

<p>1 Monday, 19 November 2018</p> <p>2 (10.00 am)</p> <p>3 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Good morning, everyone. Welcome to</p> <p>4 today's hearing.</p> <p>5 Today we are going to hear further evidence from</p> <p>6 various control room officers.</p> <p>7 MR MILLETT: Good morning, Mr Chairman.</p> <p>8 Yes, that's right, and our next witness is a London</p> <p>9 Fire Brigade control room officer, Sarah Russell.</p> <p>10 Can I please call Sarah Russell.</p> <p>11 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Thank you.</p> <p>12 SARAH RUSSELL (affirmed)</p> <p>13 Questions by COUNSEL TO THE INQUIRY</p> <p>14 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Thank you very much indeed. Sit</p> <p>15 down and make yourself comfortable.</p> <p>16 Yes, Mr Millett.</p> <p>17 MR MILLETT: Ms Russell, good morning.</p> <p>18 <b>A. Good morning.</b></p> <p>19 Q. Can I start, please, by asking you to give the chairman</p> <p>20 your full name.</p> <p>21 <b>A. Sarah Jane Russell.</b></p> <p>22 Q. I'm going to begin by thanking you very much for coming</p> <p>23 to the inquiry and assisting us with our investigations.</p> <p>24 It is enormously helpful for us to be able to hear from</p> <p>25 you, so we are extremely grateful. So thank you.</p> <p>Page 1</p>	<p>1 witness statement?</p> <p>2 <b>A. Yes. Yes, it is.</b></p> <p>3 Q. Have you read it recently?</p> <p>4 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>5 Q. Can you confirm for us that the contents are true?</p> <p>6 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>7 Q. Thank you.</p> <p>8 You had been, at the date of your statement,</p> <p>9 I think, in the position of a control room officer at</p> <p>10 the LFB for about nine months.</p> <p>11 <b>A. Nine months in total, with training as well.</b></p> <p>12 Q. And you started your training when?</p> <p>13 <b>A. September 2016.</b></p> <p>14 Q. In terms of your training, do you remember getting any</p> <p>15 training on policy number 790, which is about fire</p> <p>16 survival guidance?</p> <p>17 <b>A. Yes, there was a day of training for fire survival</b></p> <p>18 <b>guidance.</b></p> <p>19 Q. Can you tell us briefly what that training involved?</p> <p>20 <b>A. It was outlining practices. We had some example calls</b></p> <p>21 <b>played to us, how to handle it, that sort of content.</b></p> <p>22 Q. Do you remember receiving training on emergency call</p> <p>23 management, policy 539?</p> <p>24 <b>A. In regards to FSG as well?</b></p> <p>25 Q. Yes.</p> <p>Page 3</p>
<p>1 If at any time you need a break during my questions,</p> <p>2 then all you have to do is just signal and we can take</p> <p>3 a break, and there are others in the room who will help</p> <p>4 with that as well.</p> <p>5 I'm not planning to ask you questions for more than</p> <p>6 45 minutes at a go, so that's the aim, but if we need to</p> <p>7 break before that, we can do that.</p> <p>8 Can I also say that sometimes my questions, which</p> <p>9 are supposed to be short and simple, sometimes don't</p> <p>10 turn out that way, so if you want me to repeat the</p> <p>11 question or put it in a different way, I'm very happy to</p> <p>12 do that.</p> <p>13 Thank you very much.</p> <p>14 I'm going to begin by asking you some questions</p> <p>15 about your experience and training.</p> <p>16 First, it's right, I think, that you're a control</p> <p>17 room officer as at today with the London Fire Brigade.</p> <p>18 <b>A. Yes, yes.</b></p> <p>19 Q. As at the date of your statement, which I'll show you,</p> <p>20 you'd had that role for some nine months?</p> <p>21 <b>A. Yes, roughly nine months at the time.</b></p> <p>22 Q. You've given us a witness statement, which was I think</p> <p>23 done for the Metropolitan Police, dated 10 October 2017.</p> <p>24 That is MET00007698.</p> <p>25 First of all, is that the first page of your police</p> <p>Page 2</p>	<p>1 <b>A. Yes, when they played the samples, they talked through</b></p> <p>2 <b>how it was handled and just how to handle the caller.</b></p> <p>3 Q. Before Grenfell, which was June 2017, did you receive</p> <p>4 any kind of training of any kind focused on lessons</p> <p>5 learnt from an earlier fire in London at a place called</p> <p>6 Lakanal House?</p> <p>7 <b>A. I remember Lakanal being mentioned in training. It was</b></p> <p>8 <b>referred to as a hard example of FSG, but nothing since</b></p> <p>9 <b>then.</b></p> <p>10 Q. It was mentioned, was it? Was any other training given</p> <p>11 to you about what to do as a result of lessons learnt at</p> <p>12 Lakanal?</p> <p>13 <b>A. I don't remember any specific training based off of</b></p> <p>14 <b>that, I just remember it being mentioned.</b></p> <p>15 Q. You refer to it in your last answer but one as "a hard</p> <p>16 example of FSG". Why do you say that?</p> <p>17 <b>A. Just that all FSGs aren't -- they don't have happy</b></p> <p>18 <b>endings, that that incident didn't.</b></p> <p>19 Q. During your training, did you get specific training on</p> <p>20 how to handle calls coming from high-rise residential</p> <p>21 buildings?</p> <p>22 <b>A. We had training about mobilisation, what questions to</b></p> <p>23 <b>ask, how many floors categorise the high-rise, but</b></p> <p>24 <b>nothing in particular for FSGs.</b></p> <p>25 Q. Did you get any training on how to help a resident of</p> <p>Page 4</p>

<p>1 a high-rise residential building assess the safety of</p> <p>2 an escape route?</p> <p>3 <b>A. Not in specific to high-rise, just in the general</b></p> <p>4 <b>assessing the situation, is it safe to stay or to leave</b></p> <p>5 <b>in the general sense, but not in specific to high-rise</b></p> <p>6 <b>buildings.</b></p> <p>7 Q. In the general sense, what was the training which you</p> <p>8 had about how to go about assisting a caller to assess</p> <p>9 the safety of an escape route?</p> <p>10 <b>A. Just ask questions, find out if there's smoke, little</b></p> <p>11 <b>hints that there might be a fire outside the door, like</b></p> <p>12 <b>heat, popping noises, just little things that -- you</b></p> <p>13 <b>know, if they say there's popping noises at the door,</b></p> <p>14 <b>don't tell them to go outside, there could be a fire</b></p> <p>15 <b>outside. Things like that.</b></p> <p>16 Q. Did you have any experience prior to the night of the</p> <p>17 fire of any FSG?</p> <p>18 <b>A. No, that was my first FSG.</b></p> <p>19 Q. What about 999 calls from high-rise buildings, did you</p> <p>20 ever have any experience of taking those?</p> <p>21 <b>A. Yes, I would've had probably quite a few. It's quite</b></p> <p>22 <b>common to have calls from high-rises in London.</b></p> <p>23 Q. I'm assuming none of those turned into an FSG call.</p> <p>24 <b>A. No.</b></p> <p>25 Q. Did you get any training about how a control room would</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 5</p>	<p>1 it says:</p> <p>2 "The London Fire Brigade define a Fire Survival</p> <p>3 Guidance call as being a call to Brigade Control where</p> <p>4 the caller believes that they are unable to leave their</p> <p>5 premises due to the effects of fire, and where the</p> <p>6 Control Room Officer remains on the line providing</p> <p>7 appropriate advice until either the caller is able to</p> <p>8 leave by their own means, is rescued by the Fire brigade</p> <p>9 or the line is cleared."</p> <p>10 That's the context.</p> <p>11 Then it says in the third paragraph down:</p> <p>12 "Brigade Control advise callers to 'Get out and Stay</p> <p>13 out', however if a call is received from a High rise</p> <p>14 building where Fire, Heat and Smoke are not affecting</p> <p>15 the caller, LFB would advise that:</p> <p>16 "You are usually safest to remain in your premises</p> <p>17 unless affected by fire, heat or smoke. If the</p> <p>18 situation changes, you should leave your premises and</p> <p>19 dial 999, if you need further assistance."</p> <p>20 My first question, Ms Russell, is: does that accord</p> <p>21 with your understanding of the stay-put policy?</p> <p>22 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>23 Q. Looking at the text, it says in that last paragraph</p> <p>24 I read out to you:</p> <p>25 "You are usually safest to remain in your premises</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 7</p>
<p>1 go about handling multiple FSG calls if it was faced</p> <p>2 with that situation?</p> <p>3 <b>A. Well, to my understanding, not on that scale. I don't</b></p> <p>4 <b>remember anything being mentioned. It wasn't expected</b></p> <p>5 <b>as it was completely different from what you normally</b></p> <p>6 <b>expect with FSG calls.</b></p> <p>7 Q. Did you have any training on multiple FSG calls to</p> <p>8 a lesser extent than you experienced at Grenfell?</p> <p>9 <b>A. Not multiple, just the standard, you're on an FSG call,</b></p> <p>10 <b>but nothing about, you know, when there's multiple calls</b></p> <p>11 <b>coming in and they're all FSGs, nothing like that.</b></p> <p>12 Q. I want to move to explore your understanding and</p> <p>13 application of what we've come to call the stay-put</p> <p>14 policy. Whether that's the accurate expression or not,</p> <p>15 we'll find out.</p> <p>16 First of all, can I ask you, are you familiar with</p> <p>17 policy 539?</p> <p>18 <b>A. Yes, yes.</b></p> <p>19 Q. So let's look at that, . It's LFB00000737. For those</p> <p>20 who have still held onto their policy bundles, it's at</p> <p>21 tab 3 of the LFB policy bundle.</p> <p>22 We have it there on the screen.</p> <p>23 Can I ask you, please, to turn to appendix 3 in</p> <p>24 that, which is on page 16.</p> <p>25 I'll give you the first paragraph by way of context</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 6</p>	<p>1 unless affected by fire, heat or smoke."</p> <p>2 I just want to concentrate with you on the word</p> <p>3 "affected".</p> <p>4 As at the night of Grenfell, what did you understand</p> <p>5 by the word "affected"?</p> <p>6 <b>A. That there is smoke in their property or heat from the</b></p> <p>7 <b>fire, so they would have to be directly affected by the</b></p> <p>8 <b>fire to make them leave.</b></p> <p>9 Q. In your training or in your experience as you had to</p> <p>10 that date, what information did you expect to use to</p> <p>11 make your assessment of whether or not those premises</p> <p>12 were affected in the way you've described?</p> <p>13 <b>A. Smoke is normally the biggest indicator. If there's</b></p> <p>14 <b>smoke coming into their property, that means the fire</b></p> <p>15 <b>will be close normally close by. A heat source would</b></p> <p>16 <b>mean it's obviously very close.</b></p> <p>17 <b>Just general cues. The callers are normally quite</b></p> <p>18 <b>forthcoming with any information that would give away</b></p> <p>19 <b>that the fire is affecting them.</b></p> <p>20 Q. When making that assessment about whether premises are</p> <p>21 affected, were you trained to or did you have experience</p> <p>22 of relying on messages from the incident ground or were</p> <p>23 you completely reliant on information given to you by</p> <p>24 the caller?</p> <p>25 <b>A. On that night?</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 8</p>

<p>1 Q. In general, prior to that night, what would be your 2 expectation?</p> <p>3 <b>A. In general, you would expect someone to be sat with you.</b> 4 <b>When you're on an FS call, it's quite -- it's all your</b> 5 <b>focused on, really, you're very into that, and when</b> 6 <b>you're on an FSG, normally you'd have someone sat next</b> 7 <b>to you, still keeping you involved in the room,</b> 8 <b>reminding you of things. So you would expect to have</b> 9 <b>some kind of input as to what was going on in the</b> 10 <b>building.</b></p> <p>11 <b>In terms of whether they're out, you would normally</b> 12 <b>expect a message back saying, "All persons accounted</b> 13 <b>for", some acknowledgement that you knew what was going</b> 14 <b>on.</b></p> <p>15 Q. You've answered that question as if the call was already 16 an FSG call.</p> <p>17 Is it right that in fact -- and we'll come to this 18 in a minute -- before a call becomes an FSG call, there 19 are some stages you've got to go through?</p> <p>20 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>21 Q. So if a caller is affected by fire or smoke but can 22 leave, then it's not yet an FSG call.</p> <p>23 <b>A. No.</b></p> <p>24 Q. Have I got that right?</p> <p>25 <b>A. Yes, if the caller can leave in any way, it's not FSG.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 9</p>	<p>1 what a caller was telling you meant that they were 2 trapped?</p> <p>3 <b>A. Just their inability to leave the building. If they</b> 4 <b>tell you they can't leave is the big indicator.</b></p> <p>5 <b>Most of the time if you say to someone, "Can you get</b> 6 <b>out?", my experience of calls since and before, they say</b> 7 <b>yes and they start leaving. There's obviously a reason</b> 8 <b>for them to say, "No, I can't leave."</b></p> <p>9 Q. Do you explore that reason with them or do you take them 10 at face value?</p> <p>11 <b>A. Yes, you would ask what is the situation like, try and</b> 12 <b>get them to confirm a bit of what they're seeing.</b></p> <p>13 Q. Can I ask you in light of that last answer you gave me 14 to look at policy 790. That is at tab 5 of our policies 15 bundle, and it's LFB00001257.</p> <p>16 I'd like to show you paragraph 2.1 on page 2. It's 17 on the screen there, Ms Russell, for you to see, and it 18 says:</p> <p>19 "2.1. A FSG call is a call received into control 20 where the caller believes that they are unable to leave 21 their premises due to the effects of fire, and [in bold] 22 where the control officer remains on the line providing 23 appropriate advice."</p> <p>24 You said in your statement, as we've just looked at, 25 that it's where they're affected by smoke.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 11</p>
<p>1 Q. So at the time when you're making the assessment as to 2 whether the caller is affected, by fire, heat or 3 smoke --</p> <p>4 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>5 Q. -- to what extent would you expect to rely solely on the 6 information from the caller, or would you rely also on 7 information from the incident ground?</p> <p>8 <b>A. From my understanding, normally at that time the crews</b> 9 <b>would be very early on the scene. If not already on --</b> 10 <b>if not, they might not be there yet, they might still be</b> 11 <b>on the way. So you wouldn't have anything coming back</b> 12 <b>from the crews anyway, it would be just what the caller</b> 13 <b>is telling you. That's what we go by on calls because</b> 14 <b>we can't see what they're seeing.</b></p> <p>15 Q. Can I ask you to look at your witness statement, which 16 we have up on the screen in front of you, and go, 17 please, to page 3.</p> <p>18 You say on page 3 -- it's the third paragraph down: 19 "A FSG becomes active at the point the caller says 20 that they cannot get out of their property and they are 21 affected by smoke."</p> <p>22 In your training or experience -- I think we're 23 looking at training rather than experience because you 24 say you hadn't experienced an FSG call as at the night 25 of Grenfell -- how would you go about assessing whether</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 10</p>	<p>1 Is there a reason why you categorise the calls as 2 FSG if they are trapped by smoke?</p> <p>3 <b>A. Well, fire survival guidance -- sorry, you mean smoke in</b> 4 <b>relation to just generally a fire where they can't</b> 5 <b>leave?</b></p> <p>6 Q. So looking at the policy where it says, "due to the 7 effects of fire", were you trained to understand that as 8 the effects of fire, including heat and smoke?</p> <p>9 <b>A. Yes, yes, so signs of fire, yes.</b></p> <p>10 Q. In general terms, did you ever get any training on how 11 to prioritise FSG calls among themselves? So if you got 12 three FSG calls, for example, you would assign 13 a priority, 1, 2, 3, to each of them?</p> <p>14 <b>A. No, I don't remember any specific training like that.</b></p> <p>15 Q. Did you receive any training on giving particular 16 priority or treatment to callers from flats where they 17 were affected by fire, heat or smoke, where the caller 18 was in some way a child or disabled or an elderly 19 person?</p> <p>20 <b>A. No, same again, I don't remember any training about</b> 21 <b>prioritising, just that the information is passed over</b> 22 <b>and I assume the crews would then decide what to</b> 23 <b>prioritise.</b></p> <p>24 Q. Sticking with policy 790, can I ask you, please, to go 25 to paragraph 5.1, which is at the bottom of the same</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 12</p>

3 (Pages 9 to 12)

<p>1 page of the policy we're on.</p> <p>2 The heading there, Ms Russell, is "Information</p> <p>3 transfer to the incident". It says:</p> <p>4 "5.1. As soon as control has confirmed that a FSG</p> <p>5 call is in progress they will contact the incident</p> <p>6 ground and start to pass over the initial details at</p> <p>7 this stage it is likely to be basic information relating</p> <p>8 to the number of persons involved and their location</p> <p>9 within the property."</p> <p>10 Is that your understanding of what information would</p> <p>11 be transferred?</p> <p>12 <b>A. Yes, as well as possibly why they can't leave, the</b></p> <p>13 <b>conditions, if there's smoke or heat.</b></p> <p>14 Q. What sort of details would you try to get out of the</p> <p>15 caller to pass on to the incident ground?</p> <p>16 <b>A. The location, what floor, the flat number, what room</b></p> <p>17 <b>they're in, how they're being affected. It's just</b></p> <p>18 <b>information like that.</b></p> <p>19 Q. I'm sorry to make you jump from policy to policy, but</p> <p>20 can I ask you to go back to policy 539, "Emergency call</p> <p>21 management", LFB00000737. It's back to tab 3 of our</p> <p>22 policies bundle for those who have it. Please turn in</p> <p>23 that to page 16, again, appendix 3.</p> <p>24 From the middle of the page down to the bottom of</p> <p>25 the page, it says:</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 13</p>	<p>1 <b>in that day.</b></p> <p>2 Q. Did that training involve assessment of the length,</p> <p>3 nature and shape of the escape route?</p> <p>4 <b>A. I don't remember that in particular.</b></p> <p>5 Q. What about assessment of smoke density or fire in the</p> <p>6 escape route or routes?</p> <p>7 <b>A. I have a recollection about, you know, asking how bad</b></p> <p>8 <b>the smoke is.</b></p> <p>9 Q. Then the second item down on that page is assessing the</p> <p>10 situation by asking the caller direct questions, and you</p> <p>11 can see examples of those direct questions: do you know</p> <p>12 where the fire is? What room are you in? Is anyone</p> <p>13 with you?</p> <p>14 Did you get specific training on how to go about</p> <p>15 making that assessment?</p> <p>16 <b>A. Just asking the questions of the caller and getting</b></p> <p>17 <b>their response was all the training I remember, really.</b></p> <p>18 Q. In your understanding, would it be you leaving it to the</p> <p>19 caller to assess the situation, or would you then make</p> <p>20 the assessment, as it were, for them and then give clear</p> <p>21 advice based on your assessment?</p> <p>22 <b>A. I think I would rely on both. The caller would be</b></p> <p>23 <b>telling you things, assessing the situation they are in,</b></p> <p>24 <b>but we have a bit more training on how to deal with</b></p> <p>25 <b>those situations, so we can give input as, you know,</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 15</p>
<p>1 "The control room officer will ascertain through</p> <p>2 initial questioning, the type of premises the caller is</p> <p>3 in and use the link on the Reference Information File</p> <p>4 'Fire Survival Guidance' to take them to the appropriate</p> <p>5 area of information to use, to assist the caller."</p> <p>6 The first of those, if you can see it, two</p> <p>7 paragraphs on, is:</p> <p>8 "Firstly by assisting the caller to help identify a</p> <p>9 safe, alternative ESCAPE route for them to leave their</p> <p>10 premises."</p> <p>11 You see the word "ESCAPE" in bold capital letters</p> <p>12 there.</p> <p>13 Did your training assist you in how to go about</p> <p>14 helping the caller identify a safe alternative escape</p> <p>15 route?</p> <p>16 <b>A. I remember brief training about asking if they were low</b></p> <p>17 <b>enough, was there a balcony or another roof they can get</b></p> <p>18 <b>to, was there an alternative staircase, just</b></p> <p>19 <b>an alternate route out if one was blocked by smoke or</b></p> <p>20 <b>fire.</b></p> <p>21 Q. You say brief training; what did that training involve?</p> <p>22 <b>A. I just remember one day in particular for FSG training</b></p> <p>23 <b>and it covered a few different things on that one day,</b></p> <p>24 <b>so the management of the call, the questions to ask,</b></p> <p>25 <b>listening to the calls. So everything had a brief time</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 14</p>	<p>1 <b>what I think would be best in the situation. But it's</b></p> <p>2 <b>only guidance because we can't see; we're basing it on</b></p> <p>3 <b>what they're telling us.</b></p> <p>4 Q. In that training, doing that assessment, was any part of</p> <p>5 that training designed to direct you to information</p> <p>6 coming not from the caller but from the incident ground,</p> <p>7 the incident commander, the command unit?</p> <p>8 <b>A. No, I don't remember any training like that.</b></p> <p>9 Q. Right, okay.</p> <p>10 I want to turn to the night of the fire.</p> <p>11 You say on page 5 of your witness statement -- if</p> <p>12 I can take you to that, please -- in the last paragraph</p> <p>13 on that page, the third line from the start of that</p> <p>14 paragraph:</p> <p>15 "I was posted as radio operator, monitoring</p> <p>16 channel 2 (south London), with Sharon DERBY[sic] who was</p> <p>17 operating channel 4 (North London)."</p> <p>18 I want to just get a feel for where it was you were</p> <p>19 sitting in the control room on the night.</p> <p>20 Can I ask you, please, to be shown the LFB's control</p> <p>21 report, and this is LFB00004790 at page 175.</p> <p>22 If we can have that photograph expanded, please.</p> <p>23 Thank you.</p> <p>24 First of all, is that a photograph of the control</p> <p>25 room at Stratford to the best of your recollection as it</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 16</p>

