously we were now -- I think this call
 12 was made from in there, like this is where -- I don't
 13 know, really, to be honest. If this is my last call,
 14 I could actually be in the front room by now, because we
 15 then moved back into the front room. Because I think by
 16 now -- you say it's 04.43?
 17 Q. 04.33.
 18 A. 04.33. So, yeah, no, I think by now I've spoken to my
 19 sister. Yeah, I've spoken to my sister, and then --
 20 yeah, I think we're actually in the front room by now.
 21 But I still felt at that point that, you know, there
 22 is no fire. Yes, there's smoke, yes, the building's on
 23 fire, but I'm still safer in there than I am going down
 24 the stairs.
 25 Q. If we just jump back one page to page 4 for a moment,

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1 please.
 2 If you look at the second bit where you say
 3 "CALLER", there's a bit -- you know --
 4 A. That's just a reaction, sorry, that's why I'm kind of
 5 laughing, because --
 6 Q. Let's ask you to explain your reaction if we can,
 7 because you're told at the top:
 8 "OPERATOR: ... You need to make your way downstairs
 9 though.
 10 "CALLER: We need to make our ways downstairs."
 11 A. So I'm actually being really like --
 12 Q. "Oh do you know what -- there's fire on the stairs, my
 13 husband's just gone out there."
 14 Did he go out?
 15 A. No. That's me basically saying -- and I can't even say
 16 what I'm about to say -- but it's me basically
 17 saying: are you serious? We need to make our way down
 18 the stairs? Because I'm now exceptionally frustrated.
 19 By the language that I'm using in there, that's me
 20 trying to politely say just -- yeah, yeah, don't --
 21 yeah, you're -- yeah, I can't -- I am just not going to
 22 say it, otherwise I'm going to swear. But, yeah, that's
 23 just me being kind of frustrated by what I'm being told,
 24 because it's not what I want to hear and I'm responding
 25 to that. There is no kind of element of truth in that,

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1 if that makes sense. I'm just -- yeah, exaggerating and
 2 getting frustrated by what I am being told.
 3 Q. Can I go back, then, to your statement. We're almost
 4 finished --
 5 A. Yeah, yeah.
 6 Q. -- if that helps. But just go back to page 7 of your
 7 first statement, paragraph 30 down.
 8 A. Mm-hm.
 9 Q. Again, just to help you with the time sequence, you've
 10 given a time of 04.27 when you speak to your sister,
 11 Denise. We've looked at the transcript, 04.33. You say
 12 you spoke to Denise again at 04.37.
 13 A. Yes.
 14 Q. You describe in this paragraph that your sister was
 15 effectively directing the firemen.
 16 A. So, yeah, she had not long come down to -- when I spoke
 17 to her at 04.27 or maybe -- yeah, 04.27, she'd just
 18 pretty much come down to the area, and she managed to
 19 find a fire crew on the ground and told them that I was
 20 stuck in there still.
 21 She stood with the firefighter, basically telling
 22 them I'm on the 11th floor. She stayed with him, and
 23 what I'm saying is that she kept saying -- she's talking
 24 to me on the phone but standing next to him and she can
 25 hear what's happening on the radio. So she then says to

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1 me, "Look, they're on their way up, they're on their way
 2 up", and we're getting ready. So we're now in the
 3 corridor getting ready, Anthony was by the door, and
 4 then she says to me, "They're outside your door."
 5 Anthony was shouting, and then she said, "No, sorry,
 6 they've gone to the wrong floor." But then she said,
 7 "But they're coming for you now."
 8 And then Anthony continues to shout, and then Denise
 9 can hear Anthony on the radio, so we now know that
 10 they're outside the front door, and that's when she
 11 said, "They're outside your door." And that's when
 12 I told him, he opened the door and then we went.
 13 Q. You say when you left the front room there was quite
 14 a lot of grey smoke.
 15 So was that any different to the smoke that had been
 16 in your flat before?
 17 A. No, it was worse than -- so it was -- as I say, you
 18 know, I put it there that my front room was white, so
 19 now it was grey. So there was smoke in there. It
 20 wasn't thick, thick, thick, like you couldn't see, but
 21 there was definitely smoke in there.
 22 Q. Could we expand on this page -- let's have paragraphs 30
 23 down to the bottom of the page.
 24 By now, what was the temperature like in your flat?
 25 A. It was really warm. Yeah, really warm. Not like

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1 **unbearably warm, but really warm.**
 2 Q. You have already told us what we see at paragraph 31,
 3 which is Anthony opening the front door.
 4 **A. Mm-hm.**
 5 Q. Could you actually see any firefighters when you opened
 6 the front door?
 7 **A. No.**
 8 Q. So what could you see?
 9 **A. Anthony went in front. He had my daughter in his arms,**
 10 **and I was literally holding onto him. He just followed**
 11 **their instructions and then, like, we legged it down the**
 12 **stairs, really.**
 13 Q. Was it just a voice you were hearing?
 14 **A. Yeah, I was behind Anthony. So he heard the voice and**
 15 **we went out.**
 16 Q. Did you see the torch that you referred to?
 17 **A. I didn't, no, but he did.**
 18 Q. You then move into the stairwell and, as you say, you
 19 legged it down the stairs.
 20 Were the conditions any different in the
 21 stairwell -- this is one of the simple but not
 22 straightforward questions. You've got the conditions in
 23 the lobby.
 24 **A. Mm-hm.**
 25 Q. Then you move into the stairwell.

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1 **A. Mm-hm.**
 2 Q. So you're still on your floor.
 3 **A. Mm-hm.**
 4 Q. Were the conditions when you moved from lobby to
 5 stairwell any different?
 6 **A. So they were the same for about three floors. So**
 7 **obviously we went down a couple of floors, we all**
 8 **tripped, as it says in my statement, and then as we went**
 9 **down another maybe one or two -- so by now I think we're**
 10 **probably on the 7th or the 6th floor -- all of a sudden,**
 11 **it started to get brighter. By the time we got to the**
 12 **4th floor, the lights were completely on. You could see**
 13 **where you were going. You could see walls. I could see**
 14 **hoses on the floor.**
 15 **I mean, don't get me wrong, we were moving real,**
 16 **real quick, but, yeah, when we got to around the**
 17 **4th floor, I remember as we came down, there was**
 18 **a firewoman there, and I remember her looking up, but**
 19 **that was the only person other than the person higher up**
 20 **that I'd seen on the stairs.**
 21 **But all of a sudden, the lights were as bright as**
 22 **they are in this room.**
 23 MR RAWAT: Mr Chairman, I've reached the end of my
 24 questions. I don't know whether we want to take
 25 a lunchtime break or have a short 5 minutes to see if

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1 there are any questions.
 2 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Well, before we go any further, can
 3 I just have an indication from counsel, how many counsel
 4 need to speak to Mr Rawat at this stage?
 5 MR FRIEDMAN: For my part, only for 30-odd seconds to check
 6 with my solicitor. It's that level of time.
 7 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Would it be satisfactory -- rather
 8 than ask Ms Elcock to go out of the room, hang around,
 9 come back in again -- if she and I just ignore the rest
 10 of you and allow you to speak privately?
 11 MR FRIEDMAN: Yes, if that's not too rude.
 12 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: No, no, I'm inviting you to do it.
 13 I'm not trying to suppress anyone who has questions,
 14 but I think we could probably do this rather more
 15 economically than we have sometimes.
 16 All right, you and I can ignore what they are doing
 17 for a bit and then we'll see whether there are any more
 18 questions for you.
 19 (Pause)
 20 Have you digested those?
 21 MR RAWAT: It was a very efficient way of dealing with it,
 22 I think.
 23 So if I may just put a few --
 24 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: So there are a few more questions.
 25 MR RAWAT: Yes.

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1 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Not quite finished, but nearly.
 2 THE WITNESS: No problem.
 3 MR RAWAT: Thank you again for your patience, Ms Elcock.
 4 I might slightly jump around a little bit.
 5 Just to pick it up with the point of your descent
 6 down the stairs.
 7 You describe encountering firefighters and not
 8 seeing anybody; you were behind Anthony.
 9 But as you went down, did you have a sense of what
 10 the firefighters were doing?
 11 **A. Actually, I didn't see them. I've only see them in the**
 12 **stills that I've seen when I've obviously seen myself**
 13 **come out. I assume they were at the front.**
 14 **I know when we encountered what we encountered on**
 15 **the stairs that I got held -- now, thinking back,**
 16 **I assume one must have been behind me, because as we**
 17 **went down the stairs and we all stumbled, I got kind of**
 18 **straightened up by somebody. So, yeah.**
 19 Q. Thank you.
 20 I'm going to jump back onto another topic that we
 21 were asking about before.
 22 I want to show you a photograph. Again, nothing
 23 distressing and it's a photograph we've shown before.
 24 Could I have BLA00004531, please.
 25 Thank you.

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1 This is a photograph, Ms Elcock, taken during the
 2 refurbishment. You can see the green canopy that is sat
 3 over the front entrance.
 4 If you go up, you have the scaffolding. Can you see
 5 the windows, and above that there looks like a square
 6 grille?
 7 **A. Mm-hm.**
 8 Q. Do you remember that you told me some time ago about the
 9 noise that you heard from outside the tower? Does that
 10 picture help you to tell us where you heard that noise
 11 coming from?
 12 **A. Now, it doesn't. My assumption was the noise was**
 13 **coming, again, to the left of that picture on the ground**
 14 **floor. That's not to say that it could've been coming**
 15 **from -- if that's where it came -- where the vent was,**
 16 **but it was definitely down -- you heard it as you came**
 17 **in the doors. I am pretty certain it is to the left of**
 18 **that picture.**
 19 Q. As we're looking at it?
 20 **A. Yes.**
 21 Q. Thank you.
 22 **A. If that's the entrance -- again, I don't know how that**
 23 **picture has been taken. If that's coming in from**
 24 **Grenfell Road, then, yeah, it's on the left.**
 25 Q. Thank you.

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1 Do you remember I showed you those two photographs
 2 of floor 6 --
 3 **A. Yes.**
 4 Q. -- and asked you about vents?
 5 **A. Yes.**
 6 Q. Correct me, please, if my recollection is wrong, but
 7 I think you said that the grilles that I'd shown you or
 8 the vents that I'd shown you came after the
 9 refurbishment.
 10 **A. No, I didn't say they'd come after the refurbishment.**
 11 Q. Then you are correcting me. So just so that we can be
 12 clear, did you notice those vents on your floor before
 13 the refurbishment?
 14 **A. So those holes were there. They definitely changed**
 15 **something within them. I don't know what was there**
 16 **before.**
 17 Q. But there was still something there, was there?
 18 **A. Yes, them squares were there. I'm pretty certain they**
 19 **were, yeah.**
 20 Q. Were you aware, then, before the refurbishment, of
 21 a type of vent on your floor in the communal area?
 22 **A. I never actually knew what they were for, but I'm pretty**
 23 **sure them two holes were there before, them two squares**
 24 **were there before. Yeah, they were there before,**
 25 **because the tiling was done many, many years ago on the**

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1 **floors and I'm pretty certain -- yeah.**
 2 **If they'd put those vents in during the**
 3 **refurbishment, then I'm sure the tiles would've changed.**
 4 **But I'm pretty certain that they were there before.**
 5 **I think they changed the grilles, if I'm right in**
 6 **thinking, but I don't recall the actual vents changing.**
 7 Q. You may also remember that I showed you a photograph of
 8 the pipes running on a floor above a flat 2.
 9 **A. Yes.**
 10 Q. Were you aware of pipes in the stairwell as well?
 11 **A. Yes, again, because I was one of the flats that was**
 12 **affected by the lack of gas, I was aware of a lot of the**
 13 **process of what was going on with the gas situation. So**
 14 **I knew that they'd put it in the stairwell, because**
 15 **National Grid actually wanted to put the pipe on the**
 16 **outside of the building, but because the building had**
 17 **been recently cladded, the council or whoever it was**
 18 **that makes those decisions said, no, it needed to go in**
 19 **the stairwell. I remember having a conversation with**
 20 **someone from National Grid about that.**
 21 Q. So before those pipes were put in that we looked at, you
 22 didn't have pipes like that outside your front door?
 23 **A. No, because my gas pipe was behind my kitchen -- in**
 24 **between the toilet and the kitchen, there was**
 25 **a cupboard, and the gas pipe runs in there.**

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1 Q. Those are all the questions I have, Mr Chairman, bar
 2 one.
 3 Ms Elcock, before I ask this question, can I once
 4 again thank you. I appreciate it's been a long morning,
 5 but I think we all should recognise that you've dealing
 6 with the questions I've put to you with great care and
 7 a great degree of patience as well.
 8 My final question to you is this: putting aside what
 9 you've put in your statement and your supplementary
 10 statement, and also the answers that you've given to me
 11 today, is there anything else about what you saw or what
 12 you heard on the night of the fire that you think it
 13 important to draw to the attention of the chairman?
 14 **A. In terms of what I saw that night, what I heard that**
 15 **night, and what I know since that night, you know, we**
 16 **all know that it should never have happened and we will**
 17 **get to how it happened, and I guess this is about what**
 18 **happened that night.**
 19 **But I would just like to highlight that that night**
 20 **was probably the most horrific night that anyone could**
 21 **go through, and what's happened since that night is**
 22 **something that no one should have to go through.**
 23 **Not only did I lose my home, not only did I lose**
 24 **neighbours and friends, that night I lost my uncle, my**
 25 **mum's brother. He lived four floors above me and he**

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1 never made it out.
 2 And for that reason, it's imperative that this never
 3 happens again.
 4 No one should ever have to go through what we've had
 5 to go through. And I put my trust in you, in all of
 6 you, that we get the truth and justice that is deserved.
 7 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes.
 8 Well, Ms Elcock, you've obviously had a terrible
 9 experience and I'm sorry that we've had to ask you to
 10 come and talk about it in such detail.
 11 You've been very courageous dealing with all these
 12 questions, and you should know that it is really helpful
 13 to us to hear about your experience, what happened in
 14 your floor, in your flat and so on, because it's a piece
 15 of the jigsaw which we are trying to piece together. So
 16 we're very grateful.
 17 THE WITNESS: Thank you.
 18 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Thank you very much for coming to
 19 tell us about it.
 20 THE WITNESS: Thank you.
 21 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: All right?
 22 THE WITNESS: Yes. Am I free to leave?
 23 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Well, when you're ready, you go with
 24 the usher and she'll look after you.
 25 Thank you very much.