<p>1 was organised on the night of the fire?</p> <p>2 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>3 Q. Can you tell us, where were you sitting?</p> <p>4 <b>A. So if that was the supervisor position on the far right,</b></p> <p>5 <b>I was sitting opposite on this position on the left-hand</b></p> <p>6 <b>side, just behind the first computer you can see</b></p> <p>7 <b>(Indicates).</b></p> <p>8 Q. It might help if you would be able to get up and point</p> <p>9 to that. We have got a ready dot system, but it's</p> <p>10 probably slower than --</p> <p>11 <b>A. This position here (Indicates).</b></p> <p>12 Q. The witness is pointing -- we have the red dot there --</p> <p>13 to the black computer just second from the left-hand</p> <p>14 side of the picture, facing towards the camera.</p> <p>15 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>16 Q. Who was sitting to your immediate left?</p> <p>17 <b>A. That would've been Angie Gotts.</b></p> <p>18 Q. Was anybody sitting to your immediate right or were you</p> <p>19 on the end?</p> <p>20 <b>A. No, I was the end of that position. The desk in front</b></p> <p>21 <b>may have been Christine Howson, but I'm not 100 per cent</b></p> <p>22 <b>sure.</b></p> <p>23 Q. Was that a position from which you operated the radio,</p> <p>24 or did you have to move positions -- because we know you</p> <p>25 stopped operating the radio.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 17</p>	<p>1 period has finished?</p> <p>2 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>3 Q. Going to your witness statement, can I ask you, please,</p> <p>4 to look at page 6. At the top of that page, you say:</p> <p>5 "The number of calls began stacking up and up. I</p> <p>6 asked Sharon if she would mind combining both channel 2</p> <p>7 and channel 4 on the radio. My channel was silent so I</p> <p>8 thought I could help better by answering calls. I did</p> <p>9 not want to sit doing nothing when everyone else was</p> <p>10 busy. Sharon agreed so I de-monitored my channel and</p> <p>11 moved back to call handling."</p> <p>12 We'll come on to the first call that you took in</p> <p>13 a moment, but before we do, at the point when the</p> <p>14 control room started to take 999 calls from</p> <p>15 Grenfell Tower on the night of the fire, do you remember</p> <p>16 what the system in general was for passing information</p> <p>17 to the incident ground?</p> <p>18 <b>A. So once someone takes a call that has information from</b></p> <p>19 <b>it, you would generate a service request, head it to the</b></p> <p>20 <b>radio channel that that incident was on, complete it.</b></p> <p>21 <b>It then goes out so everyone can see it. The radio</b></p> <p>22 <b>operator would then pick that up, call up the call sign</b></p> <p>23 <b>that is relevant and pass that information over.</b></p> <p>24 Q. You would generate that service request from your</p> <p>25 computer monitor at your desk?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 19</p>
<p>1 <b>A. No, that was where I was all night.</b></p> <p>2 Q. All night?</p> <p>3 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>4 Q. Okay.</p> <p>5 Would your position in the control room vary</p> <p>6 depending on incident or shift, or was it random?</p> <p>7 <b>A. It would vary on shift. At the start of a tour you're</b></p> <p>8 <b>allocated to a position, and that position would</b></p> <p>9 <b>normally have a certain role, and that changes tour to</b></p> <p>10 <b>tour, every time you're in.</b></p> <p>11 Q. Do you know how the allocation of positions would be</p> <p>12 done?</p> <p>13 <b>A. It's done by the supervisors. I think it's supposed to</b></p> <p>14 <b>be done so everyone gets a fair share of different roles</b></p> <p>15 <b>and gets to experience the roles as often as everyone</b></p> <p>16 <b>else.</b></p> <p>17 Q. Was there a system whereby the most junior was sat next</p> <p>18 to one of the more experienced control room officers?</p> <p>19 <b>A. To begin with, you're sat with someone, but once you're</b></p> <p>20 <b>on your own, as far as I know there's no system like</b></p> <p>21 <b>that.</b></p> <p>22 Q. When you say "to begin with", do you mean during your</p> <p>23 probationary period?</p> <p>24 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>25 Q. When you're on your own, it means once that probationary</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 18</p>	<p>1 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>2 Q. Would you speak to the radio operator or would you rely</p> <p>3 entirely on the messaging system within the computer</p> <p>4 system in the control room?</p> <p>5 <b>A. You would make the radio operator aware that you'd sent</b></p> <p>6 <b>a message out. You would shout out "Message on</b></p> <p>7 <b>channel 2" or "4".</b></p> <p>8 Q. When you say the number of calls began stacking up and</p> <p>9 up, is that something you heard or something you saw on</p> <p>10 your monitor?</p> <p>11 <b>A. Both. We have a buzzer that sounds when calls are</b></p> <p>12 <b>coming in. I don't recall whether it was buzzing,</b></p> <p>13 <b>actually, in Stratford now I think of it, because it was</b></p> <p>14 <b>the backup, but normally we would. But it's visible on</b></p> <p>15 <b>the ICS screen that there are calls waiting with</b></p> <p>16 <b>a number underneath of how many as well.</b></p> <p>17 Q. So south London was quiet, so you moved to calls?</p> <p>18 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>19 Q. On page 6, in the second main paragraph, you say:</p> <p>20 "The first call I took was about an hour long."</p> <p>21 For the rest of that page, you describe a long call</p> <p>22 that started at 01.29.48, and we have a record of that</p> <p>23 call and we'll come to it.</p> <p>24 Just to identify it, is that the call which starts</p> <p>25 with a call from BT with a phone number?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 20</p>

<p>1 <b>A. Yes. I've since found out that wasn't my first call.</b></p> <p>2 <b>I didn't remember that I had a call from someone outside</b></p> <p>3 <b>of the building. But the hour-long call was a dead line</b></p> <p>4 <b>from BT; there was no one on the line.</b></p> <p>5 Q. I think you called the number back --</p> <p>6 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>7 Q. -- that BT had given you.</p> <p>8 We have the transcript for that, we're going to look</p> <p>9 at it in a moment, but just so that it's primed and</p> <p>10 ready to go, it's LFB00000507 and it's 70 pages long.</p> <p>11 Before I ask you some questions about that, first,</p> <p>12 when you took that call, were you aware of the messages</p> <p>13 that were starting to come in about the incident?</p> <p>14 <b>A. I was aware of the make-up messages coming in of the</b></p> <p>15 <b>incident.</b></p> <p>16 Q. Let me see if I can pin those down.</p> <p>17 Can I ask you, please, to be shown the short</p> <p>18 incident log, which is MET00013830, and turn, please, to</p> <p>19 page 17.</p> <p>20 On that page at 01.16, you can see an informative</p> <p>21 message, first of all: fire on 4th floor, 75 per cent</p> <p>22 alight, block of flats of 20 floors.</p> <p>23 Do you remember seeing that or being aware of it?</p> <p>24 <b>A. Yes, I remember being aware of it.</b></p> <p>25 Q. Then at 01.19 -- we can skip out six -- it goes to make</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 21</p>	<p>1 in a service request, "MAKE PUMPS 25".</p> <p>2 Did you see or hear the make pumps 25 message before</p> <p>3 you started the long call, do you think?</p> <p>4 <b>A. I remember being on the call and trying to reassure the</b></p> <p>5 <b>caller saying there were 25 pumps below, and I remember</b></p> <p>6 <b>it went up to a 40 at some point, but I'm not too sure</b></p> <p>7 <b>of the timeline along it.</b></p> <p>8 Q. At that point, the beginning of your call, the long</p> <p>9 call, did you have any thoughts about this fire and how</p> <p>10 it was developing, having heard or been aware of that</p> <p>11 escalation?</p> <p>12 <b>A. Around the 15/25 mark, 25 was an indication that this is</b></p> <p>13 <b>a big fire. When it went to 40, I had never had any</b></p> <p>14 <b>experience of that. I didn't really know what we were</b></p> <p>15 <b>dealing with. We hadn't seen it.</b></p> <p>16 Q. At that stage, had you heard or seen any messages about</p> <p>17 which floor it was on?</p> <p>18 <b>A. The fire started on the 4th floor, in my memory.</b></p> <p>19 Q. Yes.</p> <p>20 <b>A. But --</b></p> <p>21 Q. I'm sorry, I should've reminded you, of course, we've</p> <p>22 seen on page 17 the informative message saying it was on</p> <p>23 the 4th floor.</p> <p>24 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>25 Q. So my question should've been: having seen it was on the</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 23</p>
<p>1 pumps eight. Were you aware of that?</p> <p>2 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>3 Q. Then it goes to 10 pumps at 01.26. Were you aware of</p> <p>4 that?</p> <p>5 <b>A. Yes, yes.</b></p> <p>6 Q. 01.26.41. And then at 01.27.59, you see it goes to 15</p> <p>7 pumps. Were you aware of that?</p> <p>8 <b>A. There was a point where the make-ups were very quick and</b></p> <p>9 <b>I just remember seeing it had escalated quite quickly</b></p> <p>10 <b>while I was on the phone.</b></p> <p>11 Q. Then at 01.28, page 18, if I can just take you to that,</p> <p>12 the top of the page, 01.28.40, there's a service request</p> <p>13 from Sharon Darby, "PERSONS REPORTED".</p> <p>14 What did that mean to you?</p> <p>15 <b>A. That there are persons inside the building that can't</b></p> <p>16 <b>leave.</b></p> <p>17 Q. That can't leave. Right.</p> <p>18 So does that mean that at that point you became</p> <p>19 aware that fire survival guidance calls either were in</p> <p>20 progress or were about to be in progress?</p> <p>21 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>22 Q. Then at 01.29.41, page 18 again, you can see that</p> <p>23 there's a message, PM, which I think is Peter May, "TEN</p> <p>24 PUMP FIRE".</p> <p>25 Then at 01.31.48, SAD, halfway down the page, puts</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 22</p>	<p>1 4th floor at 01.16, did you see or hear any further</p> <p>2 information to lead you to think that it was still on</p> <p>3 the 4th floor or whether it had started to move from the</p> <p>4 4th floor?</p> <p>5 <b>A. I don't recall being made specifically aware that it had</b></p> <p>6 <b>spread the way it had.</b></p> <p>7 Q. At that point, when it was made up to 25 pumps, did you</p> <p>8 have any reason to think, or did you think, that it was</p> <p>9 still on the 4th floor?</p> <p>10 <b>A. I would've thought that it had maybe spread to flats</b></p> <p>11 <b>around it, but definitely not that it had travelled up</b></p> <p>12 <b>the building and spread to more floors.</b></p> <p>13 Q. Prior to the start of this call, did you hear or see</p> <p>14 Sharon Darby passing messages over the radio to the</p> <p>15 command unit then on scene?</p> <p>16 <b>A. I did hear messages going on, but it is quite noisy in</b></p> <p>17 <b>the room and I would've been dealing with calls, so</b></p> <p>18 <b>you're not always 100 per cent aware of what people are</b></p> <p>19 <b>saying, but you do have a general idea of what's going</b></p> <p>20 <b>on.</b></p> <p>21 Q. More specifically, if I can just ask you to look at</p> <p>22 page 18 in the middle there, against the time mark of</p> <p>23 01.31.38, you can see a service request, and this is</p> <p>24 just above the make-up request for 25, so this is still</p> <p>25 at the time when pumps are 20:</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 24</p>

<p>1 "... RT4 - G271 - FURTHER CALL TO SAY FIRE ON 20TH 2 FLOOR ALSO - PEOPLE TRAPPED." 3 Were you aware of that message at the time it was 4 sent, do you think? 5 <b>A. I knew we had calls coming in from all over the 6 building, but at the time I believed that people were 7 affected by smoke, I didn't have an indication the fire 8 was as bad as what it was.</b> 9 Q. So would it be right to think that at the time that long 10 call started, you'd heard that message or seen that 11 message? 12 <b>A. I may have done but I cannot remember.</b> 13 Q. Okay. 14 Ms Russell, I have one or two questions before we 15 have a break. 16 On page 6 of your statement -- if you can go back to 17 that, please -- you say in the second line of the second 18 main paragraph: 19 "I tried to find out basic information from her, 20 such as the flat number, floor number and how many 21 people were inside with her. She told me that she lived 22 on the 20th floor but had gone higher to the 22nd." 23 First, can I just ask you this: when you made this 24 statement to the police in October 2017, and you gave 25 your account of that call, had you seen the transcript</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 25</p>	<p>1 (10.45 am) 2 (A short break) 3 (10.55 am) 4 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: All right, Ms Russell? 5 THE WITNESS: Yes. 6 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: All right. 7 Yes, Mr Millett. 8 MR MILLETT: Ms Russell, thank you for coming back to us. 9 I'm now going to ask you to look at the transcript 10 of this long call. It's LFB00000507. If we can please 11 have the first page of that. 12 We can see at the top of that first page, in the 13 group of numbers next to the word "Event", there's 14 a group of numbers second from the right which is the 15 time: 01.29.48. 16 Do you see that? 17 <b>A. Yes.</b> 18 Q. So that's the time at which this call started. 19 I'm going to ask you quite a few questions about 20 this transcript, Ms Russell, so if at any time during it 21 you feel you need a break or you just want a breather to 22 stop and collect your thoughts, please just tell me and 23 we can do that. 24 If I can ask you to look at page 2, you can see that 25 shortly into the call, in the middle of the page, she</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 27</p>
<p>1 of that call? 2 <b>A. No, that was all based off of memory.</b> 3 Q. We'll see, as we will in a moment, probably after the 4 break, that it says 23rd floor. Do you think that's 5 what you meant when you wrote your statement and said 6 22nd? 7 <b>A. Yes. When I gave the statement, I did say that my 8 memory of floors and time was a bit fuzzy.</b> 9 MR MILLETT: Right. Okay. 10 Mr Chairman, we've been going for just under 11 45 minutes. 12 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes. 13 MR MILLETT: We're about to turn to that long call. I think 14 it might be appropriate to have a break. 15 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: A good point to have a break, yes. 16 Ms Russell, we have a break from time to time for 17 everyone's benefit. I think this is a good moment to 18 have one. So we'll stop for just over 10 minutes. 19 I must ask you not to talk to anyone about your 20 evidence while you're out of the room, please, and we'll 21 start again at 10.55. 22 THE WITNESS: Okay. 23 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: All right? If you'd like to go with 24 the usher, please. 25 Right, 10.55, please. Thank you.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 26</p>	<p>1 says to you, in answer to your question: 2 "OPERATOR: What floor are you on in Grenfell Tower? 3 "JESSICA: 23. 4 "OPERATOR: Sorry? 5 "JESSICA: The top floor, 23. Please can you hurry 6 up? 7 "OPERATOR: The top floor, 23. We're already there." 8 It doesn't look as if you took the flat number at 9 this point. Is there any reason why not? 10 <b>A. I remember the start of the call being quite -- there 11 was a lot of commotion in the background, there was 12 something going on, she was quite distressed, and 13 I didn't feel that I could get information clearly if 14 she was panicking, so I wanted to try and calm her down 15 first.</b> 16 Q. Could you tell straight away that she was a child or 17 young person? 18 <b>A. Yes, relatively, her voice sounded quite young. By 19 calling "Mum" as well.</b> 20 Q. Turning to page 3 of the transcript, to start with, 21 picking up something on that page, she says at the top 22 of the page: 23 "JESSICA: Are they downstairs? 24 "OPERATOR: The fire's on the fourth floor. They're 25 there at the moment fighting it, okay?"</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 28</p>

<p>1 Just at that stage, very early on in the call, so</p> <p>2 about 01.30, did you think the fire was still on the</p> <p>3 4th floor or did you think the fire might have moved?</p> <p>4 <b>A. I would've thought it may have moved, but I wouldn't</b></p> <p>5 <b>have thought it would've been anywhere near where she</b></p> <p>6 <b>was.</b></p> <p>7 Q. On page 4, if we can now go to that, she says at the top</p> <p>8 of page 4:</p> <p>9 "JESSICA: There's fire in the house. Please hurry</p> <p>10 up!"</p> <p>11 On the same page, she says, just a little bit lower</p> <p>12 down:</p> <p>13 "JESSICA: Yes, there's a fire in the house.</p> <p>14 "OPERATOR: Okay. Is there any smoke coming in?"</p> <p>15 "JESSICA: Yes, there's a lot of everything(?) ..."</p> <p>16 Then moving to page 5, a quarter of the way down,</p> <p>17 she says:</p> <p>18 "JESSICA: I can't, my whole house is on fire."</p> <p>19 Do you see that there?</p> <p>20 You say:</p> <p>21 "OPERATOR: Can, can you block the door? Are there</p> <p>22 any clothes you can put underneath it?</p> <p>23 "JESSICA: (Inaudible) close the door."</p> <p>24 At that point -- and it's still quite early on in</p> <p>25 the call -- did you understand that she was being</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 29</p>	<p>1 in there with you or -</p> <p>2 "JESSICA: No, it's not in my property."</p> <p>3 Just pausing there.</p> <p>4 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>5 Q. She's given you the information about the smoke, but the</p> <p>6 fire wasn't in her property.</p> <p>7 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>8 Q. At that stage, why did you not move to the first phase</p> <p>9 of FSG guidance?</p> <p>10 <b>A. What do you mean by ...</b></p> <p>11 Q. So you know that she's affected by smoke.</p> <p>12 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>13 Q. So at that stage, is there a reason why you didn't then</p> <p>14 move to exploring a safe exit with her?</p> <p>15 <b>A. Well, at the time, I still didn't know all the</b></p> <p>16 <b>information, who she was with, what flat number she was</b></p> <p>17 <b>in. As I said, it was quite panicky at the start of the</b></p> <p>18 <b>call. So as we moved on, I gradually got more</b></p> <p>19 <b>information from her. So I did find it quite difficult</b></p> <p>20 <b>to start with, with getting the information that</b></p> <p>21 <b>I needed.</b></p> <p>22 Q. At this stage in the call, you know she's affected by</p> <p>23 smoke, the fire isn't in the property, but did you think</p> <p>24 she was trapped and couldn't get out at that stage?</p> <p>25 <b>A. Yes, she told me during that call that someone had tried</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 31</p>
<p>1 affected by smoke and possibly fire?</p> <p>2 <b>A. The smoke, because she said there was smoke coming in,</b></p> <p>3 <b>but when she was talking about fire, my understanding</b></p> <p>4 <b>that there was a fire in that room, because of where</b></p> <p>5 <b>I thought the fire was -- I wanted to investigate that</b></p> <p>6 <b>more. But --</b></p> <p>7 Q. I'll come back to smoke in a minute, but as we can see,</p> <p>8 you then say towards the bottom of the page:</p> <p>9 "OPERATOR: They can't come up to you yet, the fire's</p> <p>10 below you. It's on the fourth floor, okay?</p> <p>11 "JESSICA: Already? That's too far."</p> <p>12 What did you get from that answer?</p> <p>13 <b>A. I thought she meant they're far away, they're too far</b></p> <p>14 <b>below her.</b></p> <p>15 Q. The Fire Brigade was too far away?</p> <p>16 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>17 Q. Over the page at page 6, you ask her, just below the top</p> <p>18 of the page:</p> <p>19 "OPERATOR: Have you stopped the smoke coming in?"</p> <p>20 "JESSICA: No, there's too much smoke.</p> <p>21 "OPERATOR: Whereabouts are you? What room are you</p> <p>22 in?</p> <p>23 "JESSICA: We're in the front doors but there's a</p> <p>24 fire at the back. There's a fire!</p> <p>25 "OPERATOR: Is it actually in your property? Is it</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 30</p>	<p>1 <b>to leave and they had come back inside the building, and</b></p> <p>2 <b>I did want to talk to that person because they were</b></p> <p>3 <b>an adult. At some point in the call, I tried to get --</b></p> <p>4 <b>I think a couple of times I tried to get her to pass the</b></p> <p>5 <b>phone over. I was mindful that I was talking to</b></p> <p>6 <b>a 12-year-old and I wanted to speak to the adult who had</b></p> <p>7 <b>been out in the corridor, that could tell me what it was</b></p> <p>8 <b>like out there, but I never managed to get her to give</b></p> <p>9 <b>the phone over.</b></p> <p>10 Q. Just going back a page to page 5, you say, three lines</p> <p>11 up from the bottom of the page:</p> <p>12 "OPERATOR: They can't come up to you yet, the fire's</p> <p>13 below you. It's on the fourth floor, okay?"</p> <p>14 When you said "They can't come up to you yet", were</p> <p>15 you referring to the Fire Brigade?</p> <p>16 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>17 Q. What made you think that the Fire Brigade weren't able</p> <p>18 to come up to the top floor?</p> <p>19 <b>A. That they weren't already there. I mean, at this</b></p> <p>20 <b>moment, they wouldn't have been able to come up to her.</b></p> <p>21 <b>They weren't there because they were fighting their way</b></p> <p>22 <b>through that fire.</b></p> <p>23 Q. Did you have any information from the incident ground to</p> <p>24 lead you to say that the Fire Brigade couldn't come up</p> <p>25 to you yet, or was it just your --</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 32</p>