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1 (The witness withdrew)
 2 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Right, thank you very much.
 3 We'll break there and resume at 2.10, please.
 4 (1.12 pm)
 5 (The short adjournment)
 6 (2.10 pm)
 7 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes, Mr Rawat.
 8 MR RAWAT: Good afternoon, Mr Chairman.
 9 May I now call Hanan Wahabi, please.
 10 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Thank you.
 11 HANAN WAHABI (sworn)
 12 Questions by MR RAWAT
 13 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Thank you very much, Ms Wahabi. Do
 14 sit down and make yourself comfortable.
 15 Can I say, I'm sorry that we weren't able to take
 16 your evidence last week. As you know, there was a
 17 last-minute problem --
 18 THE WITNESS: Yes.
 19 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: -- and we had to put you off. I'm
 20 glad at least we have been able to fit you in today, so
 21 thank you for coming.
 22 THE WITNESS: That's fine, thank you.
 23 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes, Mr Rawat.
 24 MR RAWAT: Thank you.
 25 Good afternoon.

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1 A. Good afternoon.
 2 Q. Can you give the inquiry your full name, please.
 3 A. My name is Hanan Wahabi.
 4 Q. Mrs Wahabi, the first thing to do is to echo the
 5 chairman's thanks to you for coming to give evidence
 6 today. Your willingness to continue to help the inquiry
 7 is very much appreciated.
 8 As I hope you already know, the majority of my
 9 questions this afternoon will focus on the night of the
 10 fire itself, and I appreciate that that is difficult.
 11 So if at any time you need a break, all you need to do
 12 is to just let me know or the chairman and we'll stop.
 13 A. Okay.
 14 Q. I'm going to try and keep the questions short and
 15 simple.
 16 A. Okay.
 17 Q. Sometimes that doesn't actually happen. But if I ask
 18 you a question that you don't understand, then please
 19 tell me and I'll ask it in a different way.
 20 A. Okay.
 21 Q. What we need to do, first of all, is just formally put
 22 your statements to the inquiry into the record. All
 23 right?
 24 A. Okay.
 25 Q. Can I have Mrs Wahabi's first statement, IWS00000074,

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1 please.
 2 It's going to come up on that small screen on the
 3 witness desk. If you need a paper copy, that bundle
 4 that's in front of you will have one in it.
 5 A. Thank you.
 6 Q. Can I take you, please, to the last page of the
 7 statement --
 8 A. Yes.
 9 Q. -- which is page 21.
 10 For the record, Mrs Wahabi, you've signed and dated
 11 every single page of the statement.
 12 A. Yes.
 13 Q. We can see the rubric:
 14 "I believe that the content of this witness
 15 statement is true."
 16 And under that, there is a signature.
 17 Can you confirm that that is your signature?
 18 A. Yes, it is.
 19 Q. We see that that is dated 18 April 2018.
 20 There are two exhibits that go with the
 21 statement: one is at page 22 of the same reference and
 22 the other one is at page 23.
 23 The first exhibit is a floor plan of your brother
 24 Abdulaziz El-Wahabi's flat.
 25 A. Yes.

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<p>1 Q. The second one is a floor plan of your own home. 2 A. Yes. 3 Q. We'll come to those in a moment. 4 A. Okay. 5 Q. Have you had an opportunity to read this statement 6 recently? 7 A. Yes, I have. 8 Q. Can you confirm that the contents of the statement are 9 true? 10 A. Yes, I can. 11 Q. You've also more recently made a supplementary 12 statement. 13 A. Yes, I did. 14 Q. That needs to go into the record as well. Could we 15 have, please, page 1 of reference IWS00001146. 16 Then if we go to the last page of that, which is 17 page 10. 18 Again, every page has been signed and dated, but can 19 you confirm that under the line "I believe the facts 20 stated in this statement are true", that that is your 21 signature? 22 A. Yes. 23 Q. We see it's dated 22 October 2018. 24 Again, in relation to that supplementary statement, 25 have you had an opportunity to go through it recently?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 117</p>	<p>1 Q. He lived there with his wife and his three children; is 2 that right? 3 A. Yes. 4 Q. Is it also right that in terms of your more extended 5 family, your mother lived nearby and you also had 6 siblings living on the Lancaster West Estate? 7 A. That's correct. 8 Q. Can I just show you your floor plan, which is 9 IWS00000074, page 23. 10 Can you confirm, your flat was originally 11 a two-bedroom flat, wasn't it? 12 A. Yes, it was. 13 Q. That was the same with your brother's flat, wasn't it? 14 A. Yes, that's correct. 15 Q. But you both, in due course, decided to add a third 16 bedroom. 17 A. We did, yes. 18 Q. If we look at your plan, so this is the layout of your 19 flat -- 20 A. Yes. 21 Q. -- it seems to show, if I've understood it properly, 22 that the living room had a door on it. 23 A. Yes, it did. 24 Q. So is that right, it just had a door on it? 25 A. Just had a door, yes, a door on it.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 119</p>
<p>1 A. I have. Yes, I have. 2 Q. Can you confirm that the contents of that statement are 3 true? 4 A. Yes, I can. 5 Q. Thank you very much. 6 Just for you, Mrs Wahabi, and in fact for others who 7 may in due course want me to ask a question, you do not 8 wish to be shown any images. 9 A. No. 10 Q. Photographic images, but you're content to see floor 11 plans, aren't you? 12 A. Yes, absolutely. 13 Q. Thank you. 14 Can I just begin with some background questions, if 15 I may. 16 In June 2017, your family home was at flat 66 on the 17 9th floor of Grenfell Tower; is that right? 18 A. Yes, that's correct. 19 Q. When did you first move into that flat? 20 A. In October 2001. 21 Q. In June 2017, who was living in the flat with you? 22 A. Myself, my two children and their father. 23 Q. Your brother Abdulaziz lived in flat 182 on the 21st 24 floor? 25 A. Yes, he did.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 118</p>	<p>1 Q. Which opened and -- 2 A. Opened and -- yes, it did, yes. 3 Q. In terms of what you had between kitchen and living 4 room, if you wanted to go from living room into kitchen, 5 could you access it directly? 6 A. I didn't have the sliding doors that everybody else had 7 in the tower block, I had two doors. However, I had 8 a couch/sofa in front of it, so we didn't access the 9 kitchen via that way. 10 Q. So you'd have to go out into the hallway -- 11 A. Yes. 12 Q. -- and around the corner? 13 A. Yes. 14 Q. I follow, thank you. 15 Can I then take you, please, to your witness 16 statement, the first one, and it's page 2. Let's look 17 at paragraph 6. 18 A. Okay. 19 Q. The part of this paragraph I'd like to draw your 20 attention to, Mrs Wahabi, is the sentence where you say 21 the only signs you remember seeing were put in near the 22 lifts after the refurbishment. 23 A. Yes. 24 Q. I don't want to show you an image, but what kind of 25 signs were these?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 120</p>

<p>1 A. That's the stay-put policy, but I've actually come to 2 the inquiry a few times and listened to other people, 3 and I know that Shah showed you one that was there many 4 years ago, and, on reflection, I remember that one as 5 well when we first moved in. 6 Q. Can I take that in stages, then. 7 A. Yes. 8 Q. So let's look at the one that was there -- 9 A. Yes. 10 Q. -- after the refurbishment. So was it a sort of 11 permanent fixture by the lifts? 12 A. Yes, it was. Yes. 13 Q. Do you remember seeing a sign on your floor? 14 A. On my floor and my brother's floor. 15 Q. What about on the ground floor? 16 A. I can't remember. 17 Q. Before I go on to ask you about that sign -- 18 A. Yes. 19 Q. -- you mentioned a sign that Shah had produced. 20 A. Yes. 21 Q. Is that Shahid Ahmed? 22 A. Yes. 23 Q. Tell us about that sign. 24 A. So that sign, when I first moved in, was opposite the 25 lifts, under the -- so opposite the lifts you had the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 121</p>	<p>1 So whilst their dad remained on the then 6th floor to 2 support the neighbours and help them get out, I ran up 3 the flights of stairs all the way to the 18th floor with 4 my daughter in my hands and I went to my brother's flat. 5 He wasn't there, he was at work, but his wife and his 6 children were there. 7 We did call 999, and when we called, that's the 8 advice we were given, to stay put. Because I was now on 9 the 18th floor, the fire wasn't there, so they said we 10 should stay put. 11 Q. I follow, thank you. 12 If we look at that last sentence in that paragraph, 13 what you say is: 14 "I never gave any thought to how we would be alerted 15 if there was a fire elsewhere in the building, or 16 whether there was a communal fire alarm system." 17 So you never gave any thought to whether there was 18 a communal fire alarm system. 19 A. Yes. 20 Q. Can you clarify what you mean by this? 21 A. So what I mean is that I didn't really give any thought 22 that, for example, if the fire, as it did, began on the 23 4th floor, we would be alerted through a communal fire 24 system on the landings, for example. 25 Q. That was never your expectation, was it?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 123</p>
<p>1 floor number. My floor number was originally 6, my 2 brother's 18. Just underneath that, you had that sign 3 that Shah showed you. That basically says not to use 4 the lifts in the event of a fire. 5 Q. You say in this paragraph: 6 "Those signs instructed us to stay in our flats if 7 there was a fire elsewhere in the building." 8 A. Yes. 9 Q. So before June 2017, was the phrase "stay put" something 10 that was in your mind? 11 A. It was something that was in my mind, yes. 12 Q. Was that your understanding of what you should do if 13 there was a fire in the tower? 14 A. That was my understanding of what I should do for two 15 reasons: (1) because of that sign, and (2) because I was 16 previously present during the last fire that happened on 17 my floor. 18 Q. Can you remember when that fire was? 19 A. I guess 2010. 20 Q. What did you learn from that fire? 21 A. During that fire, my son was in my brother's flat on the 22 then 18th floor, and I had my daughter with me, who was 23 just over one. Their father was also with me in the 24 flat when we learnt there was a fire on our floor. 25 Being a mum, I knew I couldn't leave without my son.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 122</p>	<p>1 A. No. Not when I -- no. 2 Q. If we go now forward in your statement, please, and can 3 we look at paragraphs 15 and 16, which span pages 4 and 4 5 of the statement, in paragraphs 15 and 16, 5 Mrs Wahabi -- 6 A. Yes. 7 Q. -- you are discussing the front door -- 8 A. Yes. 9 Q. -- of your flat. 10 You describe that your front door was replaced. 11 A. Yes, it was, yes. 12 Q. In paragraph 16, you say this about the door: 13 "There were three hinges on the door and from the 14 third, there was a pole that connected the door to the 15 wall, which was meant to make the door close 16 automatically. Not long after they installed the door 17 the automatic closing mechanism broke and the door 18 refused to close at all." 19 What you say is that you complained and someone came 20 out to address it, but they removed the pole entirely 21 rather than fixing it, so your door never closed 22 automatically. 23 A. That is correct, yes. 24 Q. Can you just help us, you've described three hinges. 25 The hinge that had the pole on it --</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 124</p>

1 **A. The middle hinge.**
 2 Q. Was the middle hinge?
 3 **A. Yes.**
 4 Q. You say that the pole connected the door to the wall.
 5 **A. I meant to the doorframe, so -- yes.**
 6 Q. So the pole led from the door to the doorframe?
 7 **A. To the doorframe, yes, that's correct.**
 8 Q. Can you remember when this happened?
 9 **A. So when they were installed -- which I think was before**
 10 **the refurbishment, I think maybe 2012, I'm not sure**
 11 **exactly of the date -- not long after, this happened.**
 12 **That's when this happened. It was not long after the**
 13 **doors were changed.**
 14 Q. Did you know what the mechanism was for?
 15 **A. I didn't know what the mechanism was for initially, and**
 16 **the reason why I called is because the front door**
 17 **wouldn't close at all. So as soon as that mechanism**
 18 **broke, the front door just wouldn't close at all, so the**
 19 **front door was left slightly ajar.**
 20 **I called KCTMO, who initially refused to come**
 21 **around, until I told them my front door is not closing**
 22 **at all, and they eventually sent someone around as**
 23 **an emergency call-out. They came out within 4 hours,**
 24 **and you've just got to sit and wait.**
 25 **When they came, they tried to fix it, and the way**

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1 **they fixed it was to actually take that -- it's like**
 2 **a long pole that literally goes through the whole door.**
 3 **That's what they took out.**
 4 Q. Were you there when this work was done on your front
 5 door?
 6 **A. I was there, yes.**
 7 Q. Did the person doing it explain to you what they were
 8 doing?
 9 **A. No.**
 10 Q. What difference did you notice in your door afterwards,
 11 other than that it didn't close automatically?
 12 **A. The door was much lighter. It was much lighter. And,**
 13 **like I say, it didn't close automatically, yes.**
 14 Q. Did the person tell you that they would be back to
 15 replace the mechanism or --
 16 **A. Yes, they said they would be back.**
 17 Q. First of all, did anybody come back at any time?
 18 **A. No, no one came back.**
 19 Q. So was the door still in that state in June 2017?
 20 **A. Yes, it was, as was my brother's.**
 21 Q. Can I ask you about your brother's in a moment.
 22 **A. Yes, that's fine, yes.**
 23 Q. One more question about your door.
 24 **A. Yes, that's fine.**
 25 Q. Did you chase it up with anybody?

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1 **A. I did. I called KCTMO. No one came.**
 2 Q. You mentioned your brother's door?
 3 **A. Yes.**
 4 Q. Just tell us what the problem was with his flat door?
 5 **A. He had the same problem. It was the middle hinge. The**
 6 **same problem, same place that --**
 7 Q. The same outcome?
 8 **A. His door did close, because mine, like I said, it didn't**
 9 **close at all, but it just kind of broke. So they called**
 10 **them and the same thing happened; they just took it out**
 11 **and then it no longer closed automatically.**
 12 Q. In June 2017, your brother's front door was one that
 13 didn't close automatically?
 14 **A. Yes, that's correct.**
 15 Q. Your brother's a few floors above you.
 16 **A. Yes.**
 17 Q. How often did you visit his flat?
 18 **A. Regularly. Minimum twice a week.**
 19 Q. If we can look at the bottom of paragraph 16, you say
 20 about the front door that:
 21 "... it was only ever left open if [redacted] was
 22 talking with his friends on the landing or when I was
 23 having tea on the landing with a neighbour. Otherwise,
 24 we kept it closed."
 25 **A. Yes.**

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1 Q. The reference to having tea, does that mean sometimes
 2 you'd sit or stand out on the landing?
 3 **A. Yes, we would. My neighbour Natalie, who left not long**
 4 **before the fire, we used to sit or stand on the landing**
 5 **with a cup of tea and just have a chat, as you do with**
 6 **your neighbours.**
 7 Q. When you did that, what was the environment like on the
 8 landing?
 9 **A. So Natalie had children, so did I. We'd leave our front**
 10 **doors open. Natalie's door did close, actually, but she**
 11 **did have her door replaced after the first fire, and**
 12 **that's why -- mine wasn't replaced after the first fire,**
 13 **hers was. And the children used to just go inside each**
 14 **other's flats, and that's why I'd keep mine open.**
 15 Q. Did you ever find the temperature on the landing to be
 16 uncomfortable?
 17 **A. No. No.**
 18 Q. I'm going to show you now a plan.
 19 **A. Okay.**
 20 Q. It's one that we've seen before, so can we have, please,
 21 MET00012593, page 12, please.
 22 I think you may be familiar with this, Mrs Wahabi.
 23 **A. Yes.**
 24 Q. It's a plan we've shown other witnesses. It's a layout
 25 of the 4th floor, but it mirrors what we would find as

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<p>1 you go further up the tower?</p> <p>2 A. Yes.</p> <p>3 Q. So this would be what you'd find if we went to your</p> <p>4 floor.</p> <p>5 A. Yes.</p> <p>6 Q. Perhaps if we could just expand the central middle part</p> <p>7 where it says "Communal Hall".</p> <p>8 Do you see the communal hall appears in the middle</p> <p>9 there --</p> <p>10 A. Yes.</p> <p>11 Q. -- and you've got the lifts, but at the top of the</p> <p>12 picture and at the bottom, can you see the --</p> <p>13 A. The vents.</p> <p>14 Q. -- bits marked "smoke vents", do you see that?</p> <p>15 A. Yes.</p> <p>16 Q. Do you remember -- this is about your floor -- at either</p> <p>17 end of the communal --</p> <p>18 A. Yes, I do.</p> <p>19 Q. Were those there before the refurbishment? Do you</p> <p>20 remember seeing that?</p> <p>21 A. Yes, they were.</p> <p>22 Q. Did you ever hear any noise from those vents?</p> <p>23 A. Could I just -- during the refurbishment, they did do</p> <p>24 something. I'm not sure what they did, but I know they</p> <p>25 did something, some change within those vents. I'm not</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 129</p>	<p>1 Q. What kind of noise did you hear?</p> <p>2 A. I mean, I can't really describe it. I know that I've</p> <p>3 heard it being compared to a Hoover, and I'd say yes.</p> <p>4 Compared to a Hoover, yes.</p> <p>5 Q. Using the Hoover as the comparator, you know, they've</p> <p>6 got variable speeds.</p> <p>7 A. Okay, yes.</p> <p>8 Q. It is a Hoover full on or halfway or --</p> <p>9 A. I would say -- there were times when it was halfway and</p> <p>10 there were times when it was full on, yes.</p> <p>11 Q. But audible on both occasions?</p> <p>12 A. Yes.</p> <p>13 Q. You've told us you would have tea on the landing --</p> <p>14 A. Yes.</p> <p>15 Q. -- with Natalie.</p> <p>16 A. Yes.</p> <p>17 Q. Was Natalie still living in her flat after the</p> <p>18 refurbishment?</p> <p>19 A. Yes, she was.</p> <p>20 Q. When you were having tea on the landing --</p> <p>21 A. Yes.</p> <p>22 Q. -- and the doors were open and your kids were running</p> <p>23 around, did you ever feel the movement of air on the</p> <p>24 landing?</p> <p>25 A. No. This is before the refurbishment?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 131</p>
<p>1 sure what it was. But I remember Lynda Prentice, who</p> <p>2 was from Rydon, informing me of that.</p> <p>3 Q. That something was going to be done to them?</p> <p>4 A. Yes, with the vents. But I'm not sure what it was.</p> <p>5 Q. So after the refurbishment, what did you think those</p> <p>6 vents were for?</p> <p>7 A. Well, like I said, when there was the first fire, I ran</p> <p>8 up to the 18th floor, I did see smoke coming up through</p> <p>9 the vents, so I thought maybe it would help in future</p> <p>10 and take it out. But I'm not sure 100 per cent what it</p> <p>11 would do, that's just me guessing.</p> <p>12 Q. So going back to that, you ran up obviously from your</p> <p>13 floor up to the 18th --</p> <p>14 A. Yes.</p> <p>15 Q. -- as it then was.</p> <p>16 A. As it then was, yes.</p> <p>17 Q. You say you saw smoke coming through the vents. On</p> <p>18 which floor did you see that?</p> <p>19 A. On the 18th floor, because I ran from -- yes. So the</p> <p>20 fire was on my floor, the then 6th, and by the time I'd</p> <p>21 run up to the 18th, it was coming out the vents.</p> <p>22 Q. Taking you now to post the refurbishment.</p> <p>23 A. Yes.</p> <p>24 Q. Did you ever hear any noise from those vents?</p> <p>25 A. I did, yes.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 130</p>	<p>1 Q. After the refurbishment.</p> <p>2 A. No, I wouldn't say so, no. No.</p> <p>3 Q. You told us you would visit your brother regularly.</p> <p>4 A. Yes, I did.</p> <p>5 Q. After the refurbishment, he is on the 21st floor.</p> <p>6 A. Yes.</p> <p>7 Q. Did you ever notice anything about the vents on the 21st</p> <p>8 floor?</p> <p>9 A. They were noisier than mine were.</p> <p>10 Q. So, again, using our Hoover comparator --</p> <p>11 A. Yes.</p> <p>12 Q. -- which setting would you put them on?</p> <p>13 A. The highest.</p> <p>14 Q. The highest?</p> <p>15 A. Yes.</p> <p>16 Q. And --</p> <p>17 A. And this wasn't constant. Now and again you'd hear</p> <p>18 them. It wasn't constantly noisy, but now and again it</p> <p>19 would be noisy, yes.</p> <p>20 Q. Were there particular times of the day when you'd hear</p> <p>21 the noise?</p> <p>22 A. Not necessarily.</p> <p>23 Q. Particular times of the year?</p> <p>24 A. I mean, I work full-time, so it would be in the evening</p> <p>25 for me or the weekends. Yes.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 132</p>

<p>1 Q. What about particular times of the year?</p> <p>2 A. I couldn't comment on that, I'm not sure.</p> <p>3 Q. Thank you.</p> <p>4 Can I again take you now back to your statement, and</p> <p>5 I want to go to page 5 of the statement and look at</p> <p>6 paragraph 17, please.</p> <p>7 The point that you make in this paragraph is that</p> <p>8 after the refurbishment -- it's something you've told us</p> <p>9 already -- the floors were renumbered.</p> <p>10 A. Yes, they were.</p> <p>11 Q. So you became floor 9.</p> <p>12 A. I did, yes.</p> <p>13 Q. How was the floor number marked on your floor?</p> <p>14 A. It was stencilled. Mine was changed from 6 to 9.</p> <p>15 Q. Where was the stencil?</p> <p>16 A. It was where the original 6 was on the stairs. It was</p> <p>17 just painted over -- not the whole wall was painted,</p> <p>18 just the part where the number was -- and then they</p> <p>19 stencilled in black the digit 9.</p> <p>20 Q. So if someone had decided to take the stairs up to your</p> <p>21 floor --</p> <p>22 A. To my floor, yes.</p> <p>23 Q. -- when they reached the stairwell door, they would see</p> <p>24 on the wall the number 9?</p> <p>25 A. Yes, absolutely, yes.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 133</p>	<p>1 Q. -- in your property.</p> <p>2 A. Yes.</p> <p>3 Q. Can you use that plan to tell us which windows had</p> <p>4 a draught?</p> <p>5 A. Initially, the draughts were in the bedroom opposite the</p> <p>6 main door, the middle bedroom, the last bedroom and the</p> <p>7 kitchen.</p> <p>8 I called Rydon, and they came and used mastic to try</p> <p>9 and seal the holes, as it were. My bedroom got better,</p> <p>10 but my son's bedroom, which was opposite the front door,</p> <p>11 and my daughter's bedroom, which is the bedroom we</p> <p>12 created, weren't sealed appropriately. Yes.</p> <p>13 Q. What about the kitchen?</p> <p>14 A. The kitchen wasn't great either, but the worst ones were</p> <p>15 the children's bedrooms.</p> <p>16 Q. Any draught problems in the living room?</p> <p>17 A. So my daughter's bedroom was initially part of the</p> <p>18 living room. So that window.</p> <p>19 Q. Right.</p> <p>20 A. Yes.</p> <p>21 Q. So what you've highlighted in particular is the window</p> <p>22 in your son's bedroom and the window in your daughter's</p> <p>23 bedroom.</p> <p>24 A. Yes.</p> <p>25 Q. Taking those two --</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 135</p>
<p>1 Q. How big was the stencil?</p> <p>2 A. I'd say about 15 centimetres in length.</p> <p>3 Q. If we go to the next page, please, and can we look at</p> <p>4 paragraphs 19 to 20.</p> <p>5 Again, this is a part of your statement, Mrs Wahabi,</p> <p>6 where you're dealing with the refurbishment.</p> <p>7 A. Yes.</p> <p>8 Q. You explain that your windows were replaced --</p> <p>9 A. Yes.</p> <p>10 Q. -- and then you had problems.</p> <p>11 A. Yes.</p> <p>12 Q. So the first question is: were you experiencing problems</p> <p>13 with your windows in June 2017?</p> <p>14 A. Yes.</p> <p>15 Q. One of the problems you highlight in your statement is</p> <p>16 the question of a draught.</p> <p>17 A. Yes.</p> <p>18 Q. So can I take you back to your plan, please?</p> <p>19 A. Yes.</p> <p>20 Q. IWS0000074, please, page 23, forgive me.</p> <p>21 So I think on the plan the sort of semi-circles</p> <p>22 denote a window.</p> <p>23 A. Yes, that's correct.</p> <p>24 Q. You've got obviously three bedrooms --</p> <p>25 A. Yes.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 134</p>	<p>1 A. Yes.</p> <p>2 Q. -- where would you find the draught coming in?</p> <p>3 A. At the bottom of the window ledge, the bottom.</p> <p>4 Underneath, yes.</p> <p>5 Q. So is it --</p> <p>6 A. More to the corners, though, to the corners of each.</p> <p>7 Q. And underneath the windowsill itself?</p> <p>8 A. Yes, underneath the windowsill itself.</p> <p>9 Q. Thank you.</p> <p>10 Can I now just turn, if I may, to the events of</p> <p>11 13 and 14 June?</p> <p>12 A. Could I add something about the windows, if that's okay?</p> <p>13 Q. Yes, please.</p> <p>14 A. I just wanted to mention that if you look at that plan</p> <p>15 again, sorry, if you look at the living room -- at the</p> <p>16 living room.</p> <p>17 Q. Yes.</p> <p>18 A. One of the windows, which is on the far right corner if</p> <p>19 you're looking at it from there, the far right corner,</p> <p>20 that window fell off completely, as in it completely</p> <p>21 fell off. I contacted Rydon to let them know. It</p> <p>22 completely came off the hinge and they came to fix it.</p> <p>23 It then happened again and they taught us how to fix it</p> <p>24 if it happened again. So it did happen, but my son</p> <p>25 learnt how to fix it. So whenever it came off the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 136</p>