<p>1 <b>A. No specific information. It was based off of what</b>  2 <b>I would expect to happen and trying to reassure her that</b>  3 <b>they are there, they are coming, but they're not there</b>  4 <b>yet.</b>  5 Q. Going back to page 6, Ms Russell, if I can just ask you  6 to look at that, two-thirds of the way down, you've  7 established that the smoke is there, the fire isn't.  8 Then you ask her there again:  9 "OPERATOR: And whereabouts are you in the building  10 then? Are you still on the top floor?  11 "JESSICA: Yeah, we're on the top floor, around the  12 back, in someone's house."  13 Why did you ask her that question again, given what  14 she'd already told you about where they were?  15 <b>A. I was coming back to the flat number, trying to get more</b>  16 <b>information about where she was, any additional</b>  17 <b>information that I hadn't already got at the start of</b>  18 <b>the call.</b>  19 Q. Could you tell by this point in the call that she was  20 a child or a young person?  21 <b>A. I had an idea that she was young, but I didn't know how</b>  22 <b>young.</b>  23 Q. Was there a reason why you didn't ask her to pass the  24 phone to an adult, if there was one, at this point?  25 <b>A. At that point, I was still talking to her, still trying</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 33</p>	<p>1 why you didn't do that?  2 <b>A. It was probably an overlooked comment that I didn't --</b>  3 <b>at the time, didn't see any -- I thought it meant</b>  4 <b>something different.</b>  5 Q. If I can ask you to move forward or be shown page 11 in  6 the transcript.  7 You say to her -- and the run-up to this is you're  8 giving her advice to stop the smoke coming in and you're  9 asking her about shutting the window -- then at the top  10 of the page at page 11, you say:  11 "OPERATOR: They are, they're coming for you but you  12 need to keep yourself safe until they get there.  13 Hello?"  14 At this stage, had this become a full-blown fire  15 survival guidance call?  16 <b>A. Yes, I'd say it was at that point.</b>  17 Q. At this stage, what had you done in your own mind to  18 help her assess whether or not she could leave safely?  19 <b>A. At that point, I had the information that they'd tried</b>  20 <b>to move away from the smoke, that they were trying to</b>  21 <b>keep the smoke out. From that point on, I then started</b>  22 <b>to try to talk to the person that had left to then</b>  23 <b>establish were there any other -- you know, could they</b>  24 <b>get out, or how bad it was outside.</b>  25 Q. When you said "They're coming for you", do you recall</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 35</p>
<p>1 <b>to get the information from her. I think it was shortly</b>  2 <b>after or some point after that I did start saying, "Can</b>  3 <b>I speak to someone else?" Part of the role is also to</b>  4 <b>try and calm people down, keep them calm, and I felt</b>  5 <b>that I still needed to talk to her for that little bit</b>  6 <b>of time.</b>  7 Q. At the foot of the page, just below the question and  8 answer we have just looked at, she says:  9 "JESSICA: There's four fires downstairs."  10 You at the top of page 7 say:  11 "OPERATOR: Listen -  12 "JESSICA: They're coming up. Please tell them to  13 hurry up."  14 When she said "There's four fires downstairs", what  15 did you make of that?  16 <b>A. Really I heard from that that there was fire downstairs.</b>  17 <b>I thought it was a 12-year-old panicking. I did wonder</b>  18 <b>what she was basing the four fires off of because she</b>  19 <b>wasn't downstairs, what was she seeing, because she said</b>  20 <b>the fire wasn't in her house? So I just inferred that</b>  21 <b>the fire is downstairs.</b>  22 Q. Right. But not how far down it was?  23 <b>A. No.</b>  24 Q. It does look as though you didn't explore this question  25 about four fires downstairs with her. Is there a reason</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 34</p>	<p>1 receiving or having received any information from the  2 incident ground that crews were coming up or going to be  3 able to get up to the 23rd floor to carry out rescues?  4 <b>A. No, we had no specific information that crews were on</b>  5 <b>any floors, who they were attempting to rescue; it was</b>  6 <b>just based off of -- you'd expect it, that's what always</b>  7 <b>happens, they're always going to get there.</b>  8 Q. So do we take it from that, Ms Russell, that you didn't  9 have any positive information that crews were actually  10 coming; this was your expectation that they would come?  11 <b>A. Yes, it was expectation, yes.</b>  12 Q. I see.  13 Did it occur to you that telling her that crews were  14 coming might then discourage her and those in the flat  15 who she was speaking to from making an effort to escape?  16 <b>A. It may well have, but at the time that was what</b>  17 <b>I believed was happening, that was what the firefighters</b>  18 <b>were trying to do. I had nothing to suggest otherwise</b>  19 <b>to that.</b>  20 Q. At page 13 of the transcript -- it's the same again --  21 in the middle of that page:  22 "OPERATOR: Hello. You need to explain to me what's  23 going on.  24 "JESSICA: There's - the door on the room is gonna  25 explode soon. Please can you hurry up?"</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 36</p>

<p>1 Then you go back to the question of numbers.</p> <p>2 When she said "the door on the room is gonna explode</p> <p>3 soon", did that tell you anything about whether or not</p> <p>4 she could now safely leave?</p> <p>5 <b>A. It would possibly have said that there may have been</b></p> <p>6 <b>heat on the other side. I was still trying to gain</b></p> <p>7 <b>information about numbers in the room. The call did go</b></p> <p>8 <b>back and forth between the situation in the room and me</b></p> <p>9 <b>trying to get information from her as well.</b></p> <p>10 Q. Then at page 14, just above halfway down, you say:</p> <p>11 "OPERATOR: They are hurrying up. They're, they're</p> <p>12 trying to get to you, okay? Is there another room that</p> <p>13 you can go into?</p> <p>14 "JESSICA: No. Can you hurry up, please? I'm begging</p> <p>15 you.</p> <p>16 "OPERATOR: They are. They're right below you but</p> <p>17 you need to keep yourself safe.</p> <p>18 "JESSICA: What floor are you on? What floor are you</p> <p>19 on?"</p> <p>20 At that point, do you remember whether she was</p> <p>21 speaking to someone else in the room?</p> <p>22 <b>A. My memory of it is it was quite hard to tell who she was</b></p> <p>23 <b>talking to at points, whether she'd gone off for another</b></p> <p>24 <b>conversation or whether she was talking to me, and</b></p> <p>25 <b>I think a few times, something was going on in the</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 37</p>	<p>1 <b>person who had been outside, someone that was older. It</b></p> <p>2 <b>did sound like she was panicking, and that was one of</b></p> <p>3 <b>the reasons, other than her age, why I wanted to talk to</b></p> <p>4 <b>someone else.</b></p> <p>5 Q. Did it occur to you, given that you hadn't yet assessed</p> <p>6 the security of the escape route, that telling her that</p> <p>7 the crews were coming up without having solid</p> <p>8 information to back that up meant that you might be</p> <p>9 lulling her into a false sense of security?</p> <p>10 <b>A. At the time, no, because, as I've said, it was based on</b></p> <p>11 <b>what I would expect to happen, what should happen. As</b></p> <p>12 <b>I say, it was more about -- it was comforting her and</b></p> <p>13 <b>trying to get her through that situation and to get the</b></p> <p>14 <b>information.</b></p> <p>15 Q. Going back to your training, looking back on it, was it</p> <p>16 clear to you from the training that this reassurance</p> <p>17 advice should be given at any particular point, either</p> <p>18 before or after you had thoroughly exhausted the</p> <p>19 assessment of the safety of the exit route?</p> <p>20 <b>A. I remember from the training saying that every call is</b></p> <p>21 <b>different, every caller is different, how you handle</b></p> <p>22 <b>them. Some people need more reassurance than others.</b></p> <p>23 <b>Some people will give you the information and you can</b></p> <p>24 <b>get straight down to the facts. Other people need a bit</b></p> <p>25 <b>more persuasion and comfort. So it varies.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 39</p>
<p>1 <b>background that I wasn't aware of, but she wasn't very</b></p> <p>2 <b>forthcoming with what was going on.</b></p> <p>3 Q. Just below that, you say:</p> <p>4 "OPERATOR: They're down below you. They're fighting</p> <p>5 the fire from below you, okay? They're making their way</p> <p>6 up."</p> <p>7 Again, we've seen on that page that you are</p> <p>8 essentially telling her three times that they're coming</p> <p>9 up or trying to get to you.</p> <p>10 It's the same question I asked you before: did you</p> <p>11 have any information from the incident ground that</p> <p>12 enabled you to tell her that crews were making their way</p> <p>13 up?</p> <p>14 <b>A. No. At that point, it was more about reassuring her,</b></p> <p>15 <b>trying to get her, you know, to keep going rather than</b></p> <p>16 <b>panicking. So it was just acknowledging that we were</b></p> <p>17 <b>there, we were below them, they were trying. It was</b></p> <p>18 <b>a reassurance that -- because she was at that point</b></p> <p>19 <b>talking to someone else again, I think, just trying to</b></p> <p>20 <b>keep her calm.</b></p> <p>21 Q. At this point in the call -- I know it's difficult to</p> <p>22 remember exactly because it was a long call -- had you,</p> <p>23 do you think, formed the view that you had adequately</p> <p>24 assessed with the caller the safety of the escape route?</p> <p>25 <b>A. Not yet, no. No. That's why I wanted to talk to the</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 38</p>	<p>1 <b>The training was just saying that it varies caller</b></p> <p>2 <b>to caller, that you have to assess that and get the</b></p> <p>3 <b>information, but working with the caller that you have.</b></p> <p>4 Q. Just to focus a little bit more closely on that.</p> <p>5 Did your training tell you that you should exhaust</p> <p>6 the possibilities of assessment of safety of the exit</p> <p>7 routes before moving to the reassurance phase?</p> <p>8 <b>A. I don't remember it in that specific order. My memory</b></p> <p>9 <b>of it, it's a fluid process of you reassure when needed,</b></p> <p>10 <b>and that could be before or after.</b></p> <p>11 Q. Were you ever trained to understand that there was</p> <p>12 a possibility that, if you move too quickly to the</p> <p>13 reassurance phase and gave the caller the kinds of</p> <p>14 advice to say, "They're coming to get you" before</p> <p>15 exhausting the assessment about the safety of exit, you</p> <p>16 might unwittingly lull a caller into a false sense of</p> <p>17 security, so that they might stay where otherwise they</p> <p>18 might be able to leave safely?</p> <p>19 <b>A. No, I don't remember anything like that in training.</b></p> <p>20 Q. Thank you.</p> <p>21 Is there a reason at this stage, given that we can</p> <p>22 tell she's panicking and that there is smoke in the</p> <p>23 flat, why you didn't say to her, "You must leave"?</p> <p>24 <b>A. At that point -- I mean, we don't tell people to go out</b></p> <p>25 <b>into smoke when you don't know what's there. If she was</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 40</p>

<p>1 contained in that flat, then there was smoke, but</p> <p>2 I didn't know how bad it was outside, whether it was</p> <p>3 worse sending her into more smoke or a fire. I hadn't</p> <p>4 established that yet.</p> <p>5 Q. Is there a reason why you didn't push for that</p> <p>6 information so you could make that assessment?</p> <p>7 A. I felt that I couldn't push her too much because of the</p> <p>8 way she was panicking. For some of it, I felt she</p> <p>9 wasn't necessarily listening, so it took a while to --</p> <p>10 I felt that I had to calm her down to be able to get</p> <p>11 more information out of her. So I think I was quite</p> <p>12 reassuring and soft rather than hard and, "Give me the</p> <p>13 answers."</p> <p>14 Q. Moving on in the transcript to page 16, at the bottom of</p> <p>15 the page, after the automated voice saying "You've been</p> <p>16 placed on hold", she comes back and she says:</p> <p>17 "JESSICA: Yeah, we're inside another room."</p> <p>18 You ask her whether it's a bedroom or a bathroom.</p> <p>19 At that stage, did you think that they'd moved</p> <p>20 rooms?</p> <p>21 A. Yes.</p> <p>22 Q. What did that tell you about the conditions inside the</p> <p>23 flat?</p> <p>24 A. I hadn't really established much at that point, but</p> <p>25 I would've thought that the room that they were in, it</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 41</p>	<p>1 really soon, okay? Okay, so tell me how everyone else</p> <p>2 is doing in there."</p> <p>3 Same question as I asked you before, Ms Russell, I'm</p> <p>4 afraid, but at this point in the call -- we're about</p> <p>5 a third of the way through it, so about 20 minutes or so</p> <p>6 into the call, roughly -- do you think you had any solid</p> <p>7 information on the basis of which to tell her that the</p> <p>8 fire engines are there and they're fighting the fire</p> <p>9 from below?</p> <p>10 A. Again, same reasons as before. No messages back, just</p> <p>11 the same as before.</p> <p>12 Q. Moving on to page 24, you say at the top of the page</p> <p>13 there:</p> <p>14 "OPERATOR: Okay, I'm, just sending a message to the</p> <p>15 crews now so they know where you are. So there's 11 of</p> <p>16 you on the 23rd floor. Do you know which side of the</p> <p>17 building you're on, the front or the back?"</p> <p>18 Can I ask you to keep that on the screen there and</p> <p>19 to go to the document we looked at before, which is the</p> <p>20 short incident log, which is MET00013830, and please</p> <p>21 turn in it to page 19.</p> <p>22 I'd like you to look at the time stamp of 01.45.45</p> <p>23 at the very bottom of that page. We can see, if we can</p> <p>24 just have that highlighted, at the very bottom the block</p> <p>25 that is on the monitor 01.45.45, SR -- that's you, take</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 43</p>
<p>1 was possibly too smoky to stay in.</p> <p>2 Q. So do we take it at this stage there can be no question</p> <p>3 that you understood that this was a flat affected by</p> <p>4 smoke at the very least?</p> <p>5 A. Yes.</p> <p>6 Q. Again, it looks as if you're not assessing with her the</p> <p>7 ability to escape. Is that because, again, for the</p> <p>8 reasons you gave us before, you felt you couldn't push</p> <p>9 her too hard or is there another reason?</p> <p>10 A. Yes, yes, I hadn't yet got to the point of asking to</p> <p>11 speak to the other person.</p> <p>12 Q. Moving on to page 23 of the transcript, at the top of</p> <p>13 the page -- and the context for this is you're asking</p> <p>14 who is in the flat, the numbers and ages, and she tells</p> <p>15 you she's the youngest person, apart from a baby.</p> <p>16 At the bottom the previous page, she says:</p> <p>17 "JESSICA: Can you hurry up?"</p> <p>18 Top of page 23, which is what we're on, you say:</p> <p>19 "OPERATOR: Er, we are hurrying, they're right below</p> <p>20 you, the fire engines. They're, they're fi... - listen</p> <p>21 to me, they're fighting the fire from below you so it's</p> <p>22 gonna take them a little while to get to you. There are</p> <p>23 23 floors on the building. The fire was on the 4111</p> <p>24 floor and it's spreading up but they're on their way up</p> <p>25 to you. They'll fight the fire. They'll get to you</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 42</p>	<p>1 it from me that that's you there.</p> <p>2 A. Yes.</p> <p>3 Q. You create a service request:</p> <p>4 "... RT4 G271 11 PEOPLE IN BEDROOM OF FLAT ON 23RD</p> <p>5 FLOOR."</p> <p>6 My first question is a formal one: can you confirm</p> <p>7 that's your message?</p> <p>8 A. Yes.</p> <p>9 Q. Again, does this accord with your recollection of the</p> <p>10 time that you created that service request?</p> <p>11 A. I don't really remember the times of anything. It was</p> <p>12 all very fuzzy.</p> <p>13 Q. Before this moment -- so this is about 15 minutes into</p> <p>14 the call -- did you pass any other information on about</p> <p>15 the call to anyone in the control room or on the</p> <p>16 incident ground?</p> <p>17 A. In the control room, a few times people came over and</p> <p>18 were asking questions about what call you were on. So</p> <p>19 I don't remember who it was, but I remember a couple of</p> <p>20 people coming over and me saying the information that</p> <p>21 I'd got from the call.</p> <p>22 Q. That was before this point, was it? Before 01.45?</p> <p>23 A. I believe it was.</p> <p>24 Q. So before 15 minutes into the call?</p> <p>25 A. Yes.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 44</p>

<p>1 Q. Do you remember who came over to you?</p> <p>2 <b>A. No, I don't remember. I remember Peter May coming over.</b></p> <p>3 <b>I don't think it was him I told the information to.</b></p> <p>4 <b>I remember him being more concerned about -- if we</b></p> <p>5 <b>needed to, we could stay with a caller, but him saying</b></p> <p>6 <b>we need to keep taking calls because of the number that</b></p> <p>7 <b>was coming in.</b></p> <p>8 Q. Was he trying to, as it were, get you off the call and</p> <p>9 onto another one?</p> <p>10 <b>A. He was making us aware that if everyone had stayed on</b></p> <p>11 <b>the call they were on, there would've potentially been</b></p> <p>12 <b>a large number of people in that building that we would</b></p> <p>13 <b>never have spoke to.</b></p> <p>14 Q. Did you pay attention to what he was saying?</p> <p>15 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>16 Q. But we can see you stayed on the call for another</p> <p>17 45 minutes or so.</p> <p>18 <b>A. Yes, I did say to him, "Are we staying or do I have to</b></p> <p>19 <b>leave?"</b>, words to that sense, and he said, <b>"If you need</b></p> <p>20 <b>to, stay."</b></p> <p>21 Q. So he left it to your judgement to stay on the call?</p> <p>22 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>23 Q. Given what you had found out in the 15 or so minutes,</p> <p>24 perhaps 16 minutes, before this point in the call, is</p> <p>25 there a reason why you made this service request only at</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 45</p>	<p>1 ground to know that a caller had fled a flat on the</p> <p>2 20th floor and had moved up three floors?</p> <p>3 <b>A. Not to my knowledge or understanding. From my point of</b></p> <p>4 <b>view, they would need to know where a caller is. They</b></p> <p>5 <b>don't have numbers of where people are prior to any</b></p> <p>6 <b>information passed to them.</b></p> <p>7 Q. Does that tell us that, in fact, in your training, you</p> <p>8 weren't trained to look out for patterns of fire spread</p> <p>9 in a building and be able to pass that information to</p> <p>10 the ground?</p> <p>11 <b>A. No. No.</b></p> <p>12 Q. At this point, would you have said that this was, by</p> <p>13 now, a full-blown fire survival guidance call?</p> <p>14 <b>A. Yes, yes.</b></p> <p>15 Q. Did you try to ask for help at this stage from</p> <p>16 Alex Norman or Debbie Real?</p> <p>17 <b>A. I looked up for help right at the start of the call</b></p> <p>18 <b>because I'd never taken an FSG, and you should have</b></p> <p>19 <b>people sitting with you, it's a lot for one person to</b></p> <p>20 <b>do, but everyone was busy, everyone was on calls. I was</b></p> <p>21 <b>looking around the room but there was no one free.</b></p> <p>22 Q. At page 26, if I can just take you forward to that, you</p> <p>23 say at the bottom of that page:</p> <p>24 "OPERATOR: They are coming. They're coming up to</p> <p>25 you, okay? I know it's, it's scary but they are coming</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 47</p>
<p>1 this point?</p> <p>2 <b>A. I don't remember the specifics. It could be that</b></p> <p>3 <b>I passed it verbally and that that was a message with</b></p> <p>4 <b>additional information. But it would've gone out</b></p> <p>5 <b>verbally anyway to the people that were coming around.</b></p> <p>6 Q. Is it fair to say that this was around about the time</p> <p>7 representing the first point in the call when you knew</p> <p>8 reliably that there were 11 people in that flat and the</p> <p>9 floor number?</p> <p>10 <b>A. Yes. I'd say it took me a long time to be able to get</b></p> <p>11 <b>enough information to pass over.</b></p> <p>12 Q. You say in your statement -- and, indeed, it's clear</p> <p>13 from the transcript -- that the caller lived on the</p> <p>14 20th floor but had moved to the top of the building, the</p> <p>15 23rd floor.</p> <p>16 Did you think of putting that information into the</p> <p>17 service request?</p> <p>18 <b>A. No. I think at the time I didn't think that was</b></p> <p>19 <b>relevant. It didn't matter to me where she came from,</b></p> <p>20 <b>it was where she was, because no message had been sent</b></p> <p>21 <b>prior to that. It hadn't been a movement that they had</b></p> <p>22 <b>been -- they hadn't been informed where she was</b></p> <p>23 <b>originally, so I didn't need to update them where she</b></p> <p>24 <b>had moved to.</b></p> <p>25 Q. Might it have been helpful for the crews at the incident</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 46</p>	<p>1 for you, okay, and it'll seem like forever. Minutes</p> <p>2 seem like hours, I know, but they're right below you,</p> <p>3 okay? They are making their way up, I promise."</p> <p>4 This is over the page.</p> <p>5 Just pausing there.</p> <p>6 Again, is that the same sort of reassurance not</p> <p>7 backed up by information as before?</p> <p>8 <b>A. Yes, just based on what I expect to happen, what</b></p> <p>9 <b>normally happens.</b></p> <p>10 Q. Then you ask her her name, as we can see at the top of</p> <p>11 page 27, and she says Jessica. Is there a reason why</p> <p>12 you asked for her name?</p> <p>13 <b>A. The length of the call, and I thought that having a name</b></p> <p>14 <b>would help get her back to the call when she wandered</b></p> <p>15 <b>off talking to people.</b></p> <p>16 Q. It looks as if you then talk about her age.</p> <p>17 If you can just go to page 28, there's some</p> <p>18 discussion at the foot of the page about flat number.</p> <p>19 You ask her:</p> <p>20 "OPERATOR: ... Is there anyone there at the moment</p> <p>21 that might know what flat number you're in? Anyone -</p> <p>22 "JESSICA: Which is the flat number?</p> <p>23 "CALLER 2: We're(?) on(?) 201."</p> <p>24 At that point, do you remember whether somebody else</p> <p>25 came on the phone?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 48</p>