<p>1 hinges, he learnt how to do it himself. I just wanted 2 to bring that to your attention. 3 Q. So if we imagine that there's a frame to the window -- 4 A. Yes. 5 Q. -- and there's then parts of it that you could open -- 6 A. Yes. 7 Q. -- is it that one part would come off the hinge 8 completely? 9 A. Yes. 10 Q. So was that still a problem that -- 11 A. Yes, it was. 12 Q. So you would need your son to be there to -- 13 A. Yes, I would. I couldn't do it myself, no. 14 Q. -- sort it out? 15 Right. Thank you for that. 16 A. That's fine. 17 Q. Are you okay for us to go now to the events of 18 13/14 June? 19 A. Yes. 20 Q. Could I ask, then, if we go to page 10 of your 21 statement, please. 22 A. Yes. 23 Q. What you set out in these parts -- and we pick it up at 24 paragraph 35 -- you're explaining that on the evening of 25 13 June, you had been at home since 7.00 pm.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 137</p>	<p>1 and you remember waking up and smelling smoke and 2 plastic. 3 A. Yes. 4 Q. You describe it as a very strong, immediate smell. 5 A. Yes, that's correct. 6 Q. Were you still in your bedroom at this time? 7 A. I was, yes. 8 Q. Do you remember if your bedroom door was open? 9 A. Yes, it was. 10 Q. What about the bedroom window? 11 A. It may have been slightly ajar. I cannot 100 per cent 12 remember. 13 Q. If we look at paragraph 38, it could be read that you're 14 describing two distinct smells: the smell of smoke and 15 the smell of plastic. 16 A. Yes. 17 Q. Is that what you meant? 18 A. Yes. It was like plastic burning. That's what it smelt 19 like. Plastic was literally burning. 20 Q. Were you aware of any smoke in your bedroom? 21 A. No. Not at that point, no. 22 Q. Could you tell where the smoke was coming from? 23 A. Not initially. 24 Q. You've described it to us now as it was like plastic 25 burning.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 139</p>
<p>1 A. Yes. 2 Q. You had invited friends, I think for the Iftar meal, 3 isn't it? 4 A. Yes, that's correct. 5 Q. You say that you broke your fast that evening with your 6 guests and with family. 7 A. That is correct, yes. 8 Q. Then your son left. Was that to go to the mosque? 9 A. To go to the mosque to pray the evening prayer, yes. 10 Q. If we go to page 11, what you say is that your guests 11 left not long before midnight and then your son came 12 home, I think, about -- you've given the time of 12.38. 13 A. I've seen the CCTV image shows 12.38. That's how I know 14 the time, yes. 15 Q. I think you wanted to make sure he got home before you 16 went to bed. 17 A. Yes, I could never sleep unless he was home, and he knew 18 that, so I actually called him to make sure he came home 19 so I could sleep, because I had work the next day. Yes. 20 So ... yes. 21 Q. It was only after he got home that you all then went to 22 bed; is that right? 23 A. That is correct, yes. 24 Q. With that, if we focus on paragraph 38 and 39, you then 25 say in the statement that you heard Salah call your name</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 138</p>	<p>1 A. Yes. 2 Q. You described it in your statement as a very strong, 3 immediate smell. 4 A. Yes, yes. 5 Q. Can you give us a sense of how powerful that smell was? 6 A. It was extremely powerful. As soon as my name was 7 called and I opened my eyes, I smelt it straight away 8 and panic kicked in. 9 Q. Is it possible for us just to put on one side of the 10 screen paragraphs 39 and 40 of this page, and on the 11 other side of it the plan to Mrs Wahabi's flat, which is 12 page 23. 13 You just told us that panic started to kick in, but 14 in paragraphs 39 and 40 you explain that you moved round 15 from your bedroom -- 16 A. Yes, I did. 17 Q. -- into hallway? 18 A. Yes. 19 Q. And then you, your son and your husband were in the 20 hallway by the bathroom. 21 A. Yes, we were standing by the bathroom. 22 Q. Did Salah tell you why he'd called you? 23 A. He thought [redacted], my son, had left something in the 24 oven and it had burnt or something had happened. Yes, 25 that's what he thought happened. And my son thought it</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 140</p>

35 (Pages 137 to 140)

1 **was his charger that was burnt in his room. He was**
 2 **awake; he was playing PlayStation in his bedroom.**
 3 Q. You talk about how powerful the smell was, but was it
 4 comparable to the smell if a charger was burning?
 5 **A. No, way more. Way more. My son's bedroom was furthest**
 6 **away from where it was coming up, and his door was**
 7 **closed, my door was open. His bedroom door was closed,**
 8 **so he wouldn't have smelt what I smelt. Yes.**
 9 Q. Because obviously names have been redacted on this, your
 10 daughter's bedroom is the bedroom closest to the living
 11 room, isn't it?
 12 **A. That's correct.**
 13 Q. Your son's bedroom, of the three bedrooms, is the one
 14 furthest to the left on this image.
 15 **A. That is correct.**
 16 Q. Were the lights on in the hallway at this time?
 17 **A. Yes, they were.**
 18 Q. Were there any other lights on elsewhere in your home?
 19 **A. My son's bedroom and, yes, the hallway.**
 20 Q. And --
 21 **A. And my bedroom obviously at that point.**
 22 Q. Can you remember where you all were in the hallway?
 23 **A. We were in between the bathroom and the toilet. Just**
 24 **there. There's a radiator just there, we were standing**
 25 **there.**

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1 Q. From there, would you be able to get a view into the
 2 kitchen?
 3 **A. No.**
 4 Q. In paragraph 39, if I draw your attention to that, you
 5 say that you could see smoke coming from the living room
 6 area. Was the smoke coming into the hallway?
 7 **A. Yes, it was.**
 8 Q. We can see a sort of rectangle with the words "Hall Way"
 9 on it; was that the sort of area on which you were
 10 standing?
 11 **A. Yes.**
 12 Q. From that position, could you tell how smoke was getting
 13 into the living room?
 14 **A. I couldn't tell how it was getting in, no, no.**
 15 Q. Aside from this smoke that you could see coming from the
 16 living room area, could you see any smoke elsewhere?
 17 **A. No, it was coming from that position. It was smoke,**
 18 **yes, and ash.**
 19 Q. I think you've described the colour of the smoke and
 20 you've mentioned ash.
 21 Other than that, is there anything else you remember
 22 about the smoke?
 23 **A. No, no.**
 24 Q. What about the smell at that time, what were you
 25 smelling?

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1 **A. I was still smelling the plastic, and the closer I got**
 2 **to it, the stronger the smell became.**
 3 Q. Just to give us a sense of how much smoke there may have
 4 been, what was your visibility like at this point?
 5 **A. I could see, but it was literally like a cloud just**
 6 **above, like the whole ceiling. That's what it was like.**
 7 **I would say 30 centimetres from the ceiling down,**
 8 **I estimate.**
 9 **But the ash was coming down lower, so you could see.**
 10 Q. These particles of ash were they coming into the hallway
 11 where you were?
 12 **A. At this point, they were just in the living room, but**
 13 **they were making their way towards the hallway, yes.**
 14 Q. How much smoke was there in the hallway at this time?
 15 **A. Not much. Not much in the hallway at this point.**
 16 Q. Could you see more smoke in the living room?
 17 **A. Yes, absolutely. Absolutely.**
 18 Q. Using the plan, one of the things you say in your
 19 statement is that the smoke alarms hadn't gone off?
 20 **A. Yes, that's correct.**
 21 Q. Where were your smoke alarms located?
 22 **A. One in the kitchen on the ceiling, and one in the**
 23 **hallway on the ceiling. Where the front door is, if you**
 24 **walked as if you're going towards my son's bedroom, just**
 25 **above, there is one there.**

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1 Q. As far as you're aware, were these working in June 2017?
 2 **A. Yes, they were working. You know, like I said, my son**
 3 **would cook something and they'd go off.**
 4 Q. So in the past, how easy was it to trigger a smoke
 5 alarm?
 6 **A. Yes, they were easily triggered. They triggered quite**
 7 **easily. Burn toast and they'd trigger.**
 8 Q. In paragraph 40, which we still have up, you describe
 9 moving into the living room area.
 10 **A. Yes.**
 11 Q. You then say that you could feel heat in the living
 12 room --
 13 **A. Yes.**
 14 Q. -- and see and smell smoke.
 15 **A. Yes.**
 16 Q. "... there were small particles of ash blowing in from
 17 the living room window, which we had left slightly
 18 ajar."
 19 **A. Yes.**
 20 Q. Was that the only window that was open that you
 21 remember?
 22 **A. To my knowledge, yes.**
 23 Q. Was it usual for you to close the windows in your home?
 24 **A. I normally closed them, and the reason being is that**
 25 **quite often, for some reason, people above would throw**

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1 things out of the window, like leftover food and at one
 2 point a cigarette butt, and the wind blew it into our
 3 flat. So I tended to close the windows. But it was
 4 a hot day that day and we left it slightly ajar, and
 5 that's why I say slightly. I didn't like leaving the
 6 windows open unless I was sat near it just in case
 7 something came in.

8 Q. On your plan, your living room would've had three
 9 windows.

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. Which one was left open or slightly ajar?

12 A. The one closest to the kitchen.

13 Q. Thank you.

14 When you were using that window normally, how would
 15 you open it?

16 A. You'd pull the handle down and push out.

17 Q. So it was one that opened outwards like a door?

18 A. Mm, yes.

19 Q. Did it work in such a way that it could be a tilt window
 20 as well?

21 A. Actually, no, you pull in, sorry. I had to just
 22 visualise that. You pull it in, yes. Yes, sorry.

23 Q. That's probably me and windows more than anything, but
 24 could it be opened in any way? Could it be turned into
 25 a tilt window, do you remember?

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1 A. Oh, I don't know.

2 Q. But your memory of it is of a window that opened
 3 inwards?

4 A. Yes, it could, but I didn't ever use it that way. Yes,
 5 it could, but I didn't ever use it that way, yes.

6 Q. Was that another thing you would have to ask your son to
 7 do?

8 A. Yes, yes.

9 Q. What you say about going into the living room area is
 10 that you could feel heat.

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Can you give us an indication of how hot it was?

13 A. It obviously wasn't heat from the weather, you could
 14 tell it was heat that wasn't natural. I would say --
 15 just trying to compare it to something ... yes, like
 16 a really hot day, but it was literally -- you know like
 17 when you open the oven, you're going to take out a cake
 18 that you've made, for example, and you feel that heat?
 19 It was like that.

20 Q. Was the heat such that it made you feel uncomfortable at
 21 all?

22 A. Absolutely.

23 Q. You describe that there's smoke in that living room
 24 area.

25 A. Yes.

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

2 A. I would say it did, but I'm not sure if it was the smoke
 3 or the fact that I was panicking and I was literally
 4 breathing -- hyperventilating, like a panic attack was
 5 coming on. So I'm not sure whether I was struggling
 6 because of my fear or because of the smoke. So, yes.

7 Q. Thank you.

8 Again, what you're describing from the time that you
 9 were woken up and when you're in the living room area,
 10 is this smell, and was it the same smell throughout,
 11 this --

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. And it's this burning plastic smell?

14 A. Yes, yes.

15 Q. How did that change as you got closer to the living
 16 room?

17 A. It was stronger. Stronger.

18 Q. Do you remember going to the living room windows at all
 19 yourself?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. At that time, what could you see from your living room
 22 windows?

23 A. Initially, when I walked towards the living room window,
 24 I still wasn't sure exactly where it was coming from.
 25 I went towards the actual window itself that was

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1 slightly ajar and I just kind of pulled it open, just to
 2 have a peak, to think, you know: what's happening? And
 3 at that point, that's when the flames blew up. Yes.
 4 And my face was literally right there.

5 Q. Can I take that in stages, if I may.

6 A. Yes. Yes, you can.

7 Q. One of the things that the answer you've just given can
 8 help us clear up is a detail in your statement, because
 9 in your statement I think you say you're not sure
 10 whether it was you or your son that went to the window.

11 A. Yes, so we've spoken -- I did do that, but [redacted]
 12 also went to the window, so we did it separately.
 13 I said I'm 100 per cent I did it, and he says, "Mum, I'm
 14 100 per cent I did it", so we both went to the window.
 15 We've had a discussion since.

16 Q. So if we look at what you say about the flames, they:
 17 "... shot up on the outside of the building, in
 18 front of our living room window."

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. Again, just remind us which window we're talking about
 21 now.

22 A. This is the window closest to the kitchen.

23 Q. The flames you described as orange-red, and then you
 24 shut the window.

25 A. Yes.

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<p>1 Q. Is that right?</p> <p>2 A. Yes, I was scared. I closed it.</p> <p>3 Q. Do you see the flames spread any further?</p> <p>4 A. They were going up, the flames were going up. They were</p> <p>5 travelling up the building on the outside.</p> <p>6 Q. Once you'd shut the window and stepped back, did they</p> <p>7 carry on travelling up?</p> <p>8 A. Yes, they looked like they were travelling up, yes.</p> <p>9 Q. Whilst you're in your living room, did you have any</p> <p>10 sense of what might be happening in your kitchen?</p> <p>11 A. No, I didn't even think. I didn't think about it while</p> <p>12 I was in the living room, not until I went into the</p> <p>13 kitchen.</p> <p>14 Q. Can I go, then, to paragraphs 41 and 42 on page 12 of</p> <p>15 your statement. This is where there's a discussion with</p> <p>16 your son and his father about what to do.</p> <p>17 A. Yes.</p> <p>18 Q. You say that Salah was adamant that the procedure was to</p> <p>19 stay put.</p> <p>20 A. Yes.</p> <p>21 Q. You use the word "procedure"; what do you think he meant</p> <p>22 by "procedure"?</p> <p>23 A. That's what he said. Well, maybe it's good to mention</p> <p>24 that he is actually a school caretaker, so I assume he</p> <p>25 knew the policy from working in the school. But also</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 149</p>	<p>1 Q. Where were you when he went to -- because on the plan --</p> <p>2 I'll bring it back up if you want to see it -- you've</p> <p>3 been in the living room.</p> <p>4 A. Yes.</p> <p>5 Q. Your son's gone to the front door. Where were you when</p> <p>6 he went off to do that?</p> <p>7 A. I believe that's when I checked the kitchen.</p> <p>8 Q. I'll come to the kitchen in a moment.</p> <p>9 A. Yes, that's fine. That's okay.</p> <p>10 Q. Do you remember when your son came back whether he told</p> <p>11 you anything about the conditions in the communal lobby?</p> <p>12 A. He just said it was safe to leave. That's all he said.</p> <p>13 MR RAWAT: Well, I'm going to turn now to the kitchen.</p> <p>14 Mr Chairman, I notice the time. I think we're</p> <p>15 probably coming up to 45 minutes. I don't know</p> <p>16 whether --</p> <p>17 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: You're going to a new subject?</p> <p>18 MR RAWAT: A new subject.</p> <p>19 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Would you like a break at this</p> <p>20 stage?</p> <p>21 THE WITNESS: Yes, please.</p> <p>22 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes. Well, then, we'll have one, of</p> <p>23 course.</p> <p>24 THE WITNESS: Thank you. Thank you.</p> <p>25 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: We'll stop now then.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 151</p>
<p>1 obviously with that poster that was outside the lifts,</p> <p>2 which we had a discussion about because it wasn't there</p> <p>3 for a long time, before what happened that night.</p> <p>4 So he said that's what we need to do, we must stay</p> <p>5 put, that's what we have to do.</p> <p>6 Q. What were your thoughts about what to do next?</p> <p>7 A. In all honesty, I was -- I say in this that I -- I was</p> <p>8 really scared. I was really scared and I was confused,</p> <p>9 I wasn't sure what to do. I felt like I couldn't make</p> <p>10 any decisions and my son took over.</p> <p>11 Q. So what made you decide to leave the flat?</p> <p>12 A. My son.</p> <p>13 Q. I think you describe it in there as he was the adult.</p> <p>14 A. He was. He was.</p> <p>15 Q. You describe your son going to the front door to look</p> <p>16 into the lobby.</p> <p>17 A. He did. He did. He did what we should've done, which</p> <p>18 is he went out and he checked and made sure it was okay</p> <p>19 and safe for us to leave the building before he came</p> <p>20 back. At this point, my daughter was still asleep, so</p> <p>21 she was unaware of what was going on, although her</p> <p>22 bedroom was close to the frames at that point, and it</p> <p>23 was his -- all he wants to do is to save her and make</p> <p>24 sure she's okay, and that's what he did: he ran to her</p> <p>25 bedroom and grabbed her.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 150</p>	<p>1 I'm going to have to ask you not to talk to anyone</p> <p>2 about your evidence while you're out of the room. We'll</p> <p>3 start again at 3.10. All right? Give you just over</p> <p>4 10 minutes.</p> <p>5 THE WITNESS: Thank you very much.</p> <p>6 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: You go with the usher, that will be</p> <p>7 fine. Thank you very much.</p> <p>8 Right, 3.10, then, please.</p> <p>9 (3.00 pm)</p> <p>10 (A short break)</p> <p>11 (3.10 pm)</p> <p>12 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: All right?</p> <p>13 THE WITNESS: Yes.</p> <p>14 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Ready to carry on?</p> <p>15 THE WITNESS: Thank you.</p> <p>16 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes, Mr Rawat.</p> <p>17 MR RAWAT: Thank you, Mr Chairman.</p> <p>18 Could we have, please, page 12 of Mrs Wahabi's first</p> <p>19 statement and paragraphs 41 and 42, please.</p> <p>20 Mrs Wahabi, before the short break we were, I think,</p> <p>21 about to move on to what you saw in the kitchen.</p> <p>22 A. Yes.</p> <p>23 Q. If I direct you to paragraph 42 --</p> <p>24 A. Yes.</p> <p>25 Q. -- what you're there describing is taking a mobile phone</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 152</p>

<p>1 off the charger.</p> <p>2 A. Yes.</p> <p>3 Q. And then you say you stayed behind --</p> <p>4 A. Yes.</p> <p>5 Q. -- to close -- in your statement it says the windows in</p> <p>6 the kitchen --</p> <p>7 A. Yes.</p> <p>8 Q. -- which had been open as it was a hot day.</p> <p>9 A. Yes, yes, yes.</p> <p>10 Q. So taking that in stages again, I mean, firstly, when</p> <p>11 you're referring to windows, there's one window but</p> <p>12 different parts to it; is that right?</p> <p>13 A. There's a window in the kitchen. That's the one</p> <p>14 I was -- it's the one in the kitchen, yes, yes.</p> <p>15 Q. You remember that being left open, do you?</p> <p>16 A. Yes, yes, I remember it being left open, yes.</p> <p>17 Q. What you say is:</p> <p>18 "I could still see ash in the kitchen blowing in</p> <p>19 from the window and settling on the floor, and the smoke</p> <p>20 was getting thicker. It was still mostly white, but</p> <p>21 getting a bit grayish[sic]."</p> <p>22 A. Yes.</p> <p>23 Q. To get into the kitchen -- you told us the arrangement</p> <p>24 of your home -- because the doors between kitchen and</p> <p>25 sitting room would've been closed --</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 153</p>	<p>1 A. Yes.</p> <p>2 Q. -- you've gone from bedroom into hallway --</p> <p>3 A. Yes.</p> <p>4 Q. -- then into the living room --</p> <p>5 A. Yes.</p> <p>6 Q. -- then into kitchen --</p> <p>7 A. Yes.</p> <p>8 Q. -- and then --</p> <p>9 A. I did a living room, kitchen, living room, kitchen, for</p> <p>10 a little bit, yes.</p> <p>11 Q. So on your visit to the kitchen, you'd noticed that ash</p> <p>12 was coming through --</p> <p>13 A. Yes, because like I said, we thought something was left</p> <p>14 in the oven, but nothing was left in the oven, and</p> <p>15 I knew it wasn't coming from there. It wasn't normal.</p> <p>16 Q. But could you see smoke coming through the window?</p> <p>17 A. Yes, yes. Because also in the kitchen we have the vent,</p> <p>18 the little vent. So that I assume was coming through</p> <p>19 there as well.</p> <p>20 Q. So I'm going to try, without a photograph, to describe</p> <p>21 the kitchen window to you.</p> <p>22 A. Sorry.</p> <p>23 Q. So if you imagine that there's two panels to it, on the</p> <p>24 left a panel that one could open and on the right</p> <p>25 a smaller panel but with a vent above it.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 155</p>
<p>1 A. Closed yes.</p> <p>2 Q. -- you would've had to walk out of the living room --</p> <p>3 A. Yes.</p> <p>4 Q. -- and then through to the kitchen via the kitchen door;</p> <p>5 is that right?</p> <p>6 A. That's correct, yes.</p> <p>7 Q. When you went to deal with the kitchen window, where was</p> <p>8 everyone else?</p> <p>9 A. At that point I believe [redacted] had gone already by</p> <p>10 then with -- my children had left by then, and their</p> <p>11 father was still around the hallway and in between the</p> <p>12 kitchen. I'm not sure exactly where he was, to be quite</p> <p>13 honest, but around there somewhere, yes.</p> <p>14 Q. Do you remember him being in the kitchen at the same</p> <p>15 time as you?</p> <p>16 A. He was behind me. He would've been behind me.</p> <p>17 Q. What you've also said is:</p> <p>18 "I could still see ash in the kitchen ..."</p> <p>19 A. Yes.</p> <p>20 Q. Had you seen ash in the kitchen before?</p> <p>21 A. Yes, because I had been in before and now I went in</p> <p>22 again to close the window.</p> <p>23 Q. I see.</p> <p>24 A. Yes.</p> <p>25 Q. So in terms of your moving around --</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 154</p>	<p>1 A. So we had on the left a window that didn't open, on the</p> <p>2 right a window that opened, and just above it was the</p> <p>3 vent.</p> <p>4 Q. So --</p> <p>5 A. But it was to the right, yes.</p> <p>6 Q. But was it in the window itself or to the right of the</p> <p>7 window?</p> <p>8 A. To the right of the window.</p> <p>9 Q. So --</p> <p>10 A. I believe. Yes. Sorry.</p> <p>11 Q. Okay. Thank you. Thank you for trying to be very</p> <p>12 clear.</p> <p>13 You say you assumed smoke was coming through that.</p> <p>14 Do you have a recollection of smoke coming through that</p> <p>15 vent?</p> <p>16 A. Smoke was coming through the window. Whether it was</p> <p>17 from the vent or the window that was slightly ajar,</p> <p>18 smoke was coming in. And ash.</p> <p>19 Q. You'd done more than one trip, hadn't you, to the</p> <p>20 kitchen?</p> <p>21 A. Yes.</p> <p>22 Q. On your last trip, that's to close that window, isn't</p> <p>23 it?</p> <p>24 A. Yes, I hadn't closed it initially, no. I was still</p> <p>25 confused as to what was going on.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 156</p>

<p>1 Q. Had there been a change in the amount of smoke coming 2 into the flat?</p> <p>3 A. Yes, yes, the living room and kitchen. But like I said, 4 I could still see. I could still see where I was and 5 what was in front of me.</p> <p>6 Q. Was it the same smell all the time that you were picking 7 up?</p> <p>8 A. The burning plastic, yes, it was.</p> <p>9 Q. Did it get weaker or stronger?</p> <p>10 A. Stronger. It just got stronger.</p> <p>11 Q. When you went to close that kitchen window --</p> <p>12 A. Yes.</p> <p>13 Q. -- could you see any flames outside?</p> <p>14 A. Not the kitchen window, no. With the other one, I kind 15 of opened it and then it kind of shot up, but with this 16 one, I didn't even -- I just kind of did that 17 (Indicates), I didn't even look. I was too busy trying 18 to close it, I didn't even ...</p> <p>19 Q. Did the handle feel hot to the touch at all?</p> <p>20 A. I don't believe so.</p> <p>21 Q. So --</p> <p>22 A. I don't believe so.</p> <p>23 Q. At that time, what was the temperature like in the 24 kitchen?</p> <p>25 A. Just like I said with regards to an oven, yes, I would</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 157</p>	<p>1 Q. All right. Let's move back to paragraph 42, if we look 2 at that.</p> <p>3 A. Okay.</p> <p>4 Q. Your children had left by now, hadn't they?</p> <p>5 A. Yes.</p> <p>6 Q. So it's just you and their father in the flat?</p> <p>7 A. And their father, yes.</p> <p>8 Q. You say, if you look at the portion of the statement 9 that's on the right-hand side of the screen as we're 10 looking at it, that he picked up his house keys from the 11 key holder by the front door and slammed the door behind 12 him.</p> <p>13 A. Yes.</p> <p>14 Q. You point out he didn't even take his phone.</p> <p>15 "Just as we left our flat, our smoke alarm went 16 off."</p> <p>17 A. That's correct, yes.</p> <p>18 Q. When he slammed the door shut, did he lock the door?</p> <p>19 A. You don't need to lock it, you just close it.</p> <p>20 Q. So it automatically closes --</p> <p>21 A. Well, you've got to pull it.</p> <p>22 Q. But if I was standing outside that door, I couldn't push 23 it open again?</p> <p>24 A. No, no.</p> <p>25 Q. The smoke alarm that you're referring to --</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 159</p>
<p>1 say it was the same.</p> <p>2 Q. I'd like, if I may, to show you what we've called -- 3 there's a smoke and flame descriptor, which is 4 a diagram. It's not a photograph, but it's a diagram of 5 different levels of smoke. Are you okay looking at 6 that?</p> <p>7 A. Yes, yes.</p> <p>8 Q. All right. Could I have, please, INQ00000406, page 2, 9 please.</p> <p>10 Ms Wahabi, direct your attention towards the 11 graphics on the --</p> <p>12 A. I'm so sorry, I can't do the flames, I'm sorry.</p> <p>13 Q. Okay. Let's put it away.</p> <p>14 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Take that down.</p> <p>15 A. Sorry.</p> <p>16 MR RAWAT: All right. Well, I won't --</p> <p>17 A. I'm sorry.</p> <p>18 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: No, no, no, that's quite all right. 19 I'm sorry we showed it to you.</p> <p>20 MR RAWAT: I apologise, I should have asked more clearly.</p> <p>21 A. I'm sorry, I thought it was -- yes.</p> <p>22 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: All right?</p> <p>23 A. Sorry.</p> <p>24 MR RAWAT: Are you okay to continue?</p> <p>25 A. Yes, I'm sorry.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 158</p>	<p>1 A. Inside our flat.</p> <p>2 Q. Yes. Which one was that, though?</p> <p>3 A. I'm not sure because it was behind me then, but they 4 tended to go off together. So as soon as one went off, 5 they both went off. Normally if we burnt some toast or 6 what have you in the kitchen, the kitchen one would 7 start, but it would kind of signal the other one and the 8 other one would start as well.</p> <p>9 Q. So you've told us about and we've gone through the way 10 you were moving around your flat.</p> <p>11 A. Yes.</p> <p>12 Q. This is the point at which you're leaving.</p> <p>13 A. Yes.</p> <p>14 Q. By that time, and by the time the smoke alarm has gone 15 off, how much smoke was there in the flat?</p> <p>16 A. By the time -- sorry --</p> <p>17 Q. I'm taking you to the time when you're leaving the flat.</p> <p>18 A. Yes.</p> <p>19 Q. You've shut the kitchen window.</p> <p>20 A. Yes.</p> <p>21 Q. The smoke alarm has gone off.</p> <p>22 A. Yes.</p> <p>23 Q. Can you estimate how much smoke there was in the flat by 24 this point?</p> <p>25 A. So the living room at this point and the kitchen, you</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 160</p>