<p>1 <b>A. I remember hearing a voice in the background, but</b>  2 <b>I heard voices in the background quite a few times.</b>  3 <b>I think that was the clearest one I'd heard, but it</b>  4 <b>didn't make me aware that I was talking to someone else.</b>  5 <b>I thought they may have just said it out loud.</b>  6 Q. Then she says:  7 "JESSICA: 2121?"  8 Then it's clarified during the course of the next  9 page, 201.  10 Is there a reason why you didn't get the flat number  11 from her at an earlier stage?  12 <b>A. I thought that she didn't know the flat number to begin</b>  13 <b>with because she had gone up. I got it later on by</b>  14 <b>going back to it and asking and she got it from the</b>  15 <b>person who she was with.</b>  16 Q. Should you have got that information from her earlier in  17 the call?  18 <b>A. The earlier it came would've been better, but as I said,</b>  19 <b>I found it quite hard to gauge her and get all the</b>  20 <b>information that I needed.</b>  21 Q. At page 31 of the transcript, just moving to that, you  22 say, two-thirds of the way down the page, having  23 established the flat number:  24 "OPERATOR: Okay. I'll send them that message so  25 they know where -- exactly where you are, yeah? Is</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 49</p>	<p>1 To the best of your recollection, does that reflect  2 a message that you passed to Mr Oliff on the night?  3 <b>A. I don't remember the unconscious part, but the 11</b>  4 <b>people -- I don't know whether that was based off of my</b>  5 <b>message or what someone else had given in.</b>  6 Q. Do you have any recollection of specifically passing  7 a message to Jason Oliff at around this point?  8 <b>A. We were writing down flat numbers, floors, additional</b>  9 <b>information, and that was then taken off by a collection</b>  10 <b>of different people.</b>  11 Q. You're writing them down on a piece of paper and then  12 giving them to other control room staff or somebody  13 else?  14 <b>A. I remember a few times. I think the officer of the day</b>  15 <b>himself may have come over and taken them. I think</b>  16 <b>Joanne took a few. I think Yvonne Adams may have taken</b>  17 <b>a few as well. So it was a few different people.</b>  18 Q. At this point -- and we have the time here on this page,  19 01.58.48, so very near 2 o'clock in the morning -- do  20 you remember whether you were getting any information  21 back from the incident ground?  22 <b>A. No, I don't really remember any information coming back</b>  23 <b>in.</b>  24 Q. Did that cause you any difficulties in being able to  25 give clear advice to this caller?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 51</p>
<p>1 there anyone else in there that's someone older?"  2 There's some discussion after that about whether you  3 can speak to them.  4 I just want to see if we can pin this down to  5 a time.  6 If you can look back again, please, at the short  7 incident log at MET00013830 at page 21, and go, please,  8 to the time mark of 01.58.48, SR -- do you see that?  9 <b>A. Yes.</b>  10 Q. "Service Request Created: RT4 G271 11 PERSONS AND A BABY  11 IN FLAT 201."  12 That's next to your initial.  13 Is that when you sent that service request?  14 <b>A. Yes. If that's on the log, that's what it would have</b>  15 <b>been.</b>  16 Q. So we can put a time on that.  17 If we can just look at a picture, this is  18 MET00016912.  19 We've had some evidence, Ms Russell, about what this  20 is, and this is one of two whiteboards in the control  21 room maintained by the officer Jason Oliff.  22 We can see on this one that it says, the third item  23 down from the top:  24 "201. 23rd flr -- 2 yr old. 11 people -- now  25 unconscious."</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 50</p>	<p>1 <b>A. Yes. I wasn't really aware of what was going on inside</b>  2 <b>that building.</b>  3 Q. Is there a reason why you didn't ask your senior  4 officers in the control room to push the command unit to  5 give you a clear picture of what was going on?  6 <b>A. I would believe that they would've been doing that</b>  7 <b>themselves. They would want a clear picture of what was</b>  8 <b>going on as well.</b>  9 Q. I have come to the end of the transcript I want to show  10 you, Ms Russell. I just want to ask you a general  11 question.  12 It's clear that during this call you were dealing  13 with a young person. Looking back on it, is there  14 anything in your training that you would have liked to  15 have had which would've prepared you to handle this  16 call?  17 <b>A. More experience with dealing with it, with FSG calls.</b>  18 <b>I hadn't had any training since that one day in</b>  19 <b>training, and that was eight to nine months later.</b>  20 <b>Training with high-rise and multiple calls as well.</b>  21 <b>When that volume of calls comes in, what do you</b>  22 <b>prioritise, the caller you're with or taking more calls?</b>  23 <b>Just a set procedure to follow.</b>  24 Q. Just going back to the training, opening up the  25 questions we looked at earlier this morning, when you</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 52</p>

<p>1 did FSG training, was there any role play --</p> <p>2 <b>A. No.</b></p> <p>3 Q. -- where callers were actors pretending to be trapped?</p> <p>4 <b>A. No. I have heard of that happening, but on that course,</b></p> <p>5 <b>we didn't do that. We had examples played, but there</b></p> <p>6 <b>was no role play.</b></p> <p>7 Q. You say you've heard of that happening; is that in the</p> <p>8 LFB or other fire and rescue services?</p> <p>9 <b>A. In the LFB there are FSG training days where command</b></p> <p>10 <b>units come in and they act it out that way, but I hadn't</b></p> <p>11 <b>been a part of one of those.</b></p> <p>12 Q. Were those training days before Grenfell or after?</p> <p>13 <b>A. I'm not sure. I -- no.</b></p> <p>14 Q. I'm going to ask you about one or two other calls very</p> <p>15 briefly.</p> <p>16 First of all, flat 173, and this is a call at</p> <p>17 02.26.48.</p> <p>18 I'll do this by reference to the control report, if</p> <p>19 I can, please, at page 81. That's LFB00004790.</p> <p>20 There's a related transcript which I don't think</p> <p>21 I need to take you to, which is LFB00000355.</p> <p>22 I'll take you to this on this page as it's</p> <p>23 a summary.</p> <p>24 It's a call from a female caller -- this is the</p> <p>25 bottom of the page, 02.26.48:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 53</p>	<p>1 way in which this caller could leave?</p> <p>2 <b>A. No. I think that I was pressing on through calls then,</b></p> <p>3 <b>aware of just getting information, wanting to get to as</b></p> <p>4 <b>many callers as possible. She told me it was smoky,</b></p> <p>5 <b>very smoky outside the flat. I didn't want to send her</b></p> <p>6 <b>into possibly a worse situation than she was already in.</b></p> <p>7 Q. Did you think to yourself: "Well, she says it's smoky,</p> <p>8 but I need to know how smoky; she might be assessing it</p> <p>9 is actually more dangerous than it was", or did you just</p> <p>10 take her at face value?</p> <p>11 <b>A. I took it at face value.</b></p> <p>12 Q. Do you remember whether you relayed the details of this</p> <p>13 call to the incident ground?</p> <p>14 <b>A. That I believe was put on paper. I'm not 100 per cent</b></p> <p>15 <b>sure, but I think that was put on a note that was then</b></p> <p>16 <b>taken off and put up on the board.</b></p> <p>17 Q. Looking back on the night, was that your practice, that</p> <p>18 about this time, 02.30 --</p> <p>19 <b>A. That was the standard thing, that we were writing down</b></p> <p>20 <b>the information, it was all being relayed to the boards,</b></p> <p>21 <b>and then passed over from one person on the command</b></p> <p>22 <b>unit.</b></p> <p>23 Q. Do you have any particular recollection of any call that</p> <p>24 you took where you didn't record the details of the call</p> <p>25 on a piece of paper and then hand it up to the people</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 55</p>
<p>1 "... reporting that she is inside Grenfell Tower in</p> <p>2 flat 173 on the 20th floor in her living room with her</p> <p>3 mum. CRO Russell checks if there is smoke in the flat</p> <p>4 and the caller says there is some smoke. CRO Russell</p> <p>5 advises they have two choices, if it is safe to do so</p> <p>6 they can leave but if not they should stay and the</p> <p>7 caller responds to say that she is too high to leave.</p> <p>8 The caller explains that she has opened the front door</p> <p>9 and it is very smoky outside. CRO Russell provides FSG</p> <p>10 including blocking the smoke and keeping away from the</p> <p>11 doors, shutting any windows that are letting in smoke</p> <p>12 and advises moving to other rooms as required, keeping</p> <p>13 low and covering their faces. CRO Russell confirms the</p> <p>14 floor number and explains that the Brigade is in</p> <p>15 attendance and she will pass the information onto the</p> <p>16 crews. She ends the call by saying if anything changes</p> <p>17 they should call back."</p> <p>18 First of all, do you recall receiving this call,</p> <p>19 taking it?</p> <p>20 <b>A. Yes, I think I remember that one.</b></p> <p>21 Q. You can see from the text of the summary I've shown you</p> <p>22 that the caller told you that it was very smoky outside</p> <p>23 the front door.</p> <p>24 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>25 Q. Is there a reason why you didn't explore with caller any</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 54</p>	<p>1 running the whiteboards?</p> <p>2 <b>A. I don't have any recollection of not passing it over.</b></p> <p>3 <b>I know towards the end I took calls that were already up</b></p> <p>4 <b>on the board and I'd wrote them down, went and checked</b></p> <p>5 <b>myself, passed them over, and they were ticked off, but</b></p> <p>6 <b>there would've been any updates. If someone was</b></p> <p>7 <b>unconscious, you'd write "unconscious" next to it.</b></p> <p>8 Q. Next, I'd like just to ask you about another call. It's</p> <p>9 a call from flat 82 on the 11th floor and it's timed at</p> <p>10 02.32.41.</p> <p>11 I am going to ask you to look at the transcript of</p> <p>12 this, which is LFB00000360.</p> <p>13 THE WITNESS: Sorry, is it okay if we have a quick toilet</p> <p>14 break?</p> <p>15 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes, of course.</p> <p>16 THE WITNESS: Thank you.</p> <p>17 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Probably due for a break anyway,</p> <p>18 aren't we?</p> <p>19 MR MILLETT: Yes, Mr Chairman. We are doing quite well.</p> <p>20 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: If you go with the usher, we'll come</p> <p>21 back in 10 minutes. 11.50. Thank you.</p> <p>22 Yes, 11.50, please.</p> <p>23 (11.40 am)</p> <p>24 (A short break)</p> <p>25 (11.50 am)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 56</p>

<p>1 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: All right, Ms Russell?</p> <p>2 THE WITNESS: Yes, thank you.</p> <p>3 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Happy to carry on?</p> <p>4 THE WITNESS: Yes.</p> <p>5 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Thank you.</p> <p>6 MR MILLETT: Ms Russell, thank you for coming back to us.</p> <p>7 I'm going to ask you about a call -- I'll do it</p> <p>8 direct from the transcript as I think it's quicker --</p> <p>9 this comes from flat 82 and it's 02.32.41, LFB00000360.</p> <p>10 You can see the time from the blue strap of numbers</p> <p>11 on the top of the page, and it's the second from the</p> <p>12 right which tells us this is 02.32.41, and we know it's</p> <p>13 flat 82 from page 2.</p> <p>14 I just want to take you straight to page 3 of this</p> <p>15 call. At the top of that page the caller says:</p> <p>16 "CALLER: It, it's - the fire - it's okay at the</p> <p>17 moment but the fire seems to be spreading and it's</p> <p>18 blocking past the windows.</p> <p>19 "OPERATOR: Spreading. Okay. So do you think it's</p> <p>20 safer for you (overspeaking)</p> <p>21 "CALLER: I can't see it because obviously I'm</p> <p>22 inside. Huh?</p> <p>23 "OPERATOR: Do you think it's safer for you to stay</p> <p>24 or to try and leave?"</p> <p>25 Why did you ask her that question?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 57</p>	<p>1 <b>themselves with the towels and blankets, to get down,</b></p> <p>2 <b>and that they needed to try and leave.</b></p> <p>3 Q. Right.</p> <p>4 <b>A. But I didn't feel you could force people to do that.</b></p> <p>5 Q. Does that mean that what you learnt on the call with</p> <p>6 Jessica didn't then feed into the advice you were giving</p> <p>7 to this caller?</p> <p>8 <b>A. Not necessarily because they were on a different floor</b></p> <p>9 <b>in a different flat. It was a different situation.</b></p> <p>10 Q. But you had learnt from the Jessica call that the smoke</p> <p>11 at least --</p> <p>12 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>13 Q. -- had travelled, in the end fatally, as we know, to the</p> <p>14 top floor.</p> <p>15 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>16 Q. Is there a reason why learning that didn't prompt you to</p> <p>17 tell this caller from flat 82 on the 11th floor to get</p> <p>18 out, come what may?</p> <p>19 <b>A. Just again that I didn't know how bad it was in the</b></p> <p>20 <b>stairwell, I didn't know what I was sending them into,</b></p> <p>21 <b>so to force someone to leave could've been worse than</b></p> <p>22 <b>them staying.</b></p> <p>23 Q. Just going back to the Jessica call, do you think you</p> <p>24 would've been assisted on that call by having a more</p> <p>25 senior or experienced control room officer sitting next</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 59</p>
<p>1 <b>A. I was trying to gauge what he thought of the situation,</b></p> <p>2 <b>if he could leave, if he thought that leaving would put</b></p> <p>3 <b>him in more danger than what he was already in.</b></p> <p>4 Q. Does this show us that you were actually leaving it to</p> <p>5 the caller to make that assessment?</p> <p>6 <b>A. Well, as I said before, we're not there, what we give is</b></p> <p>7 <b>guidance. We rely heavily on their decisions, what</b></p> <p>8 <b>they're seeing and doing. So I would say that I was not</b></p> <p>9 <b>leaving it to them entirely, but leaving it for them to</b></p> <p>10 <b>decide, you know, what is safer for them to do. They</b></p> <p>11 <b>were there, they could see it. I couldn't.</b></p> <p>12 Q. Is there a reason why you didn't move on to assist the</p> <p>13 caller to make that assessment jointly with you?</p> <p>14 <b>A. I would just say the volume of calls coming in, again,</b></p> <p>15 <b>that at that point, we needed to get all the flat</b></p> <p>16 <b>numbers, all the information. There were so many calls,</b></p> <p>17 <b>and for the lack of people we had in the room, making</b></p> <p>18 <b>sure we did have all the people that were in there.</b></p> <p>19 Q. At this point in time -- this is just after 02.30 -- we</p> <p>20 know that your call with Jessica had ended.</p> <p>21 Is there a reason why the information that you got</p> <p>22 on that call didn't tell you to tell this caller to get</p> <p>23 out, come what may?</p> <p>24 <b>A. I hadn't been told -- when I was told to tell people to</b></p> <p>25 <b>get out, that's when I started saying to cover</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 58</p>	<p>1 to you and monitoring you?</p> <p>2 <b>A. Yes. Yes.</b></p> <p>3 Q. Were you aware that during that call -- I know it was</p> <p>4 an hour long -- there was another fire survival guidance</p> <p>5 call in progress from the same flat?</p> <p>6 <b>A. No, not at the time, I wasn't. I think I found that out</b></p> <p>7 <b>quite recently. It was from another Brigade, I think.</b></p> <p>8 Q. But nobody -- is this right? -- in the control room came</p> <p>9 up to you during that period and said, "You should know</p> <p>10 there's another call in progress"?</p> <p>11 <b>A. No, I wasn't aware at the time.</b></p> <p>12 Q. You touched on just a moment ago the change in the</p> <p>13 stay-put advice.</p> <p>14 Can I take you back to your witness statement at</p> <p>15 page 7.</p> <p>16 You say in the second paragraph on that page:</p> <p>17 "Not long after the call finished I became aware</p> <p>18 that the advice we were giving callers to stay where</p> <p>19 they were had changed to try and make attempts to leave</p> <p>20 via the stairwell. I think this was about an hour or</p> <p>21 two into the incident. I was told by Joanne, the Senior</p> <p>22 Operations Manager, and I think someone else too."</p> <p>23 First of all, you say "Not long after the call</p> <p>24 finished"; can we be a bit more specific about that?</p> <p>25 <b>A. Again, my memory of the times weren't very good, so my</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 60</p>

<p>1 <b>recollection of not long after may have been quite some</b>  2 <b>time after.</b>  3 Q. At any rate, not by 02.32, which is the flat 82 call  4 we've just looked at, you think?  5 <b>A. Possibly, I'm not sure.</b>  6 Q. Looking at your statement and what you say there, first  7 of all, how did Joanne relay this information to you?  8 <b>A. She came around and verbally passed it on.</b>  9 Q. Did she tell you about what you should now be saying to  10 callers?  11 <b>A. To cover themselves, to not breathe in the smoke and to</b>  12 <b>make their way down the stairs.</b>  13 Q. At that stage, did you think that the Fire Brigade would  14 no longer be able to rescue people or did you think  15 there was still a possibility they might?  16 <b>A. I didn't think there wasn't a chance, but I had never</b>  17 <b>heard of the advice changing to that, so it was</b>  18 <b>something entirely different from what had ever happened</b>  19 <b>before.</b>  20 Q. Did Joanne -- Joanne Smith, I'm assuming -- tell you in  21 what terms or with what tone to give this new advice to  22 callers?  23 <b>A. No, I don't recall that.</b>  24 Q. Having had that instruction from her, did you then start  25 applying the new advice straight away to the next call</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 61</p>	<p>1 <b>A. Yes, yes, but saying the best option would be to leave.</b>  2 Q. Can I ask you to look at another call, which is  3 02.51.09. It's LFB00000386, and this is flat 193.  4 Again, we can see from the numbers second from the  5 right that this is at 02.51.09, so, again, after the  6 time at which you have been given that instruction.  7 This is a call from, as I say, flat 193.  8 At page 3 of the transcript, you say:  9 "OPERATOR: Okay, listen. You can do one of two  10 things. You can either make your way into a room and  11 shut the door, keep the smoke out, and stay low, or you  12 can try and make your way out of the building. You have  13 to decide which is safer. Okay? If you're going to  14 make your way out the building -"  15 Then it turns into a discussion about not going  16 downstairs.  17 It looks from the transcript, Ms Russell, that in  18 this call you were giving the caller a choice as to  19 whether to leave or not; is that fair?  20 <b>A. Yes, yes.</b>  21 Q. Why was that, at this point?  22 <b>A. Again, I was making them aware that they needed to leave</b>  23 <b>and how. But, again, if you send them out into fire and</b>  24 <b>smoke, I could be potentially sending them out to</b>  25 <b>a death where, if they waited, they may have been</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 63</p>
<p>1 you got?  2 <b>A. I don't recall. I am guessing I would have, but I don't</b>  3 <b>recall.</b>  4 Q. You don't recall?  5 <b>A. Yes.</b>  6 Q. Let's see if we can pin this down.  7 Transcript LFB00000368.  8 This is a call from the 23rd floor, flat 204. We  9 can see from the group of numbers second from the right  10 that this is at 02.36.07.  11 Can I just ask you to look at page 4 of the  12 transcript.  13 You say a quarter of the way down the page:  14 "OPERATOR: Okay. Listen, the fire is getting quite  15 bad. Do you think it would be better if you covered  16 yourself with a wet towel and tried to make your way  17 down out of the building?  18 "CALLER: I can't see outside my door."  19 He says that a number of times.  20 Given that was the advice you were giving at that  21 point in the call, do you think you had had the  22 instruction from Jo Smith at this point?  23 <b>A. Yes, I would say so.</b>  24 Q. So was it your understanding that the advice you were  25 giving there was get out as opposed to stay put?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 62</p>	<p>1 <b>rescued.</b>  2 Q. Does that tell us that in your understanding, what  3 Jo Smith had told you meant that you were still  4 assessing security of exit?  5 <b>A. No. I was -- at that point, I think it was more about</b>  6 <b>what the caller was saying. I was aware that we were</b>  7 <b>now saying that, you know, making your way out may be</b>  8 <b>the best option, but sending people out could've been</b>  9 <b>worse than staying in. So, for me, I think I gave them</b>  10 <b>the option, made them aware that they can leave, but if</b>  11 <b>they're choosing to stay, it depended on the situation</b>  12 <b>outside.</b>  13 Q. To your understanding, did Jo Smith say, "You've got to  14 advise callers now that they must get out at all costs"?  15 <b>A. I don't remember the wording of it.</b>  16 Q. Did you -- sorry.  17 <b>A. No, just saying that I don't remember the wording of it,</b>  18 <b>the specific wording of it, I just remember saying that,</b>  19 <b>you know -- getting out and the towels and making their</b>  20 <b>way out.</b>  21 Q. I'm just trying to get a feel for how clear and firm and  22 black and white the advice you understood you had to  23 give was to be.  24 So the question really is: when Joanne Smith came  25 round and gave you the change in advice, did you</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 64</p>



<p>1 understand her to be telling you, "You've got to get 2 these callers to get out, come what may", or did you 3 still think there was an element of assessment, 4 judgement, decision, about it?</p> <p>5 <b>A. I think there would always be an element of assessing 6 and judgement. Some people stayed with callers down the 7 stairs. At that point, they would've still been 8 assessing as well.</b></p> <p>9 Q. Turning to page 8 of the transcript, you say there, 10 a third of the way down, having given some advice about 11 what people should put over them and cover themselves, 12 you say: 13 "OPERATOR: ... There's a lot of people inside and 14 the firefighters are struggling to get to everyone, 15 okay, so your best bet is to try and make your way out 16 the building." 17 Then in the next section where you're speaking, you 18 say: 19 "OPERATOR: 22nd floor, I know, I know. But your 20 best bet is to try and get out ..." 21 Then you say that again, you use that expression 22 a third time: 23 "OPERATOR: Okay. Your, your best bet is to try and 24 leave, get outside." 25 When you were using the expression "your best bet",</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 65</p>	<p>1 were able to tell on our screens, from the numbers, if 2 the caller had called previously. There were quite a 3 few that I spoke to on more than one occasion. It was 4 relentless call after call after call. I do not 5 remember ringing anyone back or even having the chance, 6 just updating the callers with the new advice. We kept 7 asking them that if their situation changed, to keep 8 calling us back which a number of them did."</p> <p>9 Did you understand whether there were facilities to 10 be able to call people back in the Stratford control 11 room?</p> <p>12 <b>A. We can always call people back, but on that night there 13 were so many calls and so few people, we were struggling 14 just to answer the calls coming in, let alone call 15 anyone back.</b></p> <p>16 Q. Did you know whether there was a policy on not calling 17 people back?</p> <p>18 <b>A. We don't call back landlines. It's viewed that if you 19 call back a landline, you're encouraging someone to go 20 back into the fire.</b></p> <p>21 Q. Were most of the calls that you could see on your system 22 from landlines or from mobiles?</p> <p>23 <b>A. I remember seeing a large number of mobile numbers but 24 I wouldn't know the make-up of them.</b></p> <p>25 Q. Given that there were a large number of mobile numbers,</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 67</p>
<p>1 what were you trying to tell the caller?</p> <p>2 <b>A. That what I give is guidance. That the choice -- I'm 3 advising on the choice to make, that the best bet was to 4 leave. That no choice was 100 per cent safe, but that 5 was the best one that I was offering.</b></p> <p>6 Q. Do you think that reflected the instruction you'd been 7 given by Jo Smith?</p> <p>8 <b>A. I think that it did make callers aware that the best 9 thing was to leave. I had a caller that I said that to 10 and he then started panicking. He became clear that the 11 advice had now changed and this was serious.</b></p> <p>12 Q. Did you think that your job was now to tell people that 13 this was a live or die choice?</p> <p>14 <b>A. Possibly. I don't really remember at the time what 15 I thought from that.</b></p> <p>16 Q. It looks as if, by using the expression "best bet", 17 actually you were still giving the caller an element of 18 choice about it. Is that how you understood your role 19 at this point?</p> <p>20 <b>A. I don't really remember.</b></p> <p>21 Q. I just want to ask you about callbacks. 22 You say in your statement on page 7, halfway down 23 the page: 24 "There was still a stack of calls that needed to be 25 answered and we began telling them the new advice. We</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 66</p>	<p>1 does that mean that the policy of not calling them back 2 wouldn't apply to them, so you could've called them back 3 had you had the chance?</p> <p>4 <b>A. No, the policy would not have applied to the mobile 5 numbers, so there was nothing stopping us, other than 6 the volume of calls coming in.</b></p> <p>7 Q. On page 5 of your statement, if I can go back to that, 8 you say in the second from last paragraph: 9 "The Control Room uses computers as strategic 10 resource. Often a TV is on, usually showing the news, 11 so that we know what is going on. We are allowed to 12 have our mobile phones with us whilst we work but a lot 13 of the time we do not have the time to look at them." 14 Do you normally find having a TV on helpful when 15 taking a call?</p> <p>16 <b>A. I have never really found it that helpful because, other 17 than Grenfell, I haven't been involved in a major 18 incident that has been filmed on the news while you're 19 on the phone to callers.</b></p> <p>20 Q. So prior to the night of the fire, you had no experience 21 of whether or not having the TV on would've assisted you 22 or not?</p> <p>23 <b>A. No. I don't recall being in a situation where seeing it 24 would've been relevant.</b></p> <p>25 Q. On page 8 of your witness statement, you say at the</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 68</p>