40 (Pages 157 to 160)

<p>1 could walk through it. So remember I said before it was 2 just at the ceiling? It was all around now in the 3 living room and the kitchen, and the ash and the smoke 4 was all around, and it was coming towards the hallway. 5 Q. So if you're standing in the hallway, looking back 6 towards the kitchen, if you looked in the kitchen, it 7 would be full of smoke? 8 A. Yes. 9 Q. With ash as well? 10 A. With ash as well. 11 Q. And then the living room in the same way? 12 A. Yes. 13 Q. And that was progressively moving towards you in the 14 hallway? 15 A. Yes, that was coming towards the hallway, yes. 16 Q. By the time you were leaving, was it already in the 17 hallway? 18 A. Just at the beginning. So you see where the kitchen 19 door is? Just there. It's coming towards the lavatory. 20 But not the whole hallway, just like the beginning of 21 it. 22 Q. So just as if it's almost coming out of the kitchen? 23 A. Yes, yes. 24 Q. Right. 25 The temperature in the flat at this point, what was</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 161</p>	<p>1 A. I didn't. In all honestly, I was in such a panic, 2 I didn't even look to see where it was coming from. 3 Q. Were the lights on in the communal area? 4 A. Yes, they were. Yes, they were. 5 Q. This smoke that you encountered in the communal area, 6 can you tell us anything about it? What colour was it 7 by comparison to the smoke in your flat? 8 A. It wasn't grey like it was -- as it was getting darker 9 in my flat, it was quite light coloured, yeah, it wasn't 10 dramatic. Yes. 11 Q. Some witnesses in statements have compared smoke they 12 encountered to cigarette smoke. Was there more smoke 13 than that or -- 14 A. Yes, I'd say cigarette smoke. Yes, yes. 15 Q. Do you remember if it had a smell at all? 16 A. I don't remember it having a smell on the landing, no. 17 Q. Whilst you were in the communal area, did you see anyone 18 else -- 19 A. No. 20 Q. -- on the floor, on the landing? 21 A. No. 22 Q. Did you hear any noises? 23 A. No. 24 Q. What was the temperature like in the communal area? 25 A. Normal. Normal.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 163</p>
<p>1 it like? 2 A. The parts that I say were the hottest were the living 3 room and the kitchen. Everything else seemed fine. 4 Q. If I take you now just to page 13 and paragraph 43. 5 In fact, if we go 43 down to 46, please. 6 So this is the part of your statement where you deal 7 with your exit from your flat and from the tower. 8 A. Yes. 9 Q. You describe leaving your flat with your children's 10 father, and then you say: 11 "... there was a bit of smoke on the 9th floor 12 landing, but not as much as in our flat." 13 When you say not as much as in our flat, is that as 14 much as it was at the time you left your flat? 15 A. Yes, at the time we left my flat, yes. 16 Q. So you're now in the communal area. 17 A. Yes. 18 Q. What was the visibility like? 19 A. I could see. I could see, yes. 20 Q. So the smoke that you could see, where was it? 21 A. Just above, above (Indicates). 22 Q. Were the lights -- 23 A. It wasn't all around everywhere like it was in my flat. 24 It was like -- yeah, just the ceiling. 25 Q. Could you see where it was coming from?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 162</p>	<p>1 Q. Did you hear the vents at all? 2 A. I didn't pay attention. 3 Q. If we look at paragraphs 44 to 45, that's where you 4 describe moving into the stairwell and then using the 5 staircase. 6 Had you used the stairwell before? 7 A. Before the refurb, I did. I hardly ever used it because 8 I tended to go -- I leave for work really early, pretty 9 early, and I come back pretty late, and I know that 10 there are lots of times when the lifts weren't working, 11 but they tend to happen during the school runs or during 12 the day, and I wasn't home then. 13 There were times when -- my mum has Parkinson's and 14 dementia, so I'm also a carer. There were times I would 15 sleep at my mum's and I wouldn't be at Grenfell Tower, 16 and so it tended to happen on those days. So, yeah. 17 Yes. 18 Q. You got out into the stairwell. You say in 19 paragraph 45: 20 "The lights were on so I could see where I was 21 going." 22 A. Mm-hm. 23 Q. "I could see smoke, but it wasn't thick and black. The 24 smoke got thicker as I descended but I could see through 25 it, and could always see the steps in front of me."</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 164</p>

41 (Pages 161 to 164)

1 What colour was the smoke that you encountered on
 2 the staircase?
 3 **A. Not initially on my floor, but as I descended I could**
 4 **start seeing the smoke. It wasn't initially on the 9th**
 5 **floor where I was, but as I went down, I could see smoke**
 6 **and it was getting darker, in fact. So it would be like**
 7 **it was in my flat, but then was getting worse than what**
 8 **I'd left in my flat, a bit darker. But not black like**
 9 **everyone's mentioned, but I could see where I was going.**
 10 **So I'd just say greyer.**
 11 Q. When you got out from your floor onto the stairwell, was
 12 that clear?
 13 **A. That was clear. My floor was clear.**
 14 Q. But then as you descended, you started --
 15 **A. Yes.**
 16 Q. Did it get darker and darker as you went further down?
 17 **A. Yes.**
 18 Q. I know it's difficult, but doing the best you can, can
 19 you remember how many flights you went down before you
 20 encountered smoke?
 21 **A. I can't, sorry.**
 22 Q. Can you remember where the smoke was at its darkest or
 23 most intense?
 24 **A. In a sense, obviously, because I went past the floor**
 25 **where the fire had started, so maybe a couple of floors**

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1 **before I got there, three floors before I got there,**
 2 **yeah.**
 3 Q. Did the smoke that you encountered in the staircase have
 4 any particular smell as well?
 5 **A. It was burning, but the smell of burning plastic was**
 6 **more prominent in my flat than it was on the staircase.**
 7 **I could smell burning, but that plastic smell was more**
 8 **prominent within my flat.**
 9 Q. In your recollection, is that a smell that you associate
 10 with your flat?
 11 **A. Yes, yes, I associate it with my flat and I also**
 12 **associate it with once I exited the building.**
 13 Q. I drew your attention to it. You say you could feel
 14 heat in the stairwell.
 15 **A. Yes.**
 16 Q. How did the temperature in the stairwell compare with
 17 the temperature in the landing on your floor?
 18 **A. Oh, hotter. Hotter, yes.**
 19 Q. You've told us about the temperature in your kitchen and
 20 your living room --
 21 **A. Yes.**
 22 Q. -- at about the time you were leaving.
 23 **A. Yes.**
 24 Q. How did it compare with that?
 25 **A. It was hotter than that.**

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1 Q. And all the way down, you never had any difficulty
 2 seeing through the smoke?
 3 **A. No.**
 4 Q. Did you have to use anything to cover your mouth with?
 5 **A. I used my headscarf, but I wasn't consistent with it**
 6 **because I was panicking, so I was either holding on to**
 7 **the railing or back up to hold my scarf. So I'd use my**
 8 **headscarf to kind of cover my mouth, really.**
 9 **I didn't take a tea towel or anything like that.**
 10 **I didn't even think about that when I exited.**
 11 Q. If we look at 46, you describe seeing firefighters at
 12 the door to floor 4 and you say they were holding the
 13 door open.
 14 **A. Yes.**
 15 Q. Just so that we can be clear, was that where you
 16 encountered the thickest smoke?
 17 **A. Yes, that's where I encountered the thickest smoke.**
 18 Q. Once you got past floor 4, was there still smoke on the
 19 lower floors?
 20 **A. Then it became less.**
 21 Q. Can we go to the next page, please, and look at
 22 paragraph 47.
 23 What you say in paragraph 47 is:
 24 "By this time my throat was extremely dry and
 25 burning from the smoke."

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1 Which smoke had caused that effect?
 2 **A. So initially, obviously, it started within my flat, and**
 3 **then once I was descending down towards the 4th floor,**
 4 **it was then, and if you -- before, when you showed that**
 5 **paragraph where I was waiting to -- where there were**
 6 **firefighters holding the door, I waited there for a bit**
 7 **because I couldn't get past the firefighters.**
 8 Q. Why couldn't you get past the firefighters?
 9 **A. Because one was holding the door open, so the door to**
 10 **the stairs, one was holding it open, and another one had**
 11 **a hose and he was aiming towards the flames. But he**
 12 **was, like, on his knees and his legs were across the**
 13 **small landing on the step. But on the staircase, not**
 14 **within the landing where the flats are, and so**
 15 **I couldn't get past them.**
 16 **My concern was that they were going to tell me to go**
 17 **back, and so I stood there for a little while as I was**
 18 **trying to calculate, and I was quite lucky in the fact**
 19 **that he tried to -- the firefighter moved his leg**
 20 **slightly when he was trying to aim at the flames, and**
 21 **when he did, there was a bit of space, so I jumped over**
 22 **him -- well, not him completely, but his legs -- and**
 23 **that's how I got out.**
 24 Q. As you're going down the stairs, and at this point where
 25 you pause, were you aware of people above you coming

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<p>1 down as well?</p> <p>2 A. No, no.</p> <p>3 Q. Were you aware of anyone else being in the stairwell at</p> <p>4 the time --</p> <p>5 A. No, no.</p> <p>6 Q. -- other than these firefighters?</p> <p>7 A. No one else.</p> <p>8 Q. I appreciate it's difficult to estimate time, but how</p> <p>9 long do you think it took you to go from your front door</p> <p>10 to leaving the tower?</p> <p>11 A. I wouldn't say it took that long. I was in flight or</p> <p>12 flight and I was flying. So, yeah, I wouldn't say it</p> <p>13 was that long.</p> <p>14 Q. Apart from what you've described about your throat being</p> <p>15 dry, did the smoke that you encountered have any other</p> <p>16 effect on you?</p> <p>17 A. No.</p> <p>18 Q. I want to move on now to a different topic, and that's</p> <p>19 once you've left the tower and it's your contact with</p> <p>20 your brother and his family.</p> <p>21 A. Yes.</p> <p>22 Q. Are you okay for me to ask you some questions about</p> <p>23 that?</p> <p>24 A. Yes.</p> <p>25 Q. Mrs Wahabi, again, if you want a break at any point,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 169</p>	<p>1 Q. So was this the first time that you spoke to your</p> <p>2 brother --</p> <p>3 A. Yes.</p> <p>4 Q. -- after the fire?</p> <p>5 A. Yes.</p> <p>6 Q. After you'd found out about the fire.</p> <p>7 A. Yes.</p> <p>8 Q. You say that he was aware of something going on. Did he</p> <p>9 tell you if he could see any signs of the fire?</p> <p>10 A. No.</p> <p>11 Q. Did he tell you where he and the family were in flat 182</p> <p>12 at that time?</p> <p>13 A. At that time, they were in between the kitchen and the</p> <p>14 living room.</p> <p>15 Q. You then -- it's also in this paragraph -- describe</p> <p>16 a second call to your brother, and you have given a time</p> <p>17 of that at about 1.30 am.</p> <p>18 A. Yes.</p> <p>19 Q. Just to help us, how are you estimating the time there?</p> <p>20 A. I am estimating the time just because I know how long it</p> <p>21 was from when I first made the first call, that's how</p> <p>22 I estimated it.</p> <p>23 Q. So you're taking that call as your benchmark?</p> <p>24 A. Yes, as my benchmark, absolutely.</p> <p>25 Q. What your brother told you then was that he couldn't</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 171</p>
<p>1 just let me know.</p> <p>2 A. Yes.</p> <p>3 Q. But you've left the tower, and in your statement you</p> <p>4 describe contact between yourself, your brother and his</p> <p>5 wife.</p> <p>6 A. Yes.</p> <p>7 Q. Those are direct conversations that you had with them,</p> <p>8 aren't they?</p> <p>9 A. Yes, they are.</p> <p>10 Q. Can you remember how many times you called your</p> <p>11 brother's phone?</p> <p>12 A. From my phone, me personally, I would say four times;</p> <p>13 twice I spoke to him -- that's my brother -- and twice</p> <p>14 I spoke to my sister-in-law.</p> <p>15 Q. Can I take you to part of your statement where you deal</p> <p>16 with a call.</p> <p>17 A. Yes.</p> <p>18 Q. It's page 15, paragraph 51, please.</p> <p>19 This is where you call your brother, and you're able</p> <p>20 to give a time for it in your statement because it's</p> <p>21 just after your son took a photo on your phone.</p> <p>22 A. Yes.</p> <p>23 Q. The time that you give is in paragraph 50, and the</p> <p>24 photograph was taken at 1.25 am.</p> <p>25 A. Yes.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 170</p>	<p>1 leave --</p> <p>2 A. Yes.</p> <p>3 Q. -- because there was too much black smoke.</p> <p>4 A. Yes.</p> <p>5 Q. They couldn't see and they couldn't breathe.</p> <p>6 A. Yes.</p> <p>7 Q. You've made the point in your statement that it was very</p> <p>8 different from the smoke that you encountered, wasn't</p> <p>9 it?</p> <p>10 A. Absolutely.</p> <p>11 Q. That was the description he was giving to you, was it?</p> <p>12 A. Yes.</p> <p>13 Q. Did your brother tell you where he'd encountered this</p> <p>14 black smoke?</p> <p>15 A. He had come out of the flat and attempted to go down the</p> <p>16 stairs.</p> <p>17 Q. Did he tell you whether the smoke was in the communal</p> <p>18 area on his floor, or whether he got to the stairwell?</p> <p>19 A. He did get to the stairwell. He got to the stairwell,</p> <p>20 yes, and then he came back. But I believe the black</p> <p>21 smoke was both places, yes.</p> <p>22 Q. Did your brother tell you whether there was any smoke</p> <p>23 coming into his flat at all?</p> <p>24 A. There wasn't at that point, no.</p> <p>25 Q. If we go to page 16 and just look at the top of the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 172</p>

1 page, can you see, Mrs Wahabi, the second sentence, you
 2 say:
 3 "I called my brother's phone back for the third
 4 time."
 5 And this time your sister-in-law picked up the call.
 6 **A. Yes, yes.**
 7 Q. Again, I appreciate time is difficult, but you've used
 8 that photo that your son took as the benchmark.
 9 **A. Mm-hm.**
 10 Q. You've been able to say your second call was at 1.30 am
 11 or about that.
 12 **A. Yes.**
 13 Q. Can you remember how soon after you then made the third
 14 call?
 15 **A. Not long. It would've been about roughly 1.40. Yes, it**
 16 **wasn't that long at all.**
 17 Q. The information you got from your sister-in-law was that
 18 the emergency services had said they were coming to
 19 rescue them.
 20 **A. Yes, I could hear my brother speaking to the emergency**
 21 **services in the background, yes.**
 22 Q. At that time?
 23 **A. At that time.**
 24 Q. Was he then relaying information to your sister-in-law,
 25 who was talking to you?

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1 **A. Who was talking to me; yes, that's correct.**
 2 Q. So, in effect, could it be described as a three-way
 3 passing of information?
 4 **A. Three-way conversation, yes.**
 5 Q. So emergency services speaking to your brother --
 6 **A. Yes.**
 7 Q. -- who is speaking to his wife, who is speaking to you?
 8 **A. Yes.**
 9 Q. So when you say that Faouzia said the emergency services
 10 had said they were coming to rescue them, that was what
 11 he was getting from Abdulaziz?
 12 **A. He was getting from Abdulaziz. I mean, I could hear him**
 13 **in the background talking. Yes, so -- but I know that**
 14 **it wasn't just him that was talking, but the information**
 15 **was being relayed to Faouzia, to me.**
 16 Q. Did she give you any more information about what else
 17 they'd been told?
 18 **A. They had been told to stay put. They were told to stay**
 19 **in the living room. They were then told to move from**
 20 **room to room. They were told to stay low. They were**
 21 **told they were coming to save them.**
 22 Q. At that time -- and you've very helpfully tried to
 23 estimate the time at 01.40 --
 24 **A. Yes.**
 25 Q. -- did your sister-in-law tell you anything about the

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1 conditions in their flat at that time?
 2 **A. Not on that call. Later on, yes.**
 3 Q. Is that the fourth call?
 4 **A. Yes, there's another call, yes.**
 5 Q. All right.
 6 Just before I take you to that call, when she was
 7 speaking to you, where was your sister-in-law at that
 8 time?
 9 **A. I could see her in the window. She was in the living**
 10 **room. She was in the -- flat 182, so it was the second**
 11 **window along, if I'm facing -- I was on the sports**
 12 **centre side, the Kensington Leisure Centre. She was the**
 13 **second window along. As I was conversing with her,**
 14 **I could physically see her. And there is a photo I've**
 15 **given to the police, which is a photo we have taken of**
 16 **her as she is standing in that window. My nephew who**
 17 **came on site took a photo as I was having a conversation**
 18 **with her.**
 19 Q. Can I take you to paragraph 55 of your statement,
 20 please.
 21 This is the last call that you speak about.
 22 **A. Mm-hm. Yes.**
 23 Q. You give a time in that paragraph that it's at 2.15 am.
 24 **A. Mm-hm.**
 25 Q. How are you able to estimate that time?

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1 **A. I can't remember. I can't remember how I estimated that**
 2 **time. I'm not sure if it was around a photo that was**
 3 **taken, because there were a few photos taken on my**
 4 **phone, including a video recording. It would've been on**
 5 **those times. So that's how I made it.**
 6 **So when I first did the statement, I think I was**
 7 **a bit stronger in that I could look at images and**
 8 **photos, especially knowing that they hadn't been found.**
 9 **All I could do was go and stand by that tower. I can't**
 10 **do that now. So I think when I estimated that time,**
 11 **I could look at the photos and I could see what time**
 12 **they were made and what time I gave to the police.**
 13 **I can't do that now, so I can't give you 100 per cent.**
 14 Q. No. Thank you.
 15 What I think is worth pointing out, of course, is
 16 that other members of your family were there with you.
 17 **A. Yes, they were.**
 18 Q. They would've been in contact as well with --
 19 **A. Yes, they were in contact with them as well.**
 20 Q. So what your sister-in-law picks up -- and outside you
 21 mention that your sister Amina is with you?
 22 **A. Yes, she is.**
 23 Q. She spoke to Faouzia, didn't she?
 24 **A. Yes. It was on my phone. I had the phone because**
 25 **I promised them that I would call them when I saw the**

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1 **flames approach their flat.**
 2 **I didn't understand the severity of the black smoke.**
 3 **I didn't understand that. I just thought it was the**
 4 **flames, like it was in 2010. I didn't know anything**
 5 **about the chemicals because I could just visually see.**
 6 **So I promised them that I would call them when the**
 7 **flames were approaching their flat, because the flames**
 8 **were on my side, on the 6th corner. And so as the**
 9 **flames progressed up the tower, it did like an upside**
 10 **down L-shape and it went across the top, and my**
 11 **brother's on that -- and I promised her as soon as it's**
 12 **coming -- I called her when it was next door, so it**
 13 **would've been flat 181, and then I said now it's --**
 14 **I said it's coming to 182. I said, "As soon as I call**
 15 **you, you need to get out." That was my promise, which**
 16 **is why I called her. I was getting a bit panicky. My**
 17 **sister Amina who came to support me at that point spoke**
 18 **to her, and I could hear the whole conversation about**
 19 **fact that the fire had now reached their flat. It was**
 20 **in their kitchen, yes, at that point.**
 21 Q. You say that you said to them to get out.
 22 A. Yes.
 23 Q. And your sister-in-law said that they were trying.
 24 A. They were told to stay put, yes.
 25 Q. But did they tell you whether there was anything

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1 preventing them from getting out?
 2 A. The calls, the 999 calls. They were telling them to
 3 stay put. That was the only prevention.
 4 They did say it was black, and I know my nephew was
 5 scared, my youngest nephew, so they were trying to calm
 6 him down, because I could hear that.
 7 But from my understanding of the conversation with
 8 them and the family around me that were talking -- and
 9 I was there live, so I heard them -- was that they were
 10 told to stay put and they believed they were going to be
 11 rescued.
 12 Q. I mean, you've mentioned some of it in this paragraph.
 13 A. Yes.
 14 Q. But did they tell you what the conditions were like in
 15 the communal area at this time?
 16 A. No.
 17 Q. Did they mention anything about the smoke that they were
 18 encountering?
 19 A. Apart from right at the beginning, when I said it was
 20 black, yes. But that was right at the beginning, they
 21 talked about it being black and they couldn't see and
 22 breathe properly. Yes, they did relay that information
 23 to me. But that was outside, not within the flat.
 24 Q. I follow.
 25 A. Yes.

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1 Q. That was the information they gave you in the first call
 2 to you?
 3 A. In the first call to me directly, and it was the
 4 information that, yeah, they gave me, but then with
 5 regards to the fire, that was later, the fire in the
 6 kitchen.
 7 Q. Can I finally just move on to ask you a question about
 8 one last topic, please.
 9 A. Okay.
 10 Q. How long did you remain outside the tower that night?
 11 A. All night.
 12 Q. Whilst outside --
 13 A. All day after that.
 14 Q. -- did you have any contact with anyone from RBKC or the
 15 TMO?
 16 A. RBKC didn't come and find me. RBKC were not there at
 17 all. It was my nephew that opened Portobello Rugby Club
 18 for us to find refuge.
 19 Q. That was going to be one of my questions, because you
 20 mention the opening of the rugby club.
 21 Did you arrange that through your nephew for that to
 22 be done?
 23 A. The caretaker of Portobello Rugby Club is
 24 an acquaintance of my nephew's, so he proceeded to knock
 25 on the door so that we'd have somewhere to go, because

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1 we were literally everywhere, all over the streets.
 2 My daughter had been taken to my sister Amina's
 3 house, because she wasn't wearing any shoes and wasn't
 4 dressed appropriately. So my nephew then ran at some
 5 point, when he realised we're not getting any help, so
 6 he went and knocked on the doors. He initially knocked
 7 on the door of somebody who works at RBKC who directed
 8 him to the caretaker, and the caretaker then opened up
 9 the Portobello Rugby Club for us to have some refuge.
 10 But I still didn't go in initially because I needed
 11 to find my brother and his family.
 12 Q. Whilst you were outside -- you were a resident of the
 13 tower.
 14 A. Yes, I was.
 15 Q. You've come out of the tower.
 16 A. Yes.
 17 Q. Did anyone ask for your flat number or a floor number?
 18 A. The police.
 19 Q. How soon after you'd come out of the building did
 20 somebody ask you for those details?
 21 A. I would say maybe an hour. Because the police were
 22 moving us and then they realised some of us were in
 23 pyjamas, and so the police took my name and my flat
 24 number.
 25 MR RAWAT: Mr Chairman, those are all the questions I have

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<p>1 for Ms Wahabi. 2 May I ask for a short break just to check if anybody 3 else has supplementary questions they would like to put. 4 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes. 5 Well, Ms Wahabi, we'll have a very short break now 6 to give Mr Rawat a chance to review his questions and 7 any that may be suggested by others. 8 So I'm going to ask you to leave us for 5 minutes. 9 We'll come back at 3.50 and see if there are any further 10 questions. 11 THE WITNESS: Okay. 12 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: I have to ask you not to talk to 13 anyone about your evidence while you're out of the room. 14 Is that all right? 15 THE WITNESS: Thank you very much. 16 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Would you like to go with the usher 17 then, please. 18 All right, 3.50, then, please. 19 (3.45 pm) 20 (A short break) 21 (3.50 pm) 22 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: I think there are a few more 23 questions, but I hope not too many. 24 THE WITNESS: Okay, that's fine. 25 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes, Mr Rawat.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 181</p>	<p>1 beginning to come, but not all the way up the whole 2 ceiling. 3 Q. You didn't see it spread through the lobby, you just saw 4 it coming out of the vent itself? 5 A. Yes, because then obviously I went into the flat and 6 remained within, yes. 7 Q. Thank you. 8 Second topic is back to 14 June and your descent, 9 and it may have been me confusing you a little bit, but 10 you remember that you told us that as you descended, the 11 smoke got thicker? 12 A. Yes. 13 Q. On the transcript of today's proceedings you're recorded 14 as saying that the smoke was thickest a few floors above 15 floor 4, which is where you saw the firemen, but you 16 also said that smoke was thickest at floor 4. 17 A. What I meant was it was getting thicker, thicker, above 18 floor 4, but once I got to floor 4, that's when it was 19 thickest. 20 Q. Thank you very much for clearing that up. 21 A. That's okay. 22 Q. My last question to you is this. 23 Before I ask it, can I thank you for coming and 24 giving evidence today. We all appreciate that it's 25 a difficult task and we're very grateful for it.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 183</p>
<p>1 MR RAWAT: Thank you, Mr Chairman. 2 Mrs Wahabi, thank you for coming back. 3 A. You're welcome. 4 Q. I want to pick up two matters that have arisen from some 5 of the answers you've given. 6 Do you remember that you described an earlier fire 7 in the tower? 8 A. Yes, I did. 9 Q. Which took you up to what was then the 18th floor to 10 your brother's flat? 11 A. Yes. 12 Q. You recall that on that occasion you saw smoke coming 13 through the vents? 14 A. Yes. 15 Q. That was on the 18th floor? 16 A. Yes, I did. 17 Q. Just so that we can get it very clear, was the smoke 18 coming into the 18th floor lobby? 19 A. Yes. 20 Q. And how much smoke did you see? 21 A. No comparison to what happened on 14 June. It was very 22 light, very light. Like cigarette smoke, like you said 23 earlier. I'd say like that, cigarette smoke. And it 24 wasn't all the way across the ceiling; it was just 25 literally I could see it coming through the vents,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 182</p>	<p>1 A. Yes. 2 Q. What I want to do is ask you this: if you put aside what 3 you've put in your statement and your supplementary 4 statement, and put aside the answers that you've given 5 to my questions today, and, again, taking you back to 6 the night itself, is there anything else that you saw or 7 heard or smelt on that night that you think it important 8 to draw to the attention of the chairman? 9 A. I do have something I prepared, if that's okay, because 10 I have memory loss and I wanted to read it. Is that 11 okay? 12 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes, of course. All right. 13 A. Thank you. 14 It's not very long, I just worded it big so I could 15 see it. 16 I've addressed it to you, the chairman. 17 Dear Sir Martin Moore-Bick. I'm normally very quiet 18 and don't like making a fuss. I appreciate this 19 opportunity to have my say and have prepared a statement 20 that I'd like to read. 21 I am here, but my brother and his family are not. 22 I need to be his voice, because I know, if it was the 23 other way round, he would be mine. He would fight for 24 me, I know he would. 25 There are four brief points I want to make.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 184</p>