<p>1 second paragraph, three lines up from the end:</p> <p>2 "We had no TV on the Control Room so I had a look on</p> <p>3 the phone and then saw the extent of the blaze. I</p> <p>4 remember someone saying, 'Oh my God! How is anyone</p> <p>5 still calling us?!' the whole building was on fire."</p> <p>6 I know it's difficult to estimate time during the</p> <p>7 night, but roughly what time of the night do you think</p> <p>8 that was?</p> <p>9 <b>A. It would've been quite late on into the incident, when</b></p> <p>10 <b>it had quietened down enough to be able to look at</b></p> <p>11 <b>social media and the internet, news.</b></p> <p>12 <b>I can't guess a time, but it would've been quite</b></p> <p>13 <b>late on.</b></p> <p>14 Q. Do you remember whether you took any further 999 calls</p> <p>15 from anybody in the building after that time?</p> <p>16 <b>A. I don't recall. I know I went back onto channel 2 when</b></p> <p>17 <b>it had quietened down enough for me to take the channel</b></p> <p>18 <b>back again.</b></p> <p>19 Q. Did seeing for the first time the image of this building</p> <p>20 on fire affect or change the advice that you had been</p> <p>21 giving to callers up to that point?</p> <p>22 <b>A. It's hard to say. It may have, because before that</b></p> <p>23 <b>I didn't know what I was dealing with. So it may have,</b></p> <p>24 <b>but I can't say that for sure.</b></p> <p>25 Q. Slightly different subject.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 69</p>	<p>1 MR MILLETT: Ms Russell, thank you very much. I've come to</p> <p>2 the end of the questions I have for you. I'm extremely</p> <p>3 grateful to you.</p> <p>4 I normally ask the chairman to rise for</p> <p>5 a few minutes just to see whether there are any further</p> <p>6 questions I need to ask you, so I'm going to ask him to</p> <p>7 do that, if I may.</p> <p>8 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes. Well, there may be a few</p> <p>9 questions that counsel has forgotten about, so I'm going</p> <p>10 to rise for 5 minutes just to let him take stock.</p> <p>11 So don't talk to anyone about your evidence while</p> <p>12 you're out of the room.</p> <p>13 If you go with the usher, we'll resume in about</p> <p>14 5 minutes.</p> <p>15 THE WITNESS: Thank you.</p> <p>16 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Right, Mr Millett, I'm going to say</p> <p>17 12.20. It's a slightly generous 5 minutes, but you</p> <p>18 never know.</p> <p>19 MR MILLETT: If I can get you back in any earlier than that,</p> <p>20 Mr Chairman, I will do that.</p> <p>21 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes, very well. Thank you.</p> <p>22 (12.14 pm)</p> <p>23 (A short break)</p> <p>24 (12.20 pm)</p> <p>25 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes, Mr Millett.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 71</p>
<p>1 Are you aware of the facility in the control room</p> <p>2 called the heli-tele downlink?</p> <p>3 <b>A. I'm aware of it, but I've never had any use or training</b></p> <p>4 <b>on it that I remember.</b></p> <p>5 Q. Does that mean that you wouldn't be able to tell me</p> <p>6 whether it would've helped you if you'd had it operating</p> <p>7 on the night?</p> <p>8 <b>A. I wouldn't know, I've never had any experience with it.</b></p> <p>9 Q. Turning to a different subject.</p> <p>10 If you had known that many callers -- or a number of</p> <p>11 callers, at least -- were calling from flats which had</p> <p>12 front doors which had no functioning automatic</p> <p>13 door-closers, would that have affected the advice that</p> <p>14 you were giving in any way?</p> <p>15 <b>A. Yes, because that would've meant that the units weren't</b></p> <p>16 <b>contained, they weren't fireproof for the amount of time</b></p> <p>17 <b>that they should have been, or may have not been</b></p> <p>18 <b>contained.</b></p> <p>19 Q. Knowing that information, what advice would you then</p> <p>20 have given?</p> <p>21 <b>A. I would've known that there would've been a lot less</b></p> <p>22 <b>time they had in where they were. So I probably</b></p> <p>23 <b>would've emphasised more at the start, knowing that they</b></p> <p>24 <b>didn't have as much time as what you'd think they would,</b></p> <p>25 <b>to leave rather than to wait for rescue.</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 70</p>	<p>1 MR MILLETT: Very few, Mr Chairman, but one or two</p> <p>2 nonetheless.</p> <p>3 Ms Russell, thank you very much for coming back to</p> <p>4 us. I don't have very many questions for you.</p> <p>5 Can the witness be shown the LFB control report,</p> <p>6 LFB00004790 at page 95.</p> <p>7 I'd like you, please, to look at the time mark of</p> <p>8 02.41.46.</p> <p>9 I'll just read it to you Ms Russell:</p> <p>10 "CRO Russell takes a call from a MPS CRO who gives</p> <p>11 details of a call they have taken from Flat 192 in</p> <p>12 Grenfell Tower where there are two adults and three</p> <p>13 children. The MPS CRO states that they are in the</p> <p>14 bedroom and the fire is in the living room. CRO Russell</p> <p>15 confirms this information and asks if the MPS CRO knows</p> <p>16 the floor number which he does not. CRO Russell states</p> <p>17 that she will pass it on to the crews."</p> <p>18 My question is: as a matter of practice or so far as</p> <p>19 you recollected, would the phone number of the caller be</p> <p>20 available to the MPS CRO?</p> <p>21 <b>A. Yes, it should have been.</b></p> <p>22 Q. We can see from this summary that he did not pass that</p> <p>23 on to you.</p> <p>24 Is there a reason why you didn't ask him for it?</p> <p>25 <b>A. Same as the others. We were taking call after call.</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 72</p>

<p>1 That would've meant not taking any more calls to call 2 back a caller. It was very likely that we already had 3 that flat number, and therefore would've known what 4 floor that flat was on, up on the board. So that 5 would've been passed over and added to the list. 6 Q. I see. 7 If you had had that number to hand, would you have 8 used it to call that number back, if it was a mobile, to 9 tell the caller of a change in stay-put advice? 10 A. If it was a silent call, I may have re-called it just to 11 make sure that they were in Grenfell Tower, that it 12 wasn't a different incident, that it wasn't a new caller 13 with a flat number that we didn't already have. 14 Q. Right. 15 A. But the Met Police Service would, I'm guessing, have 16 given some form of advice themselves as well. 17 Q. You say you're guessing; does that tell us you didn't 18 know what advice they were giving? 19 A. Yes, sorry, that's a guess, yes. 20 Q. Different question. 21 Can I ask you, please, to be shown a transcript 22 LFB00000357, which is a call at, as you can see, 23 02.30.45 seconds. This comes from flat 194 on the 24 22nd floor. 25 Just to summarise it, you took a call from Surrey</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 73</p>	<p>1 guessing. 2 MR MILLETT: Okay. Thank you very much. 3 Ms Russell, you'll be glad to know that I've come to 4 the very end of my questions. It remains for me simply 5 to thank you very much for your patience in answering 6 them and for coming to the inquiry today and assisting 7 us with our investigations. We are very grateful to 8 you, so thank you. 9 THE WITNESS: Thanks. 10 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: I'd add my thanks to those of 11 Mr Millett. It's very helpful to hear what was going on 12 in different places at different times during that 13 night. It helps us to fill in the bigger picture. So 14 it's really helpful, and thank you very much indeed for 15 coming to tell us about your part in it. 16 THE WITNESS: Thank you. 17 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: All right. You are now free to go. 18 If you would like to go with the usher, she'll look 19 after you. Thank you. 20 (The witness withdrew) 21 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes, Mr Millett. 22 MR MILLETT: Mr Chairman, thank you. 23 The next witness is going to be taken by Mr Andrew 24 Kinnier, and that is Zoe Martin from Kent Fire and 25 Rescue Services. There may be a need for a very short</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 75</p>
<p>1 Fire and Rescue services, who were passing details on 2 from a relative. 3 If you look at the second page of the call, you get 4 the details. It's a call from a woman who is concerned 5 about someone in flat 194 on the 22nd floor. 6 If we look at the bottom of the page -- I think we 7 probably get enough from this page -- you say at the 8 bottom: 9 "OPERATOR: Just the one. Okay. Thank you. We've, 10 we've got a lot of calls coming in through to that, 11 we'll pass it on to our command unit, but they're, 12 they're fighting their way up for a lot of people." 13 It's the same question I asked you before: at this 14 point, do you think you had received any information 15 about crews being able to get to the 22nd floor? 16 A. No, no information back about where they were, where 17 they would be able to get and where they wouldn't be 18 able to get. 19 Q. So, again, was this the kind of advice that you were 20 giving which was essentially reassurance but without any 21 factual information? 22 A. Yes, based on that we'd heard nothing otherwise. 23 Q. Do you remember whether you passed this message back to 24 the command unit? 25 A. That would've gone on paper and then passed over, I'm</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 74</p>	<p>1 break to change the furniture, but I'm in your hands. 2 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Do you know whether we need to 3 change the furniture or not? 4 MR MILLETT: No, we don't. 5 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Well, then -- 6 MR MILLETT: We don't. 7 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: The witness is ready? I'm told the 8 witness is ready as soon as Mr Kinnier is ready to call 9 her. 10 MR MILLETT: The witness is readier than counsel. So I'll 11 quickly move out of the way and let Mr Kinnier take 12 over. 13 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Just take your time. 14 (Pause) 15 MR KINNIER: Sir, good afternoon. 16 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes, Mr Kinnier. 17 MR KINNIER: May I call Ms Martin. 18 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Thank you. 19 ZOE MARTIN (sworn) 20 Questions by MR KINNIER 21 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Thank you very much, Ms Martin. 22 Sit down and make yourself comfortable there. 23 THE WITNESS: Thank you. 24 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: All right. 25 Yes, Mr Kinnier.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 76</p>

<p>1 MR KINNIER: First of all, would you please confirm your 2 name for the record. 3 <b>A. Yes, it's Zoe Louise Martin.</b> 4 Q. Thank you. 5 If you open the blue folder in front of you, you 6 should find there your witness statement [MET00012678] 7 dated 19 February of this year; is that right? 8 <b>A. Yes.</b> 9 Q. Have you read that statement recently? 10 <b>A. This morning I got to read over it.</b> 11 Q. Do you confirm that its contents are true? 12 <b>A. Yes.</b> 13 Q. And you're content for that statement to stand as your 14 evidence to this inquiry? 15 <b>A. Yes.</b> 16 Q. Thank you. 17 First of all, as I understand it, you are a crew 18 manager in the control room at Kent Fire and Rescue 19 Service. 20 <b>A. Yes, that's right.</b> 21 Q. As at the date of your witness statement, you had been 22 working for Kent for 6 and a half years; is that right? 23 <b>A. Yes.</b> 24 Q. Throughout that time, have you been based in the control 25 room?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 77</p>	<p>1 Q. Did the training cover stay put? 2 <b>A. In your fire survival guidance, it does cover that.</b> 3 Q. You say -- it flows probably from your answer -- the 4 training included special training regarding fire 5 survival guidance; is that right? 6 <b>A. Yes.</b> 7 Q. Can you just give us a summary of what training you 8 received in relation to FSGs? 9 <b>A. Yes. So you listen to previous fire survival guidance</b> 10 <b>calls that other operators have taken, and we also do</b> 11 <b>some mock calls. So trainers or other operators will be</b> 12 <b>in a separate room, you'll take a call from them, and it</b> 13 <b>will be a mock fire survival guidance call.</b> 14 Q. Just the one? 15 <b>A. No, it could be one or two. Yes.</b> 16 Q. But no more than that? 17 <b>A. Just whatever, you know -- how much time you have on the</b> 18 <b>day to do it, yes.</b> 19 Q. You also say in your statement -- we don't need to go to 20 it -- training is continually written into your shift 21 pattern and often takes place monthly. You go on to say 22 that it covers FSG calls. 23 Can you remember before the fire when your most 24 recent training on FSGs had been? 25 <b>A. I can't remember.</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 79</p>
<p>1 <b>A. Yes.</b> 2 Q. As I understand it, the nature of your role as crew 3 manager you summarise thus: 4 "... to supervise all calls that our operators deal 5 with to ensure that the right advice is given at all 6 times." 7 Will you take calls during the course of your shift 8 or is that left solely to control room operators? 9 <b>A. No. If the operators are busy, then we do take calls.</b> 10 Q. Will you supervise what message, what advice, the 11 control room operators are giving whilst you're on -- 12 <b>A. Yes, we monitor the calls at all times.</b> 13 Q. The first substantive topic I'd like to discuss with you 14 is training and experience. 15 <b>A. Mm-hm.</b> 16 Q. I want to ask you, first of all, about what you say at 17 page 1 of your witness statement. You don't need to go 18 to it. You say that your training consisted of 19 a six-week programme containing a number of modules. 20 Is this the initial training you received when you 21 joined? 22 <b>A. Yes, yes.</b> 23 Q. Can you remember, did that initial training cover fires 24 in high-rise buildings? 25 <b>A. Not in high-rise, just fires in domestic premises.</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 78</p>	<p>1 Q. Can you remember what the training consisted of? 2 <b>A. It is going over previous calls that have been taken</b> 3 <b>within the control room, listening to the calls, looking</b> 4 <b>at the call handling, what you may ask, what extra,</b> 5 <b>stuff like that.</b> 6 Q. Did that training cover anything about stay put? 7 <b>A. We always cover stay put, yes.</b> 8 Q. Had you had any specific training since your initial 9 training on high-rise fires? 10 <b>A. No.</b> 11 Q. Are you given any training on how to gather information 12 from callers to specifically establish things such as 13 whether they're disabled or might have mobility issues? 14 <b>A. You do -- you know, if they are in a property fire, you</b> 15 <b>ask if they can get out, but normally if a caller has</b> 16 <b>a disability or can't get out, they normally do inform</b> 17 <b>you quite early on in the call.</b> 18 Q. Presumably Kent has written policies on how to handle 19 999 calls and FSG calls; is that right? 20 <b>A. Yes.</b> 21 Q. Is there a specific policy for the handling of FSG 22 calls? 23 <b>A. I don't know. I can't remember.</b> 24 Q. Could I turn to the topic of stay put. 25 <b>A. Mm-hm.</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 80</p>

<p>1 Q. Again, it's in your statement, we don't need to go to 2 it. 3 You say there at page 2, the last paragraph: 4 "My understanding of the stay put policy within 5 buildings is that every building is different and have 6 different policies. Some have stay put policies which 7 are put in place by the building management team; and 8 others do not. Personally I would ask each caller what 9 the policy is for their building and then be guided by 10 them. If a stay put policy is in place and the 11 individual is unable to get out, we would enact the Fire 12 Survival Guidance." 13 When you say that you would ask the caller whether 14 there is a stay-put policy in place, does that mean you 15 wouldn't usually have that information in front of you? 16 <b>A. No, we don't have information.</b> 17 Q. What happens if a caller doesn't know whether there's 18 a stay-put policy in place? 19 <b>A. If no other calls had come in from the same building, we</b> 20 <b>would then start fire survival guidance, yes.</b> 21 Q. Immediately? 22 <b>A. Yes.</b> 23 Q. Okay. 24 <b>A. If they couldn't get out, yes.</b> 25 Q. What other information would you try to be gathering</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 81</p>	<p>1 "Fire Survival Guidance calls relate to calls in 2 which the caller tells us they are stuck within a 3 premises and are unable to get out." 4 How do you go about finding out that the resident is 5 in fact stuck? 6 <b>A. If smoke is coming through the door of the bedroom or</b> 7 <b>the room that they're in, and, you know, it's too</b> 8 <b>dangerous for them to exit that door and it's safer for</b> 9 <b>them to stay in the room they're in, that's when you</b> 10 <b>would give fire survival.</b> 11 Q. You also say in your statement that you stay on the 12 phone to those callers to make sure they're rescued. 13 <b>A. Mm-hm.</b> 14 Q. Would you also expect to receive updates from the 15 incident ground as to how a particular rescue is 16 progressing? 17 <b>A. Yes. So when the crews get there, they'll put back</b> 18 <b>messages via the radio. You know, normally if they know</b> 19 <b>someone's in, it's, you know, maybe a swift rescue. So</b> 20 <b>I just normally stay on the phone to the caller and see</b> 21 <b>if they can hear anybody shouting, or if they can see</b> 22 <b>the fire service outside.</b> 23 Q. Would you get any specific updates from the incident 24 ground saying, "We've deployed a crew, crew have located 25 the flat, crew have rescued the residents, mission</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 83</p>
<p>1 from a caller who is calling from a building that has 2 a stay-put policy? Could you take us through the type 3 of information you'd be after? 4 <b>A. Obviously you would get their address. So normally</b> 5 <b>a stay-put policy is in a block of flats, for example,</b> 6 <b>so you would get the flat number, what floor they were</b> 7 <b>on, determine what room they were in. I always try and</b> 8 <b>get the route -- so if we were to enter via the front</b> 9 <b>door, would our firefighters turn left or right, you</b> 10 <b>know, the route in to find them in that specific room.</b> 11 Q. Would you ask them about the extent to which their flat 12 had been affected by heat or smoke? 13 <b>A. Yes. If smoke was coming in, we'd ask them to put stuff</b> 14 <b>at the bottom of the door, yes.</b> 15 Q. Can you explain in what circumstances you would advise 16 a person within a building that is governed by 17 a stay-put policy to leave? 18 <b>A. Well, unless we've been told that that stay-put isn't</b> 19 <b>relevant -- but I've never been in a situation to have</b> 20 <b>to do that, so I can't answer that.</b> 21 Q. Can I turn next to fire survival guidance itself. 22 <b>A. Mm-hm.</b> 23 Q. Again, at page 2 of your witness statement -- it's the 24 second paragraph from the bottom for reference -- you 25 explain that:</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 82</p>	<p>1 completed", something along those lines? 2 <b>A. Yes. They would always update us with radio messages,</b> 3 <b>yes, throughout the incident.</b> 4 Q. Can I now talk to calls from other brigades. 5 <b>A. Mm-hm.</b> 6 Q. At page 3 of your witness statement -- again, we don't 7 need to go to it unless you want to, but it's the first 8 big paragraph on that page -- you say this: 9 "In the event that we take calls from other Brigades 10 the protocol would be to keep the caller on the line and 11 call the other Brigade simultaneously and introduce the 12 caller to that Brigade having told them what was being 13 reported. For a Brigade like London, we have them on 14 speed dial. If we do not receive any answer, we would 15 take ownership of the call and continue to take all 16 relevant information whilst continuing to try and 17 contact the necessary Brigade." 18 You refer there to protocol. 19 Is that protocol contained within a formalised 20 document or not? 21 <b>A. I'm unsure.</b> 22 Q. Have you received any training on what the arrangements 23 are when you take calls in relation to incidents covered 24 by other brigades? 25 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 84</p>

1 Q. Can you give us help, what type of training have you  
2 been given in respect of that?

3 **A. Its just how to handle the call, what information we**  
4 **should take. We then ask the caller to stay on the**  
5 **line. We then do the short dial to whichever brigade,**  
6 **introduce the caller, pass over a mobile number in case**  
7 **we lose them, and then we just transfer the caller**  
8 **through.**

9 Q. Do you have phone lines which are dedicated for that  
10 purpose?

11 **A. Well, we have short dials. We don't have a particular**  
12 **phone that is, you know, for London Fire, but we have**  
13 **short dials on our telephone.**

14 Q. In your previous experience of dealing with London, do  
15 those calls go straight through to a CRO or do they go  
16 through to a supervisor within the Brigade control in  
17 London?

18 **A. It goes through to an operator.**

19 Q. Apart from London, do you know which other brigade Kent  
20 is able to take calls for?

21 **A. Essex we take calls for, and East Sussex and Surrey.**

22 Q. And they're your buddy fire and rescue services?

23 **A. We don't have a buddy fire and rescue; they're our**  
24 **neighbouring services.**

25 Q. On the night of 14 June, we know it was a BT operator

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1 who called and asked if Kent was able to take calls on  
2 behalf of the LFB.

3 Is that how usually the system works, you get  
4 contacted by BT first?

5 **A. For example, if we take a call on somebody else's**  
6 **ground, that's because a telephone master has picked it**  
7 **up, so it comes through to us. If, for example, for**  
8 **this night, because of the number of calls they were**  
9 **taking, that's when the BT operator will contact us to**  
10 **see if we can help for overflow of calls.**

11 Q. In your experience, is it usually the BT operator who  
12 decides to divert calls from London to other areas?

13 **A. The BT operator will call us, ask if we are able to. We**  
14 **would then double-check with our senior management and**  
15 **then we would call BT back and say yes or no, you know,**  
16 **we're able to assist.**

17 Q. When you say you checked with senior management, what  
18 rank are we talking about that you'd contact?

19 **A. It will be our duty control manager.**

20 Q. On 14 June, can you remember who your duty control  
21 manager was on that night?

22 **A. It was Station Manager Gill.**

23 Q. Thank you.

24 When you've taken ownership of a call, is there  
25 a means of getting information about the details of the

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1 incident?

2 **A. Can you ...?**

3 Q. When you accept calls from another Brigade's area --

4 **A. Mm-hm.**

5 Q. -- is there a means by which you can contact that  
6 brigade to get more details about the particular  
7 incident that you're about to start receiving 999 calls  
8 in respect of?

9 **A. To be honest, it doesn't happen often that we get**  
10 **overflow of calls from another brigade. That's the**  
11 **first time that I've experienced it.**

12 Q. In the event that you do need more detail than you're  
13 getting from the 999 call itself, has your training  
14 given you any number that you can contact to get more  
15 detail about an incident from, if I can call it, the  
16 home brigade?

17 **A. It will be just the short dial number, yes.**

18 Q. Again, that could go through to the operator?

19 **A. Yes.**

20 Q. Is there a way of passing on relevant information that  
21 the caller gives you directly to the incident ground?

22 **A. From another brigade?**

23 Q. Yes.

24 **A. No. So we would tell the relevant control room and they**  
25 **will speak to their ground. We don't have contact with**

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1 **other brigades on the incident ground.**

2 Q. Have you heard -- you told us you haven't had previous  
3 experience -- people using an Airwave radio as a means  
4 of contacting the incident ground in an incident covered  
5 by another brigade?

6 **A. We would never contact an incident ground of another**  
7 **brigade.**

8 Q. Could I now turn to the night of the fire itself,  
9 Ms Martin.

10 **A. Mm-hm.**

11 Q. Just to get this right, as I understand it, you're in  
12 overall charge of the control room; is that right?

13 **A. Yes.**

14 Q. With you was Mitch Samson, who is a crew manager --

15 **A. Yes.**

16 Q. -- Paul Stables, who is a radio operator --

17 **A. Mm-hm.**

18 Q. -- and Jade Millsom was a phone operator.

19 **A. Yes.**

20 Q. In your statement, you refer to Chris Else as the senior  
21 manager. Can you help us, where does he lie in your  
22 chain of command?

23 **A. He would've been our duty group manager for that night.**

24 Q. So he would be above Linda Gill?

25 **A. Yes.**

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22 (Pages 85 to 88)

<p>1 Q. Again, you've set out that your duty control manager was 2 Linda Gill. 3 <b>A. Mm-hm.</b> 4 Q. Was she within the control chain of command or does she 5 have any operational experience? 6 <b>A. She used to work in the control room. She's now</b> 7 <b>a station manager.</b> 8 Q. Do you need access in the control room to someone who 9 has operational experience? 10 <b>A. Normally all of our senior managers have operational</b> 11 <b>experience.</b> 12 Q. Do you have operational experience? 13 <b>A. No.</b> 14 Q. So are you an exception to the rule? 15 <b>A. Most people in the control room do not. There's some</b> 16 <b>part-time firefighters, but normally us in the control</b> 17 <b>room -- we don't have operational experience.</b> 18 Q. If I could ask you to turn to page 3 of your witness 19 statement, and if you look at the fourth paragraph on 20 that page, five lines down, you say this: 21 "At some point in the night, I cannot be sure of any 22 times, we received a phone call from BT asking whether 23 we would be prepared to take calls on behalf of the 24 London Fire Brigade ..." 25 We can go to it if you want to, but we have an entry</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 89</p>	<p>1 <b>A. I can't remember.</b> 2 Q. At that stage, did you know what advice in relation to 3 stay put was being given to residents? 4 <b>A. I knew that it was a stay-put policy.</b> 5 Q. Can you remember whether you were told that at 01.47 or 6 later on in the evening? 7 <b>A. What, that it was a stay-put policy?</b> 8 Q. Yes. 9 <b>A. Well, we were told -- we knew that.</b> 10 Q. You knew that anyway? 11 <b>A. Yes, we were told that, yes.</b> 12 Q. Did you discuss at this initial stage what advice your 13 team should be giving to residents phoning from the 14 tower? 15 <b>A. When we found out we were taking calls for London,</b> 16 <b>I looked on the news, saw the incident and I told my</b> 17 <b>team that we may be receiving very difficult calls.</b> 18 <b>Yes.</b> 19 Q. That flows into my next question. 20 You say, same page, the fourth paragraph on page 3, 21 four lines from the bottom, that you were prompted to 22 look at the news, which you just said. 23 Do you remember how soon after the initial call from 24 BT that was? 25 <b>A. Quite --</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 91</p>
<p>1 in the Brigade control report at 01.47, that's at 2 page 50, recording Christine Howson taking a call from 3 Kent explaining that BT have been in contact and asking 4 Control Room Officer Howson for the details of the 5 incident, including the address. CRO Howson explains it 6 is a 25-pump fire with persons reported. 7 Does 01.47 sound about right for the time when you 8 were first contacted by BT? 9 <b>A. It sounds correct, yes.</b> 10 Q. Do you know who it was who then called LFB control from 11 Kent? 12 <b>A. I believe it would've been Paul, who was on the radio.</b> 13 <b>I asked him to be my go-to. As he was on the radio and</b> 14 <b>we were quiet that night, there was no radio traffic at</b> 15 <b>that time, so I asked him to be our liaison.</b> 16 Q. That's Paul Stables -- 17 <b>A. Yes.</b> 18 Q. -- who we referred to earlier? 19 <b>A. Yes, yes.</b> 20 Q. At that time, were you made aware that it was a 25-pump 21 fire? 22 <b>A. I can't remember.</b> 23 Q. Can you remember whether you were informed as to the 24 number of pumps being escalated during the course of the 25 night?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 90</p>	<p>1 Q. Moments? 2 <b>A. Yes.</b> 3 Q. Do you remember having any thoughts about whether 4 compartmentation had been breached or not? 5 <b>A. I don't understand the question.</b> 6 Q. You're aware of the principle of compartmentation? 7 <b>A. No.</b> 8 Q. That buildings are designed so that a fire is contained 9 within a particular compartment. 10 <b>A. Okay, yes.</b> 11 Q. Did you have any thoughts about whether that principle 12 held good? 13 <b>A. No.</b> 14 Q. No? 15 <b>A. No.</b> 16 Q. When you looked at the footage that was being broadcast 17 on the television, what crossed your mind as to the 18 particular advice that would require to be given to 19 those calling in relation to the fire? 20 <b>A. I just informed the team that fire survival guidance,</b> 21 <b>you know, will be the advice that will be given out,</b> 22 <b>yes.</b> 23 Q. We know from your statement that Kent had access to 24 images from the helicam. Was the helicam footage 25 available as soon as you were notified of the incident?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 92</p>

<p>1 <b>A. Automatically on our screen you can open up the CCTV.</b></p> <p>2 <b>I always do it when I start a shift as a manager in the</b></p> <p>3 <b>control room. That covers the whole of Kent and there</b></p> <p>4 <b>is a screen that is a helicam.</b></p> <p>5 <b>I don't think it was on at the beginning, but that</b></p> <p>6 <b>is something that the police helicopter turn on.</b></p> <p>7 <b>It's --</b></p> <p>8 Q. You're dependent upon them?</p> <p>9 <b>A. Yes, they have to switch the switch to turn it on, yes.</b></p> <p>10 Q. Does it help having footage from the helicam when giving</p> <p>11 advice and thinking what the appropriate advice is to</p> <p>12 give to those calling?</p> <p>13 <b>A. Not that night, no.</b></p> <p>14 Q. Why do you say that?</p> <p>15 <b>A. It was on the heat camera, as it were, so the whole</b></p> <p>16 <b>building was obviously glowing, so you couldn't really</b></p> <p>17 <b>determine floors and stuff. So it would've made no</b></p> <p>18 <b>difference to the advice we gave.</b></p> <p>19 Q. Does the same drawback apply to the footage you saw</p> <p>20 being broadcast on the telly?</p> <p>21 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>22 Q. You also say in that paragraph on page 3 that for a few</p> <p>23 hours you received nothing.</p> <p>24 <b>A. Mm-hm.</b></p> <p>25 Q. Did that surprise you?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 93</p>	<p>1 Q. Again, we can go to the Brigade control report if it</p> <p>2 helps, but I'll give you some background before I ask</p> <p>3 you some questions, if that's all right, Ms Martin.</p> <p>4 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>5 Q. There was a call taken by a Kent CRO at 02.57 from</p> <p>6 a caller in flat 73 on the 10th floor.</p> <p>7 Then we see at 02.59 -- so roughly 2 minutes</p> <p>8 later -- a record of CRO Gotts at LFB control taking</p> <p>9 a call from someone in Kent explaining that they have</p> <p>10 a caller from flat 73 on the line. CRO Gotts confirms</p> <p>11 that the current advice is to leave the building.</p> <p>12 <b>A. Mm-hm.</b></p> <p>13 Q. I can take you to that summary if it helps from the</p> <p>14 Brigade control report, but are you content to rely on</p> <p>15 the information I've given you?</p> <p>16 <b>A. Yes, yes.</b></p> <p>17 Q. Okay.</p> <p>18 If I can ask you to go to page 4 of your witness</p> <p>19 statement, and it's really the bottom paragraph, at the</p> <p>20 end of the first line. You say this:</p> <p>21 "I had been in touch with London regarding the 'stay</p> <p>22 put' policy and we were advised that the policy had been</p> <p>23 withdrawn ..."</p> <p>24 Do you think this call recorded with CRO Gotts at</p> <p>25 02.59 was you?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 95</p>
<p>1 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>2 Q. Did you try and make contact with LFB control to find</p> <p>3 out what was happening?</p> <p>4 <b>A. No, because I knew that they would be extremely busy.</b></p> <p>5 Q. So you just waited --</p> <p>6 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>7 Q. -- and prepared for any calls that may come your way?</p> <p>8 <b>A. Yes, yes.</b></p> <p>9 Q. Okay.</p> <p>10 We don't need to go to it unless it would help you,</p> <p>11 but we have a record in the Brigade control report of</p> <p>12 a call from a Kent CRO at 02.18 in which the Kent CRO</p> <p>13 asked LFB control for the reference of the incident.</p> <p>14 Could you help us, why would the incident number be</p> <p>15 required by Kent?</p> <p>16 <b>A. Because we will make an incident our end, if we took any</b></p> <p>17 <b>calls, and it's just for reference, cross-referencing.</b></p> <p>18 <b>If we needed to ring London at a later date, we have</b></p> <p>19 <b>their incident number.</b></p> <p>20 Q. The next topic I'd like to discuss with you is the</p> <p>21 change in stay-put advice that happened on the night.</p> <p>22 <b>A. Mm-hm.</b></p> <p>23 Q. I think probably by the time you took your first call at</p> <p>24 03.22, the advice had already changed.</p> <p>25 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 94</p>	<p>1 <b>A. No.</b></p> <p>2 Q. Who do you think it could've been from Kent making that</p> <p>3 call?</p> <p>4 <b>A. It would've been Paul Stables, I believe.</b></p> <p>5 Q. Okay.</p> <p>6 Apologies, it's always difficult asking questions</p> <p>7 about timing.</p> <p>8 <b>A. Mm-hm.</b></p> <p>9 Q. Do you think the timing that we have, 02.57, is about</p> <p>10 right?</p> <p>11 <b>A. I can't remember.</b></p> <p>12 Q. Roughly an hour after the first notification from BT?</p> <p>13 <b>A. About that, I can't remember, sorry.</b></p> <p>14 Q. Can you remember Paul feeding back this information to</p> <p>15 you?</p> <p>16 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>17 Q. Yes?</p> <p>18 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>19 Q. Was that the first time you had been made aware that LFB</p> <p>20 control were telling people to leave rather than stay</p> <p>21 put?</p> <p>22 <b>A. Yes. I asked Paul to contact LFB to see if the stay-put</b></p> <p>23 <b>policy was still in place and what information they were</b></p> <p>24 <b>giving their callers so that we, you know, carried on</b></p> <p>25 <b>the same, consistent --</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 96</p>



<p>1 Q. What prompted you to make that call? Was it looking at 2 the TV footage?</p> <p>3 <b>A. No, just the other call that was coming into our control 4 room was a lengthy call, so I asked Paul just to double 5 check with London if they had changed any of their 6 policies, just so that it was consistent between all 7 control rooms.</b></p> <p>8 Q. Once the information had come back from CRO Gotts, 9 presumably you notified the rest of the Kent team of the 10 change in advice?</p> <p>11 <b>A. Yes. It was just the four of us in there and I did let 12 them know, yes.</b></p> <p>13 Q. Can you remember -- again, apologies, it's difficult 14 with this passing of time -- the words you used or the 15 gist of the words you used in communicating the change 16 of advice to your team?</p> <p>17 <b>A. There's only four of us in the room, it's not a large 18 room, so I just said to them all: "Just to let you know, 19 you know, the stay-put policy is no more." So ...</b></p> <p>20 Q. They were to get out?</p> <p>21 <b>A. Well, I said, "If you do receive any calls, you know, 22 see if they can get out", yes.</b></p> <p>23 Q. Okay.</p> <p>24 Can you remember any later discussions with LFB 25 control about what advice to give to callers?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 97</p>	<p>1 <b>A. I could hear what he was saying. We don't monitor him 2 as a crew manager, so I couldn't hear what she was 3 saying back, but I could hear the conversation he was 4 having.</b></p> <p>5 Q. Can you remember what advice he gave, if any, about 6 staying put or leaving?</p> <p>7 <b>A. I can't remember.</b></p> <p>8 Q. Okay.</p> <p>9 Obviously the call with CRO Gotts was at 02.59, and 10 that would be 2 minutes after Mr Samson gets on the line 11 to flat 73.</p> <p>12 Can you remember whether, after you'd received the 13 call from CRO Gotts, you told Mr Samson to phone flat 73 14 back?</p> <p>15 <b>A. He was already on the phone to them, I believe.</b></p> <p>16 Q. So did you hear him change the advice he gave to the 17 caller?</p> <p>18 <b>A. I heard him say to them if they can get out, and I know 19 they did try a few times to get out, but they couldn't.</b></p> <p>20 Q. Would it be possible to bring up the control report 21 itself, which is LFB00004790, at page 110.</p> <p>22 You'll see there in respect of the call at 02.57.32 23 there's a chunk of text.</p> <p>24 <b>A. Mm-hm.</b></p> <p>25 Q. Might I ask you just to briefly read that to yourself</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 99</p>
<p>1 <b>A. I can't remember.</b></p> <p>2 Q. Did you have any information at this stage regarding 3 conditions within the tower, particularly on the 4 stairwells and on lobbies?</p> <p>5 <b>A. No.</b></p> <p>6 Q. No?</p> <p>7 <b>A. Not that I can remember.</b></p> <p>8 Q. Ms Martin, I'd now like to turn to certain calls that 9 were received by Kent on the night, if that's okay.</p> <p>10 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>11 Q. Again, if at any stage you want a break, please just say 12 so.</p> <p>13 <b>A. Yes, that's fine.</b></p> <p>14 Q. The first call I'd like to discuss with you is in 15 respect of flat 73. That was a flat on the 10th floor 16 and the caller was a lady called Ann Chance.</p> <p>17 <b>A. Mm-hm.</b></p> <p>18 Q. Going back to the call from the Kent CRO at 02.57, which 19 I think we think is Paul Stables, Mitch Samson in his 20 witness statement says he took a call in relation to 21 flat 73. Do you remember Mitch taking that call?</p> <p>22 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>23 Q. How close to Mitch were you when he took that call?</p> <p>24 <b>A. He sits next to me.</b></p> <p>25 Q. Were you able to overhear the entire conversation?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 98</p>	<p>1 just so that you're familiar with what it says and then 2 I'll ask you a few questions about it.</p> <p>3 (Pause)</p> <p>4 You'll see roughly 11 lines down, the text says: 5 "The caller says that she is confused because Kent 6 FRS is telling them to stay and on the other line they 7 are being told to evacuate. The CRO says that if it 8 safe to evacuate then they should but the caller says it 9 isn't safe."</p> <p>10 By that stage, how do you assess whether you should 11 just say directly to the caller "You need to get out"?</p> <p>12 How do you assess whether to make that decision or not?</p> <p>13 <b>A. It all depends, you know, what's happening outside their 14 door. If smoke is coming in, if the back of the door 15 feels hot -- you're determined by what the caller tells 16 you, so ...</b></p> <p>17 Q. Can you remember whether you pressed Mr Samson to give 18 advice to the caller to get out, to be more explicit?</p> <p>19 <b>A. I informed him the policy had changed for London Fire 20 Brigade and I left him to deal with the call.</b></p> <p>21 Q. Do you know what feedback Mr Samson gave to London about 22 what had been reported to him by the caller?</p> <p>23 <b>A. All of the information was put on an incident log. That 24 incident log was then -- Paul Stables, as I asked him to 25 speak to London, I believe Paul would then have rang</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 100</p>

<p>1 <b>London to update them on the information.</b></p> <p>2 Q. I suppose my question was more directed to the substance</p> <p>3 of what Mr Samson may have told London. Can you</p> <p>4 remember what he said? Were you next to him when he</p> <p>5 updated London?</p> <p>6 <b>A. I can't remember --</b></p> <p>7 Q. Okay.</p> <p>8 <b>A. -- what he said.</b></p> <p>9 Q. The next call I'd like to discuss with you is in</p> <p>10 relation to flat 194, which is on the 22nd floor, and</p> <p>11 the resident was a man called Mr Anthony Disson.</p> <p>12 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>13 Q. As I understand it, you took the call in relation to</p> <p>14 Mr Disson from his daughter-in-law; is that right?</p> <p>15 <b>A. Yes, it was his wife.</b></p> <p>16 Q. His wife?</p> <p>17 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>18 Q. The first of these calls is at 03.22.51.</p> <p>19 <b>A. Mm-hm.</b></p> <p>20 Q. If I could ask for us to go to page 129 in the control</p> <p>21 report.</p> <p>22 If I could just ask you to refresh your memory</p> <p>23 before I ask you questions.</p> <p>24 (Pause)</p> <p>25 And if you can go on to the next page, please.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 101</p>	<p>1 "OPERATOR: Okay, we're gonna give him the best</p> <p>2 advice that we can that we've been given from London</p> <p>3 Fire, okay, so I'll give him a call."</p> <p>4 In your witness statement on page 4 -- we can go to</p> <p>5 it if we need to -- you say:</p> <p>6 "I advised what I normally would for Fire Survival</p> <p>7 Guidance but also assured her that I would personally</p> <p>8 phone him as well."</p> <p>9 At that stage, was there a reason why you didn't</p> <p>10 tell her that the advice had changed to get out</p> <p>11 effectively?</p> <p>12 <b>A. No.</b></p> <p>13 Q. Can you give us a reason why you wouldn't have said that</p> <p>14 to her?</p> <p>15 <b>A. Obviously she's going to be in shock, so I just didn't</b></p> <p>16 <b>want to share that advice with her. That's why I said</b></p> <p>17 <b>I would call him myself and give the advice.</b></p> <p>18 Q. Would there be something to be said -- you've got to</p> <p>19 balance a number of considerations. On the one hand,</p> <p>20 you don't want to cause unnecessary distress to the</p> <p>21 caller.</p> <p>22 <b>A. Mm-hm.</b></p> <p>23 Q. But equally you know that the resident is calling his</p> <p>24 wife, who is calling you.</p> <p>25 Is there something to be said for telling her that</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 103</p>
<p>1 (Pause)</p> <p>2 We have the wife of the resident calling you from</p> <p>3 Kent, where she was on holiday. The call was put</p> <p>4 through to you via an operator in Dundee.</p> <p>5 Do you know why the call came via Dundee, of all</p> <p>6 places? It just did?</p> <p>7 <b>A. Yeah, it's just where the BT operators are based.</b></p> <p>8 Q. If Ralph could put down the control report and put up</p> <p>9 the transcript of the call, which can be found at</p> <p>10 LFB00000659, and if I could ask you to turn to page 2.</p> <p>11 If I could ask you just to have a quick read of that</p> <p>12 page before I ask you questions.</p> <p>13 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Can you see it clearly enough?</p> <p>14 <b>A. Yes, thank you.</b></p> <p>15 (Pause)</p> <p>16 MR KINNIER: If we could turn over the page to page 3, just</p> <p>17 so you can familiarise yourself with it.</p> <p>18 (Pause)</p> <p>19 As we've seen, at the bottom third of page 2 of the</p> <p>20 transcript the caller says:</p> <p>21 "CALLER: ... First of all the fire brigade kept</p> <p>22 saying to him, 'Stay put, stay put' now no one ain't</p> <p>23 going to him. He's been in trapped in there for over an</p> <p>24 hour."</p> <p>25 On page 3, you say:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 102</p>	<p>1 the advice has changed in case the resident contacts his</p> <p>2 wife again, so he knows the advice that is being given</p> <p>3 by the LFB to get out?</p> <p>4 <b>A. I didn't think about it, to be honest.</b></p> <p>5 Q. Could I now turn to the second call you received in</p> <p>6 relation to this flat.</p> <p>7 If I could ask Ralph to go back to the control</p> <p>8 report, so LFB00004790, and if I could ask you to go to</p> <p>9 page 136 within that document.</p> <p>10 We see it's 03.31.23, at the top of that page.</p> <p>11 It says:</p> <p>12 "Kent FRS make a call to a resident believed to be</p> <p>13 Anthony Disson who explains that he say[sic] on the</p> <p>14 stairs. The Kent CRO asks if he knows what floor he is</p> <p>15 on and the line goes dead."</p> <p>16 If I could ask you, Ralph -- let's go to the</p> <p>17 transcript. That's at LFB00000660.</p> <p>18 If I could ask you just to read to yourself the</p> <p>19 first page of that.</p> <p>20 (Pause)</p> <p>21 You'll see roughly the third entry from the bottom:</p> <p>22 "OPERATOR: ... are your doors closed?"</p> <p>23 <b>A. Mm-hm.</b></p> <p>24 Q. At that stage in the conversation, you appear to have</p> <p>25 thought he was still within the flat.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 104</p>