1 The first thing I want to talk about is the previous
 2 fire in 2010.
 3 As you know, there was a fire, which we just talked
 4 about, on 30 April 2010. This fire was on my floor.
 5 When I exited my flat in 2010, the flames were quite
 6 intense. My son was upstairs playing with his cousin on
 7 the 18th floor, so I ran, rather than exit, up the
 8 stairs to my brother's flat, carrying my daughter in my
 9 arms. I already said about what the 999 call said to
 10 stay put.
 11 There was some smoke on the upper floors that came
 12 through the ventilation system, but it was not black.
 13 You could see where you were going and the fire did not
 14 spread.
 15 There was limited damage to my own flat on the 6th
 16 floor from the 2010 fire, and I did suffer some smoke
 17 inhalation, as did others. But there is no comparison
 18 with what happened on 14 June.
 19 What happened that night was very different.
 20 I evacuated at 01.21 and called my brother not long
 21 after. He said the smoke on the 21st floor was already
 22 black and they were struggling to breathe outside the
 23 flat.
 24 What I want to bring to your attention is that this
 25 is a massive change in the behaviour of the fire from

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1 2010 to 2017 fire.
 2 The refurbishment changed the building and had the
 3 fire act differently. There is no question in my mind
 4 about that fact.
 5 The second issue I want to mention is the lack of
 6 help from RBKC or KCTMO on the night.
 7 Like I said before, it was my nephew that opened the
 8 Portobello Rugby Club. They did not help us when we
 9 were raising concerns or asking for help before the
 10 fire. They did not help us during the refurbishment
 11 when we raised our voices and our fears about safety.
 12 They did not help us on the night of the fire.
 13 I am asking you, as the chairman of the inquiry, to
 14 help us now. There needs to be change. Please help.
 15 The third issue I want to raise is about core
 16 participant status. There are people that are key to
 17 this inquiry, especially for Phase 2, that have been
 18 declined core participant status. If you read my
 19 statement, I name a person that was a chairperson of the
 20 Grenfell Action Group. He has been declined core
 21 participant status. I urge you, chairman, to please
 22 rethink this and have a look at this, because he is key
 23 to this inquiry.
 24 Finally, I need to speak for my brother and his
 25 family. There is what happened on the night for us, but

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1 there is also what happened on the night for them.
 2 I know that you have the 999 call recordings and
 3 transcripts. They were given false hope by the LFB
 4 operators. They may well have survived if they didn't
 5 listen to the stay-put advice.
 6 I have listened to my brother's calls, and in the
 7 background in one call, where he's waiting to be
 8 connected, he says something along the lines of "We
 9 could've gotten out", had they not listened to them.
 10 I agree with him.
 11 But there are also calls we personally made to our
 12 families that night and the conversations that we had
 13 with them. No transcripts exist for these calls. We
 14 also gave them false hope because we wanted to keep them
 15 calm, and we'll have to live with that for the rest of
 16 our lives.
 17 I lied to my 8-year-old nephew on the night because
 18 my brother asked me to tell him that it was going to be
 19 okay. I have to live for the rest of my life knowing
 20 that I lied and I told him it was going to be fine,
 21 knowing that it wasn't.
 22 I urge you to take these into account, what happened
 23 during these calls. There may be no recordings or
 24 transcripts, but I know what I heard: I heard fear,
 25 I heard parents trying to be strong for their children.

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1 Sir Martin, I want to say to you that 72 people died
 2 as a result of what happened. None of them had to die.
 3 This could have been prevented and should have not
 4 happened. Please make sure there is change.
 5 When I look back, there are many things that we as
 6 the Grenfell community and Grenfell Action Group could
 7 have done differently. I cannot change the past, but
 8 I can learn and do things differently.
 9 It was very upsetting to hear Dany Cotton say that
 10 she would have done nothing different on the night.
 11 This is like saying that there are no lessons to learn.
 12 I know that people tried their best, but mistakes
 13 were made.
 14 Sir Martin, as we move forward, I implore you to
 15 make the case and space for learning and reflection, for
 16 ensuring we hear from witnesses what they have learnt.
 17 Saying they would do nothing differently cannot be
 18 an acceptable response if we are serious about learning.
 19 72 people passed away and we can't bring our loved
 20 ones back.
 21 The impact it's had on our families and our
 22 community could have been prevented. We can't change
 23 that now, but we can change the lives of those we've
 24 lost to count, for their deaths not to have been in
 25 vain. There has to be change. We have to learn from

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1 this.

2 Life will never be the same for us. We may find

3 a new place to live, but it won't be our home. Grenfell

4 was our home. The people who were there were our

5 family. The impact on me and my children, all of those

6 impacted, will last a lifetime. And I want to know that

7 we will be supported for the rest of our lives.

8 As a result of this inquiry, I want the truth to be

9 found and for change to happen.

10 I finally want to thank all of those people,

11 including the inquiry team, who have and continue to

12 help us. It makes a huge difference and I can't express

13 my gratitude enough.

14 Words will never be enough, but from my heart, thank

15 you.

16 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Mrs Wahabi, thank you very much for

17 those powerful and perceptive and, may I say also,

18 generous remarks.

19 I am very sorry, of course, for the loss of your

20 brother and his family. That's a loss that can never be

21 repaired, and I understand that.

22 I'm sure there are lessons to be learned, and it's

23 the inquiry's job to identify them and do our best to

24 make sure they're learned and put into effect.

25 We're very grateful to you for coming to give your

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1 evidence. I've said this to other people, but I'll say

2 it again: it's very important that we understand as much

3 as we can about the conditions in the tower at different

4 times and different places, and what was going on more

5 generally. Your evidence and the evidence of others

6 like you who have come along to tell us that is really

7 essential.

8 So I'm sorry its been a difficult experience, but

9 you can at least be assured that it's been very helpful.

10 Thank you very much indeed.

11 THE WITNESS: Thank you. Thank you.

12 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: All right? Thank you.

13 All right, would you like to go with the usher now

14 then.

15 THE WITNESS: Thank you very much.

16 (The witness withdrew)

17 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Well, Mr Rawat.

18 MR RAWAT: Mr Chairman, we have a bit of time and, if I may,

19 I'd like to use that just to put one statement into the

20 record, if I may.

21 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes.

22 SALAH EDDINE CHEBIOUNI (evidence read into the record)

23 MR RAWAT: That is the statement of Mrs Wahabi's husband,

24 Salah Eddine Chebiouni. The statement is at

25 IWS00000945, please.

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1 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Right, thank you.

2 MR RAWAT: If we go to page 11 of the statement, we can see,

3 Mr Chairman, it's dated 3 July 2018, it carries

4 a statement of truth and it's signed.

5 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes.

6 MR RAWAT: There is one exhibit which is also part of the

7 statement, which is a floor plan at page 12.

8 If I could, I'd like to just read a short extract

9 from the statement.

10 As you will have appreciated from Mrs Wahabi's

11 evidence, her and her family were at home on the night

12 of the fire. If I can pick it up at paragraph 24, this

13 is Mr Chebiouni's account of the events of the night.

14 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes, thank you.

15 MR RAWAT: I preface it with this: you'll remember that

16 Mrs Wahabi was saying that they wouldn't go to sleep

17 until their son had got back, and that's where we start:

18 "24. According to the CCTV image I have been shown,

19 [redacted] returned home at 12:38 a.m. Hanan and I went

20 to sleep when he got in. The next thing I remember is

21 waking up and wanting to go to the toilet. I don't know

22 what time it was. As I walked towards the bathroom, I

23 smelled a strong plastic burning smell. I thought, 'oh

24 my god, [redacted] has left something in the cooker', so

25 I didn't go to the toilet. Instead, I went to the

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1 kitchen and opened the cooker, but there was nothing in

2 it, and it was switched off. I couldn't find the source

3 of the smell, which was stronger now, in the kitchen,

4 than it had been in the hallway. I couldn't tell you if

5 the kitchen was hotter than usual because I was

6 panicking. I could see light grey smoke in the kitchen.

7 No windows in our flat were open, except for our bedroom

8 window. We generally kept the windows closed because

9 people smoke and we worry about them throwing a lit

10 cigarette down, and flame catching a curtain.

11 "25. I heard crackling, like when you burn

12 something. I turned to the left and, could see flames

13 coming up behind the kitchen window, like someone was

14 having a bonfire just outside of my window. I wondered

15 if it was fireworks or something, so I opened the

16 kitchen window. Straight away, smoke came in and I felt

17 an immense heat. I closed the window. I did not hear

18 any fire alarms go off. This all happened very quickly,

19 within a few seconds.

20 "26. Then I walked into the living room, confused,

21 and looked out of the window there. I opened the window

22 and leaned forward. I could see flames below our flat,

23 on the outside of the building, and I could feel intense

24 heat. The fire looked like it was just a metre or two

25 away. I closed back the window after just a couple of

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1 seconds.

2 "27. I immediately went to Hanan and woke her up,

3 telling her there was a fire. Then I went to

4 [redacted]. He was lying down in his bed, but was

5 awake. I'm not sure what he was doing, maybe listening

6 to music. I told him that there was a fire in the

7 building, but I wasn't sure where. He ran into the

8 living room and opened the window. Immediately, flames

9 shot up outside of the window, in front of his face. He

10 closed back the window before the flames entered the

11 flat, Hanan was in the living room too, panicking. I

12 told her to calm down and get her mobile telephone, and

13 I got my mobile phone as well.

14 "28. As I've said above, I thought we would be safe

15 in the flat. I thought the fire services would be able

16 to put the fire out and that we would be safe in the

17 flat in the meantime. I told Hanan and [redacted] that

18 we should stay inside the flat. Luckily, they insisted

19 that we get out. I now realise if we had stayed in the

20 flat as I had suggested, we would be dead now."

21 In paragraph 29, Mr Chebiouni explains that his son

22 left with his daughter first, his son carrying his

23 daughter, and then he continues:

24 "Hanan followed next, carrying her mobile phone and

25 her keys. I left the flat last, closing the door behind

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1 me. I also carried my mobile phone and keys. I did not

2 lock the door behind me. It all happened so quickly

3 that I didn't even think to call 999. When I left the

4 flat, the flames were not yet inside it. I don't recall

5 hearing any smoke alarms as we left.

6 "30. I walked slowly as I left the flat. I didn't

7 think the fire was that serious. I thought everything

8 would be okay. I remember seeing light grey smoke on

9 the 9th floor landing, like cigarette smoke. Apart from

10 that, everything looked normal. The front doors of our

11 neighbours were all closed. I did not see anyone else

12 leaving their flat. I can't recall the landing being

13 unusually hot.

14 "31. I took the stairs down. I know that you must

15 not use the lift during a fire so I did not consider

16 using it. The door to the stairwell was closed. There

17 was smoke in the stairwell. Again it was light, like

18 exhaust smoke, pale grey in colour. The lights were on

19 in the stairwell. I went slowly down the stairs. I

20 couldn't see Hanan in front of me; she was gone already.

21 The stairs weren't slippery and did not seem wet. I

22 don't remember seeing hoses-in the stairwell, I could

23 smell that burning plastic smell. As I descended I

24 could hear people speaking but couldn't tell where the

25 voices were coming from.

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1 "32. Around the 6th or 7th floor, I saw a black guy

2 with his daughter, I think he is from Somalia or Sudan.

3 He is a small guy, and was wearing glasses. He was

4 carrying his daughter, who I would say was around 3

5 years old. He asked me what had happened. He looked

6 confused rather than scared. As we spoke, I opened the

7 door onto what believe was the 6th floor landing. When

8 I opened the door, I saw thick, black smoke. It was

9 impossible to see through it. I closed back the door

10 and I was confused.

11 "33. The guy with his daughter was initially behind

12 me on the stairwell, but then passed me: I said, 'go. I

13 am going slowly'. I was having a little bit of

14 difficulty breathing as went down the stairs, because of

15 the smoke. Every time I breathed, I coughed."

16 The statement concludes, or the part of it that

17 I wish to read, explaining that CCTV images show his son

18 carrying his daughter leaving at 1.19 am, Hanan Wahabi

19 leaving at 1.21 am and Mr Chebiouni leaving at 1.22 am.

20 That's where I propose to finish reading from that

21 statement.

22 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Well, thank you very much.

23 We should express our thanks to Mr Chebiouni for

24 taking the trouble to make his statement and, of course,

25 you can assure him that it will form part of the

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1 evidence before the inquiry in full, and will be taken

2 into account.

3 MR RAWAT: Yes, Mr Chairman.

4 Mr Chairman, that's our work for today.

5 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Right.

6 MR RAWAT: Tomorrow we are sitting with a witness, and it

7 will be Mr Millett.

8 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes. So we break now, and resume

9 tomorrow morning at 10 o'clock.

10 MR RAWAT: Thank you, Mr Chairman.

11 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Good, thank you very much.

12 10 o'clock tomorrow, then, please.

13 (4.11 pm)

14 (The hearing adjourned until Friday, 9 November 2018

15 at 10.00 am)

16

17 I N D E X

18 NATASHA ELCOCK (sworn)1

Questions by MR RAWAT1

19

HANAN WAHABI (sworn)114

Questions by MR RAWAT114

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21 SALAH EDDINE CHEBIOUNI (evidence190

read into the record)

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