<p>1 Was that simply you assumed he was still in the flat</p> <p>2 because he hadn't told you otherwise at that stage?</p> <p>3 <b>A. Yeah.</b></p> <p>4 Q. Do you remember why you were asking whether the doors</p> <p>5 were closed or not?</p> <p>6 <b>A. As fire survival, you know, you always make sure the</b></p> <p>7 <b>door is closed to the fire. Yes.</b></p> <p>8 Q. Do you remember once you'd finished the call with the</p> <p>9 gentleman calling back London to give them an update as</p> <p>10 to what his position was?</p> <p>11 <b>A. I wouldn't have called back but --</b></p> <p>12 Q. Paul would've done?</p> <p>13 <b>A. -- Paul would've done, yes.</b></p> <p>14 Q. So we get an understanding of the information that's</p> <p>15 being reported back, can you remember the best you can</p> <p>16 what you told Paul to report back to London?</p> <p>17 <b>A. No, I can't remember. It would've been confirming the</b></p> <p>18 <b>flat number and the floor, definitely, and maybe where</b></p> <p>19 <b>his location was, but I can't fully remember.</b></p> <p>20 Q. The fact that he was on the stairs was obviously quite</p> <p>21 a vital bit of information. Can you remember -- don't</p> <p>22 speculate if you can't --</p> <p>23 <b>A. No, I can't remember.</b></p> <p>24 Q. -- whether you identified the stairs or not?</p> <p>25 <b>A. I can't remember.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 105</p>	<p>1 I'll just let you refresh your memory, Ms Martin.</p> <p>2 (Pause)</p> <p>3 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>4 Q. Looking at page 2, it seems that you explained to her</p> <p>5 that you tried to call Mr Disson back; is that a fair</p> <p>6 summary?</p> <p>7 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>8 Q. Is it standard practice in Kent control to try to call</p> <p>9 someone back where the line goes dead?</p> <p>10 <b>A. In that case, yes.</b></p> <p>11 Q. In your view, would it be practicable to call someone</p> <p>12 back if things had changed since you last spoke to them,</p> <p>13 for example if advice as to whether to leave --</p> <p>14 <b>A. It depends on the number of calls you were getting, you</b></p> <p>15 <b>know, if you could start to call people back.</b></p> <p>16 Q. Okay.</p> <p>17 The penultimate topic I'd like to discuss with you,</p> <p>18 and that's the question of door-closers.</p> <p>19 Were you ever made aware during the course of the</p> <p>20 night that there was an issue in the building concerning</p> <p>21 malfunctioning of self-closing front flat entrance</p> <p>22 doors?</p> <p>23 <b>A. No.</b></p> <p>24 Q. If you had been aware of any issue regarding</p> <p>25 door-closers to the flat entrance doors, would that have</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 107</p>
<p>1 MR KINNIER: Sir, there's one third and final call that it</p> <p>2 may be best to deal with before we adjourn, if that's</p> <p>3 all right for you, and obviously convenient for the</p> <p>4 witness.</p> <p>5 THE WITNESS: Yes.</p> <p>6 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Can I just ask, how long do you</p> <p>7 think you may need to be with Ms Martin?</p> <p>8 MR KINNIER: To finish my questions, no more than</p> <p>9 10 minutes.</p> <p>10 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: I imagine you would prefer to finish</p> <p>11 your evidence before lunch if we can manage it.</p> <p>12 THE WITNESS: If possible, yes.</p> <p>13 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: On you go, Mr Kinnier.</p> <p>14 MR KINNIER: Again, if you want a break, please shout.</p> <p>15 <b>A. No, that's fine, thank you.</b></p> <p>16 Q. If we can go to the third call, which I think is with</p> <p>17 Mr Disson's wife, that was at 03.46.42.</p> <p>18 Ralph, would you mind putting up on the screen the</p> <p>19 control report, LFB00004790 at page 139.</p> <p>20 We see 03.46.42, so roughly the middle of the way</p> <p>21 down the page. I'll just let you refresh your memory of</p> <p>22 that.</p> <p>23 (Pause)</p> <p>24 If we can go to the transcript, which is,</p> <p>25 LFB00000661, and page 2 of that transcript.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 106</p>	<p>1 affected the advice you gave to callers coming through</p> <p>2 to Kent?</p> <p>3 <b>A. In regards to their own domestic front doors?</b></p> <p>4 Q. Yes. The flat front entrance.</p> <p>5 <b>A. It depends what room they're in. If they're in</b></p> <p>6 <b>a bedroom, then they can still shut that door, you know.</b></p> <p>7 Q. The final question I'd like to ask -- it may be that you</p> <p>8 can't assist us on this, but you're here, so we take the</p> <p>9 advantage.</p> <p>10 <b>A. Okay.</b></p> <p>11 Q. Would it have been part of your job to have considered</p> <p>12 what resources Kent Fire and Rescue Services could've</p> <p>13 offered to London to assist?</p> <p>14 <b>A. No -- to offer? They were obviously extremely busy, so</b></p> <p>15 <b>that's not a conversation we would have had. If they</b></p> <p>16 <b>called us for assistance with appliances, then yes, we</b></p> <p>17 <b>would've offered them to them. But as it stands, the</b></p> <p>18 <b>people in charge of their control room know that we have</b></p> <p>19 <b>resources they can use if they need to, so we'll just</b></p> <p>20 <b>wait until --</b></p> <p>21 Q. If a request had come from London, would you then</p> <p>22 communicate that request, say, to your duty manager --</p> <p>23 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>24 Q. -- who would then refer it up to senior management?</p> <p>25 <b>A. Yes. Well, if they requested our appliances, we do send</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 108</p>

<p>1 <b>them straight away.</b></p> <p>2 Q. You have that authority, do you?</p> <p>3 <b>A. Yes, yes.</b></p> <p>4 Q. Can you help us finally with this question: what number</p> <p>5 of appliances would you usually deploy to a high-rise</p> <p>6 fire within Kent on your predetermined deployment?</p> <p>7 <b>A. Every building has its own predetermined attendance. So</b></p> <p>8 <b>it could change depending on the number of floors.</b></p> <p>9 Q. But for high-rise buildings, is there a base minimum of</p> <p>10 appliances that would be --</p> <p>11 <b>A. I believe it's four pumps and a height vehicle.</b></p> <p>12 MR KINNIER: Okay.</p> <p>13 Ms Martin, those are all the questions that I have.</p> <p>14 The custom is that the chairman allows me a break to</p> <p>15 check that I've covered everything.</p> <p>16 Sir, if you wouldn't mind allowing me 5 minutes.</p> <p>17 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: It doesn't take very long.</p> <p>18 If I say 1.10 or sooner if you're ready sooner.</p> <p>19 MR KINNIER: Thank you, sir.</p> <p>20 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: We're going to have a break for</p> <p>21 5 minutes. I have to ask you, please, not to talk to</p> <p>22 anyone about your evidence while you're out of the room.</p> <p>23 THE WITNESS: Yes, yes. Thank very much.</p> <p>24 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: If you go with the usher, she'll</p> <p>25 look after you. Thank very much.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 109</p>	<p>1 His wife recalls that she was informed by a CRO --</p> <p>2 she can't remember whether Kent or London -- to stay off</p> <p>3 the line whilst they were trying to get through.</p> <p>4 Can you remember, would you have said that to her?</p> <p>5 <b>A. I can't remember. But if I was trying to call the</b></p> <p>6 <b>husband, I'd have asked her to try not to call him just</b></p> <p>7 <b>so that we could give the best advice we could.</b></p> <p>8 Q. Is that standard practice or is it something you decided</p> <p>9 was appropriate because of the particular</p> <p>10 circumstances --</p> <p>11 <b>A. Because of the circumstances.</b></p> <p>12 Q. Okay.</p> <p>13 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>14 Q. The final topic is the footage from the helcam.</p> <p>15 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>16 Q. Were you aware that you could see images of individuals</p> <p>17 and where they were located?</p> <p>18 <b>A. No.</b></p> <p>19 Q. No.</p> <p>20 <b>A. You could just see an outline of the building, because</b></p> <p>21 <b>it was on the heat camera, so the outline of the</b></p> <p>22 <b>building and you just saw that it was hot, for example.</b></p> <p>23 <b>You couldn't see anything else.</b></p> <p>24 Q. Presumably you would've found it helpful to have had</p> <p>25 imagery which identified, first of all, where</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 111</p>
<p>1 Right, 1.10 or sooner if you're ready sooner.</p> <p>2 MR KINNIER: Thank you, sir.</p> <p>3 (1.06 pm)</p> <p>4 (A short break)</p> <p>5 (1.10 pm)</p> <p>6 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: I think there are one or two</p> <p>7 questions.</p> <p>8 THE WITNESS: Yes, okay.</p> <p>9 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: I hope not too many.</p> <p>10 MR KINNIER: Ms Martin, thanks very much for your time.</p> <p>11 Just a few more questions.</p> <p>12 First of all a question about resourcing of the</p> <p>13 control room at Kent.</p> <p>14 If asked, could you have supplied more operator</p> <p>15 services on the night, for example by calling in</p> <p>16 off-duty operators?</p> <p>17 <b>A. We do have that facility, but we didn't have that many</b></p> <p>18 <b>calls, so we didn't need to do that.</b></p> <p>19 Q. What's the maximum number of people you can call in</p> <p>20 should the need arise?</p> <p>21 <b>A. Well, we have six desks --</b></p> <p>22 Q. And that defines the number of --</p> <p>23 <b>A. -- in our control room, yes.</b></p> <p>24 Q. Next question is in relation to your calls with</p> <p>25 Mr Disson.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 110</p>	<p>1 individuals were, or individuals within the building and</p> <p>2 their location?</p> <p>3 <b>A. Not necessarily. I don't think it would've changed the</b></p> <p>4 <b>advice or anything that we would've done in Kent, no.</b></p> <p>5 Q. Were you aware that you could hear the commentary of the</p> <p>6 helicopter pilots who --</p> <p>7 <b>A. We don't have any. You can't hear anything from the</b></p> <p>8 <b>CCTV.</b></p> <p>9 MR KINNIER: Okay.</p> <p>10 Ms Martin, those are all my questions. Thank you</p> <p>11 very much for coming along to give evidence today.</p> <p>12 We're very grateful.</p> <p>13 THE WITNESS: Thank you very much.</p> <p>14 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: I would add my thanks to those of</p> <p>15 Mr Kinnier.</p> <p>16 I'm sorry, by the way, if we've kept you waiting all</p> <p>17 morning to give your evidence.</p> <p>18 THE WITNESS: No, that's fine.</p> <p>19 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: I'm afraid that's how it works,</p> <p>20 sometimes.</p> <p>21 Anyway, it's very helpful to us to hear what was</p> <p>22 going on and your contribution to taking calls. Thank</p> <p>23 you very much for coming to tell us about it, and now</p> <p>24 you're free to go.</p> <p>25 THE WITNESS: Thank you very much.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 112</p>

<p>1 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Thank you very much. 2 (The witness withdrew) 3 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Well, that, as they say, Mr Kinnier, 4 is probably a convenient point. 5 MR KINNIER: It is, and when we come back, we'll have Crew 6 Commander Rob Brown. 7 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Very good. 8 All right, we'll resume at 2.15, please. 9 MR KINNIER: Thank you, sir. 10 (1.15 pm) 11 (The short adjournment) 12 (2.15 pm) 13 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes, Mr Kinnier. 14 MR KINNIER: Sir, may I call Crew Commander Rob Brown. 15 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Thank you. 16 ROB BROWN (affirmed) 17 Questions by MR KINNIER 18 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Thank you very much, Mr Brown. 19 Sit down and make yourself comfortable. All right? 20 Yes, Mr Kinnier. 21 MR KINNIER: Good afternoon. 22 Would you first confirm your name for the record. 23 <b>A. Robert Edward Brown.</b> 24 Q. In front of you, you should have a blue folder. Behind 25 the first tab or directly in front of you should be two</p> <p>Page 113</p>	<p>1 <b>A. Yes, I am.</b> 2 Q. You've worked for Surrey for over 14 years? 3 <b>A. 13 years and 9 months at the time, I think it was.</b> 4 Q. But now obviously 14 years. 5 <b>A. Oh, 15 years now, yes.</b> 6 Q. You've been a crew commander since March 2017; is that 7 correct? 8 <b>A. I'm classed as competent crew commander as</b> 9 <b>of March 2017.</b> 10 Q. On the night, you were on duty with officer in charge 11 Claire Stanbridge; is that right? 12 <b>A. Yes.</b> 13 Q. Is she senior to you? 14 <b>A. Yes.</b> 15 Q. Just looking at who else was on duty that night, 16 Caili Anderson? 17 <b>A. Yes.</b> 18 Q. Is it right she's also known as Caili Beckham? 19 <b>A. Now she is, yes.</b> 20 Q. She was a call taker. 21 <b>A. Yes.</b> 22 Q. There was also Laura Waters, who was also a call taker; 23 is that right? 24 <b>A. Yes.</b> 25 Q. Was anyone else involved in taking calls from the tower</p> <p>Page 115</p>
<p>1 witness statements, both dated 29 January [MET00010868 2 and MET00010786]. 3 <b>A. Yes, there is.</b> 4 Q. Behind the blue tab, you should find an exhibit, which 5 is notes you made on the night [MET00018263]. 6 <b>A. Yes.</b> 7 Q. Have you read those documents recently? 8 <b>A. Yes, I have.</b> 9 Q. Do you confirm their contents are true? 10 <b>A. Yes.</b> 11 Q. And you're content for those documents to stand as your 12 evidence to this inquiry? 13 <b>A. Yes.</b> 14 Q. Thank you. 15 Mr Brown, thank you very much for attending today. 16 If at any time you want a break, please say so, 17 that's not a problem. 18 If at any time any of my questions are unclear, 19 please say so and I'll try and make them clear for you. 20 <b>A. Thank you.</b> 21 Q. If I can just deal with some background points first of 22 all. 23 You are currently a crew commander at Surrey Fire 24 and Rescue Service based in the control room; is that 25 right?</p> <p>Page 114</p>	<p>1 on the night? 2 <b>A. No.</b> 3 Q. You say in your witness statement -- we don't need to go 4 to it -- that part of your role as the crew commander is 5 to be one of the supervisors; is that right? 6 <b>A. That's correct.</b> 7 Q. On page 3 of your witness statement, it's the second 8 line from the top, you provide further detail of your 9 job, and it's described as: 10 "... to monitor and supervise, where necessary, the 11 calls that come in and ensure that they are handled 12 appropriately by the call handlers." 13 Can you give us a bit more flavour, how do you 14 monitor and supervise the call takers? 15 <b>A. So there's a function within the -- so when a call taker</b> 16 <b>is taking a call, I have the ability to monitor them</b> 17 <b>and, where needs be, prompt them if they need assistance</b> 18 <b>in gaining the correct address or inputting it correctly</b> 19 <b>into the system.</b> 20 <b>Also, that can be to offer guidance on anything,</b> 21 <b>really.</b> 22 Q. In relation to the training you yourself received, as 23 part of your initial training, which I think was another 24 six-week module training course -- 25 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>Page 116</p>

<p>1 Q. -- what training did you have in relation to fires in 2 high-rise buildings?</p> <p>3 <b>A. Well, nothing specific with regard to high-rise 4 buildings, but an awareness of the different factors in 5 comparison to a domestic house or a factory or 6 a warehouse, those kind of things.</b></p> <p>7 Q. Did that initial training deal with stay put and the 8 advice you're to give --</p> <p>9 <b>A. The initial six-week training?</b></p> <p>10 Q. Yes.</p> <p>11 <b>A. No.</b></p> <p>12 Q. In the subsequent professional training you've received 13 during your time with Surrey, have you received any 14 specific training on stay put and the circumstances in 15 which it's appropriate to change the advice?</p> <p>16 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>17 Q. Before the fire itself, when was the most recent time 18 you'd received training?</p> <p>19 <b>A. It was very recently before that, because I think it was 20 from the lessons learned I think from Lakanal House. 21 Yeah, so very recently before it.</b></p> <p>22 Q. Are you able to remember what training you were given on 23 the circumstances in which it's appropriate to change 24 advice from stay put to leave?</p> <p>25 <b>A. Okay, so it would be to stay put unless a fire or smoke</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 117</p>	<p>1 <b>A. Some buildings within our mobilising system have 2 associated notes with it. They would say on that note 3 that it had a stay-put policy. That doesn't necessarily 4 cover each and every building because that's -- yeah.</b></p> <p>5 Q. What do you do if you have no notes and the caller 6 doesn't know whether there is a stay-put policy in 7 place? How do you advise them?</p> <p>8 <b>A. So I think it goes back to that original concept, that 9 if the fire, smoke or fumes or whatever, are not 10 directly affecting the person involved, the person 11 calling the fire service, then the advice would be to 12 not move towards it or move away from it -- well, not to 13 move -- not to change anything. Yeah.</b></p> <p>14 <b>So stay put is a policy or kind of theory which 15 relies on two things: it's the premise that buildings 16 can be and should be designed to prevent fire or inhibit 17 the spread of fire, and secondly to stop the person 18 involved from potentially leaving a place of relative 19 safety and putting them into a much more dangerous 20 place.</b></p> <p>21 Q. Could you help us: say if someone called you. They live 22 in a high-rise building and there's a fire affecting 23 that building. What information do you try and get from 24 the caller to assist you to decide how best to respond 25 and what advice to give?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 119</p>
<p>1 <b>or other fumes are directly affecting the person trapped 2 or -- not even trapped, directly affecting the person, 3 in which case it would be safer, relatively, to attempt 4 an escape.</b></p> <p>5 Q. As part of your ongoing professional training, has that 6 covered fire survival guidance?</p> <p>7 <b>A. Sorry, could you repeat the question?</b></p> <p>8 Q. As part of your continuing professional training, have 9 you received any specific training on fire survival 10 guidance?</p> <p>11 <b>A. Yes, that happens on quite a regular basis.</b></p> <p>12 Q. Could I ask you, how regular is regular?</p> <p>13 <b>A. Well, we have monthly watch training within our control 14 room, and that can encompass a whole manner of different 15 things, but fire survival guidance is one of them.</b></p> <p>16 Q. Could we come on to discuss the first substantive topic 17 with you, which is stay put and FSG.</p> <p>18 On page 2 of your statement, you discuss the 19 stay-put policy.</p> <p>20 Presumably you're familiar with advising callers on 21 stay put. Is that a fair assumption, I should ask?</p> <p>22 <b>A. Yes. Yes, I understand the concept of stay put and how 23 it would relate to a caller.</b></p> <p>24 Q. How do you know if a caller's building has a stay-put 25 policy or not?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 118</p>	<p>1 <b>A. So if --</b></p> <p>2 Q. Will you ask for their name, first of all?</p> <p>3 <b>A. Not necessarily.</b></p> <p>4 Q. Will you ask for their address?</p> <p>5 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>6 Q. Will you ask for where their flat is, for example what 7 floor it's on of the high-rise building?</p> <p>8 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>9 Q. Will you ask them to what extent their flat is affected 10 by fire or heat?</p> <p>11 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>12 Q. Are there any other details you try and extract from 13 them during the course of the call?</p> <p>14 <b>A. If they were able to get out. If they've already stated 15 that they're trapped, then to offer some form of fire 16 survival advice.</b></p> <p>17 Q. I don't know whether you heard Ms Martin's evidence 18 before, but she said in her experience callers tended to 19 offer up the information that they were trapped. Does 20 that reflect your professional experience as well?</p> <p>21 <b>A. Yes, because it would be probably the most pressing 22 thing in their mind to say.</b></p> <p>23 Q. When you have a caller who says they're trapped, is it 24 your practice in Surrey to stay on the phone until the 25 individual caller is rescued by the Fire Brigade?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 120</p>

<p>1 <b>A. Yes, because it's a constantly changing environment, the</b>  2 <b>person could be potentially getting in increasingly</b>  3 <b>dangerous situations with the fire approaching or smoke</b>  4 <b>or -- you know, there's a number of different factors</b>  5 <b>which could change. So, yes, we stay on the phone.</b>  6 <b>Also to gain more information for the crews</b>  7 <b>proceeding. So, you know, ascertain whereabouts in the</b>  8 <b>property they are. So if it's a house, are they at the</b>  9 <b>back of the house or the front of the house, which</b>  10 <b>floor, that kind of thing.</b>  11 Q. Is there a policy requirement at Surrey to ask callers  12 whether they have mobility issues or anything of that  13 nature which may affect the extent to which the Brigade  14 are able to rescue them?  15 <b>A. No. But, again, that's something which would be most</b>  16 <b>probably offered, in the way that they would say,</b>  17 <b>"I can't get out because I'm wheelchair-bound" or</b>  18 <b>bedridden or so on or so forth.</b>  19 Q. Similarly, if they were elderly or there were a number  20 of children in the property, is that a detail that is  21 offered up rather than it being a requirement of policy  22 to ask?  23 <b>A. Yes.</b>  24 Q. Can I ask next about overflow call arrangements.  25 In the fourth paragraph on page 2 of your statement,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 121</p>	<p>1 Surrey to communicate directly with London in the event  2 of receiving London calls?  3 <b>A. So if we receive their calls, we would attempt to pass</b>  4 <b>these calls back to them. We have no facility at</b>  5 <b>present to mobilise any of their appliances or assets.</b>  6 Q. In terms of contacting London, Ms Martin talked about  7 having a short dial system with London. Is that  8 something that Surrey has with London?  9 <b>A. A direct line straight through -- yes, yes.</b>  10 Q. Yes.  11 <b>A. Yes.</b>  12 Q. Okay.  13 Do you have the technology to pass a call directly  14 to London or would you take the information, then pass  15 that information on to London?  16 <b>A. We have to take the information and pass it on. I'm</b>  17 <b>unsure of whether we could essentially transfer the</b>  18 <b>call. I think it would be bad practice to do that, but</b>  19 <b>yeah.</b>  20 Q. Can you explain why it would be bad practice?  21 <b>A. Yes. We take the details and then we pass those details</b>  22 <b>on to London.</b>  23 Q. Okay.  24 Could I ask you about one point which Caili Beckham  25 raised in her witness statement. We can go to it if</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 123</p>
<p>1 you say:  2 "In the event of large scale incidents, we have a  3 procedure in place for the overflow of calls to be  4 diverted to a different Brigade. This happens  5 nationally amongst Brigades and is known as a 'buddy'  6 system."  7 You then say that Surrey's buddy is Merseyside, and  8 in relation to Grenfell Tower you were:  9 "... not acting on behalf of London and were not  10 taking their overflow, the caller was calling from  11 within our area hence why we took the calls."  12 We'll come on to the specific calls later, but can  13 you please help us first with whether it's a common  14 occurrence for you to receive calls in Surrey that  15 relate to London?  16 <b>A. It's not a current -- say again?</b>  17 Q. Is it common?  18 <b>A. Is it common?</b>  19 Q. Yes.  20 <b>A. Not normally. I think the last instance that I had</b>  21 <b>personally of that was the August riots and whatnot.</b>  22 Q. In 2011 or whenever?  23 <b>A. Yes. In which case we did take a few overflow calls for</b>  24 <b>that. Yes.</b>  25 Q. Do you know what arrangements are in place to allow</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 122</p>	<p>1 necessary.  2 At page 3, she recalls receiving the first call  3 about a lady calling about her father-in-law trapped in  4 Grenfell Tower, and Caili Beckham says this:  5 "I checked BBC News and Twitter and then saw the  6 scale they were talking about - 200 firefighters. It  7 was horrifying. I had never seen anything quite like it  8 and was actually quite surprised that we had not been  9 made aware by London of the scale and that we may  10 receive overflow calls."  11 Would you have expected the fire and rescue service  12 which has responsibility for that incident to phone  13 around neighbouring fire and rescue services to alert  14 them to the incident?  15 <b>A. No, they would be tied up with the actual incident</b>  16 <b>itself.</b>  17 Q. In relation to previous major incidents, have you ever  18 received a call by way of early notice that you may be  19 asked to take overflow?  20 <b>A. Possibly within spate conditions, spate conditions being</b>  21 <b>heavy rainfall, storm-like conditions, which again</b>  22 <b>happened to London a few years ago, actually. They were</b>  23 <b>taking quite a few flooding calls and we I think</b>  24 <b>received a couple of calls for that as well.</b>  25 Q. Would you have expected, say, in this case, London to</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 124</p>

<p>1 have contacted you to give you a briefing as to what</p> <p>2 advice they were giving to callers as to stay put,</p> <p>3 whether to leave, et cetera? Would you have expected to</p> <p>4 have received that type of call?</p> <p>5 <b>A. Well, we wouldn't have expected to -- they wouldn't have</b></p> <p>6 <b>known necessarily that we were receiving calls.</b></p> <p>7 <b>Therefore, they wouldn't necessarily give us information</b></p> <p>8 <b>or guidance to pass on to -- yeah, so they wouldn't have</b></p> <p>9 <b>contacted us in the first place.</b></p> <p>10 Q. Is there any means available to Surrey CROs to receive</p> <p>11 updates in real time, say from incidents in London, from</p> <p>12 either London Brigade control or the fire ground as to</p> <p>13 what is happening, and to inform what advice they gave</p> <p>14 to callers?</p> <p>15 <b>A. At the moment, there's nothing utilised to that effect.</b></p> <p>16 Q. Okay. Thank you, Mr Brown.</p> <p>17 We can now turn to the events on the night itself.</p> <p>18 The first issue I'd like to discuss is the call you had</p> <p>19 with Mr Disson's I think daughter-in-law.</p> <p>20 <b>A. Yes. I didn't take the call, but yes, yes.</b></p> <p>21 Q. You say on page 3 of your witness statement:</p> <p>22 "At 02:30 hours our control received a phone call</p> <p>23 from a distressed female ... Caili ANDERSON answered the</p> <p>24 call ... and I monitored from the Supervisors desk."</p> <p>25 Is that a fair summary of your evidence?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 125</p>	<p>1 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>2 Q. When you contacted the LFB, did you know a specific</p> <p>3 person to contact or did you just call through and</p> <p>4 simply --</p> <p>5 <b>A. Oh, no, so there's a direct line number, so we just</b></p> <p>6 <b>press that and it goes through to London, and presumably</b></p> <p>7 <b>one of their operators picks it up.</b></p> <p>8 Q. So it's not a line specific to a supervisor; it's a line</p> <p>9 which goes into the control room and may be picked up by</p> <p>10 any of the operators in the Brigade control?</p> <p>11 <b>A. Yes, I don't know how their system looks at their end,</b></p> <p>12 <b>but that's what I presume to be the case.</b></p> <p>13 Q. When you phoned through to the LFB, did you try and find</p> <p>14 out more detail about the incident at Grenfell Tower</p> <p>15 itself?</p> <p>16 <b>A. Well, the address which we had originally was</b></p> <p>17 <b>"Renfield", so obviously we got clarification on that,</b></p> <p>18 <b>that it was Grenfell. If my memory serves me right,</b></p> <p>19 <b>they said it was a large incident, they were aware of it</b></p> <p>20 <b>and dealing with it.</b></p> <p>21 Q. Did they give you any steer on what advice was being</p> <p>22 given by LFB Brigade control to callers?</p> <p>23 <b>A. I can't remember.</b></p> <p>24 Q. Did you ask, can you remember that?</p> <p>25 <b>A. I can't remember.</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 127</p>
<p>1 <b>A. Correct.</b></p> <p>2 Q. Can you help us with one document. Ralph, if you could</p> <p>3 bring this up: LFB00003629.</p> <p>4 Have you seen this before?</p> <p>5 <b>A. Yes, it's an incident log from our Vision mobilising</b></p> <p>6 <b>system.</b></p> <p>7 Q. So this is the Surrey log.</p> <p>8 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>9 Q. The first entry, just below halfway, is 02.28.13.</p> <p>10 Would that be the time at which the first call came</p> <p>11 through from the distressed female that you were</p> <p>12 referring to earlier?</p> <p>13 <b>A. I believe so, yes. Yes, that's time stamped as the time</b></p> <p>14 <b>when it would come in.</b></p> <p>15 Q. Going back to your witness statement, you say at the</p> <p>16 bottom of page 3 of your witness statement that you:</p> <p>17 "... stopped monitoring Caili's call and immediately</p> <p>18 called London Fire Brigade Control Room to pass on the</p> <p>19 information as it was time critical."</p> <p>20 We know from looking at the LFB's control report</p> <p>21 that at 02.30, Control Room Officer Russell takes a call</p> <p>22 from Surrey FRS to report the call being from flat 194,</p> <p>23 the 22nd floor.</p> <p>24 Does that correspond to the call that was made by</p> <p>25 you to London?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 126</p>	<p>1 Q. Were you given any details such as number of pumps, the</p> <p>2 type of building, resident numbers, number of FSGs, any</p> <p>3 of that type of information?</p> <p>4 <b>A. I can't remember.</b></p> <p>5 Q. Can you remember asking for that type of information,</p> <p>6 just by way of background, to brief your own control</p> <p>7 room?</p> <p>8 <b>A. No. So they just gave us the -- from my statement, they</b></p> <p>9 <b>confirmed that the tower was called Grenfell Tower and</b></p> <p>10 <b>that they were aware of it. Yes, that's all we got.</b></p> <p>11 Q. Conveniently, the Surrey log is still on the screen.</p> <p>12 Ralph, could I ask you to turn to page 2 of that log,</p> <p>13 and if you could identify the entry at 02.34.15.</p> <p>14 Mr Brown, are you able to help as to whether that</p> <p>15 log is in relation to the conversation between</p> <p>16 Caili Anderson and the female caller?</p> <p>17 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>18 Q. Yes. Thank you.</p> <p>19 Ralph, if you could put that down and bring up</p> <p>20 another document, which is a transcript, which is</p> <p>21 LFB00000650.</p> <p>22 If I could just ask you to read page 1 and then</p> <p>23 shout when you've finished page 1 and we can turn over</p> <p>24 to page 2, just so you can refresh your memory before</p> <p>25 I ask you questions.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 128</p>



<p>1 (Pause)</p> <p>2 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>3 Q. Turn over to page 2, please, Ralph.</p> <p>4 (Pause)</p> <p>5 <b>A. Okay, yes.</b></p> <p>6 Q. This is the transcript of a second call from the same</p> <p>7 caller.</p> <p>8 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>9 Q. It's at 02.45.45. You'll see at the bottom of page 2,</p> <p>10 which is the page on the screen, the CRO has taken the</p> <p>11 number and then said:</p> <p>12 "OPERATOR: ... No problem, we will pass that through</p> <p>13 to London and see if someone's able to give him a call</p> <p>14 from there, okay? To reassure him, all right?"</p> <p>15 I know it's not you who was taking the call at</p> <p>16 Surrey, but did you know this was something that London</p> <p>17 would do, ie call the individual back to provide</p> <p>18 reassurance?</p> <p>19 <b>A. I didn't know that that was something that they were</b></p> <p>20 <b>going to do, but I was going to pass that number through</b></p> <p>21 <b>to London so that they could contact them with regards</b></p> <p>22 <b>to rescue.</b></p> <p>23 Q. Okay.</p> <p>24 At 02.48.49, Caili Anderson contacts the LFB to ask</p> <p>25 them to do this. She speaks to CRO Gotts to pass on the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 129</p>	<p>1 that floor, and when taking the mobile number, she says:</p> <p>2 "OPERATOR 2: ... I've got lots of calls waiting."</p> <p>3 Looking at that answer, do you think at that stage</p> <p>4 it was essential to ascertain from the LFB that someone</p> <p>5 was going to call back Mr Disson to tell him to</p> <p>6 evacuate, whether Surrey or London?</p> <p>7 <b>A. It wasn't necessarily to tell him to evacuate.</b></p> <p>8 Q. Why do you say that?</p> <p>9 <b>A. Because on the initial call we knew that he was trapped.</b></p> <p>10 <b>So at that stage we were asking them to contact him to</b></p> <p>11 <b>aid in a rescue operation.</b></p> <p>12 Q. Do you think at that stage, they would've given --</p> <p>13 that's what you knew. Was there any benefit in Surrey</p> <p>14 contacting Mr Disson directly?</p> <p>15 <b>A. No.</b></p> <p>16 Q. Why do you say that?</p> <p>17 <b>A. Because that would've possibly impinged on any rescue</b></p> <p>18 <b>operation going ahead with London, as it being their</b></p> <p>19 <b>ground and their resources and attendance.</b></p> <p>20 Q. Could that risk have been mitigated if you'd asked</p> <p>21 London for an update as to the attempts to rescue</p> <p>22 Mr Disson?</p> <p>23 <b>A. Could it be -- sorry, could you repeat the question</b></p> <p>24 <b>again?</b></p> <p>25 Q. Could you have dealt with that problem by asking London:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 131</p>
<p>1 details. For everyone's reference, that is page 102 of</p> <p>2 the control report. We don't need to go to that unless</p> <p>3 you want to.</p> <p>4 My question is this: in Caili Anderson's witness</p> <p>5 statement, she says when she tried to pass on details</p> <p>6 about the trapped resident to the LFB CRO she said:</p> <p>7 "... London sounded really busy and I had to try and</p> <p>8 force her to take the details down."</p> <p>9 Was that your experience when you tried to contact</p> <p>10 London?</p> <p>11 <b>A. Not that I can -- I can't remember, to be honest.</b></p> <p>12 Q. Do you have any recollection of how the CRO on the</p> <p>13 receiving end at London dealt with your call? Did they</p> <p>14 sound stressed, were they rushed, did you have to, as</p> <p>15 Ms Anderson said, force them to take the details down?</p> <p>16 <b>A. Okay, yes, they sounded busy.</b></p> <p>17 Q. But receptive?</p> <p>18 <b>A. They sounded busy, yes.</b></p> <p>19 Q. Okay.</p> <p>20 If I could ask Ralph to put up another transcript,</p> <p>21 and it's of that particular call made by Caili Anderson,</p> <p>22 at LFB00000544.</p> <p>23 If we can go to page 3 of that transcript and the</p> <p>24 second entry from operator 2.</p> <p>25 CRO Gotts says that they've had so many calls from</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 130</p>	<p>1 "What's the state of play in terms of rescuing this</p> <p>2 gentleman? Would it help if we phoned him to provide</p> <p>3 him with an update, provide him with information as to</p> <p>4 someone's on their way?" something along those lines?</p> <p>5 <b>A. Possibly.</b></p> <p>6 Q. Did it cross your mind at the time, can you remember?</p> <p>7 <b>A. Possibly.</b></p> <p>8 Q. You --</p> <p>9 <b>A. I can't remember. I can't remember.</b></p> <p>10 Q. The next topic I'd like to come to is the change in</p> <p>11 stay-put advice --</p> <p>12 <b>A. Okay.</b></p> <p>13 Q. -- on the evening.</p> <p>14 If we could stay with this transcript but go to</p> <p>15 page 2, operator 2 says:</p> <p>16 "OPERATOR 2: No. Well, we've just been told to tell</p> <p>17 people to put a wet towel over their heads and try and</p> <p>18 get out."</p> <p>19 At the time, did you take that to mean that stay put</p> <p>20 had been withdrawn?</p> <p>21 <b>A. At no point did we know that -- we had no idea or</b></p> <p>22 <b>inkling if there was stay put in place at that property.</b></p> <p>23 <b>So this is the first advice that we've had from London</b></p> <p>24 <b>Fire stating that this is what their guidance is, to</b></p> <p>25 <b>exit the property with a wet towel.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 132</p>

<p>1 Q. Did you understand that at the time to mean that stay 2 put -- ie people had been told to evacuate, to leave? 3 <b>A. The gentleman was initially trapped in his property. We 4 had no idea of any kind of stay-put policy in place. It 5 being London's ground, we were reliant on them providing 6 guidance as to what they were going to do, bearing in 7 mind it was assumed to be a rescue operation. We 8 weren't told otherwise that it wasn't.</b> 9 Q. Once you'd received that information from London, did 10 you try to call Mr Disson's daughter-in-law to give 11 her advice? 12 <b>A. Yes, we contacted the -- yes.</b> 13 Q. If I could ask you to turn back to your witness 14 statement at page 5, the very top of that page, you say 15 you received another call at 03.07, and this was from 16 the same lady who had called previously. As before, 17 Caili Anderson took the call and you monitored it; is 18 that right? 19 <b>A. Yes.</b> 20 Q. Is your recollection that it was during the course of 21 that call that you provided the caller with an update as 22 to the advice from London? 23 <b>A. Okay, so, yeah, it must have been on that call rather 24 than us contacting her back.</b> 25 Q. You also say in your witness statement at page 5, third</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 133</p>	<p>1 "OPERATOR: And stay low to the floor and 2 (overspeaking) flat and we'll pass it through to London 3 again ..." 4 Looking at that transcript, it doesn't look as if 5 Caili Anderson is giving express advice to get out; is 6 that a fair summary of the advice that was given during 7 the course of that call? 8 <b>A. No. Is that -- yeah, no.</b> 9 Q. Are you able to give us, from your perspective, an 10 explanation as to why that advice wasn't given? Was it 11 because you knew he was trapped and you were relying 12 upon the previous information he had given you? 13 <b>A. What's the next page of this, sorry?</b> 14 Q. Ralph, could you turn over the page, please. 15 (Pause) 16 <b>A. Okay, sorry, can you repeat the question?</b> 17 Q. Looking at the transcript, it doesn't look as if 18 Caili Anderson gave express advice to get out. 19 Are you able to help us as to why that advice wasn't 20 given? 21 <b>A. I don't know why that advice wasn't given.</b> 22 Q. From your perspective, were you sat next to Caili whilst 23 she was on the call -- 24 <b>A. I --</b> 25 Q. -- to the lady?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 135</p>
<p>1 line down: 2 "The female sounded more distressed during this 3 call. She said that her father-in-law could see flames 4 and a lot of smoke inside the flat. On hearing this I 5 was worried that it was now half an hour since the first 6 call and nobody had got there." 7 At that time, when that thought crystallised, was 8 your expectation still that Mr Disson would be rescued? 9 <b>A. No.</b> 10 Q. So in those circumstances, what advice did you give to 11 the caller? What did you say to the caller? 12 <b>A. I'm just referring to my statement.</b> 13 (Pause) 14 Q. Would it help if we went to the transcript? 15 <b>A. Of course, yes.</b> 16 Q. Ralph, could you put up LFB00000651, and particularly go 17 to page 2 of the transcript. 18 I'll just let you refresh your memory. 19 (Pause) 20 I think it's that middle section on page 2 which 21 I think is your recollection -- 22 <b>A. Yes.</b> 23 Q. -- of the advice you gave. 24 Then at the bottom of that page, the caller says: 25 "CALLER: Yeah, he knows that ...</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 134</p>	<p>1 <b>A. I wouldn't be sat next to Caili. I was in the control 2 room, but I was at a different position.</b> 3 Q. Given the transcript, are you able to say what advice 4 you would've given in the circumstances, given the 5 information that Caili had? 6 <b>A. I would've passed exactly the same advice which London 7 had passed us to pass on.</b> 8 Q. Okay. That's useful. 9 Ralph, can you put that down and put up another 10 transcript which is LFB00000685. 11 This is a call at 03.06 and is a call made by Surrey 12 to the LFB to pass the information following that 13 earlier call. 14 If I could ask Ralph to take you to page 2 of the 15 transcript, you'll see from the fifth line down, 16 operator 1 says: 17 "OPERATOR 1: Yeah. So, flat 194, we're getting a 18 further call saying that the gentleman says there's fire 19 in his flat now. 20 "OPERATOR 2: Right. Now, we're doing now, we've 21 changed our advice, were going to ring you. So, you 22 need to just tell them, whatever they can, get something 23 damp, cover it over them and leave the building. 24 "OPERATOR 1: Right, okay. So, we're telling them to 25 self rescue -- like, just get out as quickly as they</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 136</p>

<p>1 can?</p> <p>2 "OPERATOR 2: Yeah, yeah. Do it now. Put something</p> <p>3 over your body, put something over your mouth and leave.</p> <p>4 "OPERATOR 1: And just go. Okay. Brilliant, okay.</p> <p>5 Thank you very much."</p> <p>6 Is that the first time you've had clear, express</p> <p>7 advice from London that the advice is to evacuate?</p> <p>8 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>9 Q. If I could turn back to page 5 of your witness</p> <p>10 statement -- we don't need to turn it up unless you</p> <p>11 would like to see it -- you say, and I quote:</p> <p>12 "At 03:11 hours, Caili ANDERSON called the female</p> <p>13 caller back and relayed the information that London had</p> <p>14 passed on to me ..."</p> <p>15 We have a record of that and subsequent calls at</p> <p>16 03.09 and 03.10.26 in the control report.</p> <p>17 At this time, bearing in mind those additional calls</p> <p>18 that were made, can you help us as to why Caili is not</p> <p>19 calling Mr Disson directly instead of going via</p> <p>20 a relative?</p> <p>21 <b>A. The gentleman was in contact -- he was speaking to the</b></p> <p>22 <b>family and we were -- and as Caili had spoken to the</b></p> <p>23 <b>female caller already, she contacted her back.</b></p> <p>24 <b>We did have the telephone number for Mr Disson, but</b></p> <p>25 <b>we didn't use it.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 137</p>	<p>1 Q. Was?</p> <p>2 <b>A. Sorry, could you repeat the question?</b></p> <p>3 Q. Sorry, I was waiting for you to finish your sentence,</p> <p>4 Mr Brown.</p> <p>5 You've got the advice there in the call of 03.06.</p> <p>6 What more, if anything, would you have expected to</p> <p>7 have been told by the LFB?</p> <p>8 <b>A. I don't know.</b></p> <p>9 Q. At the time, did you consider that sufficient to enable</p> <p>10 you to provide advice to any subsequent callers?</p> <p>11 <b>A. We were working under the belief that they were</b></p> <p>12 <b>attempting to be rescued.</b></p> <p>13 Q. Can I ask you, what was the basis of that belief?</p> <p>14 <b>A. Because it's a fire persons reported and we hadn't been</b></p> <p>15 <b>told otherwise. That's a standard procedure.</b></p> <p>16 Q. Can I turn to a separate topic, which is calling other</p> <p>17 fire and rescue services. On page 5 of your witness</p> <p>18 statement, you say you spoke to Kent Fire and Rescue</p> <p>19 Service, and I quote:</p> <p>20 "... passing on the information from London that</p> <p>21 people were to wrap themselves in something wet and try</p> <p>22 to get out."</p> <p>23 Then you spoke to Essex to tell them the same thing.</p> <p>24 Was this as a result of a specific request from</p> <p>25 London to update surrounding fire and rescue services?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 139</p>
<p>1 Q. Can you explain why in more detail? Just looking at it</p> <p>2 objectively, it seems easier to phone him.</p> <p>3 <b>A. Because possibly, if London were attempting any rescue</b></p> <p>4 <b>operations, they possibly would be contacting that</b></p> <p>5 <b>number back. However, at that point, now, where they're</b></p> <p>6 <b>saying that that's the advice they're giving, to just</b></p> <p>7 <b>leave the property -- yes.</b></p> <p>8 Q. But there doesn't appear to be a practical reason to</p> <p>9 stop Surrey phoning Mr Disson directly; is that a fair</p> <p>10 comment?</p> <p>11 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>12 Q. At the end of page 5 of your witness statement, you say</p> <p>13 this, and I quote:</p> <p>14 "We didn't have that much control over the calls we</p> <p>15 received, especially around giving advice to the caller</p> <p>16 as it was not our incident and London didn't pass on any</p> <p>17 advice until we received the third call."</p> <p>18 What would you have expected to have been told by</p> <p>19 the LFB above and beyond what is set out in the</p> <p>20 transcript of that call at 03.06?</p> <p>21 <b>A. The expectation up until the point where they said that</b></p> <p>22 <b>the person should self-rescue was that rescue operations</b></p> <p>23 <b>were in place, as they should be with a fire persons</b></p> <p>24 <b>reported. So anything other than that, was -- yeah,</b></p> <p>25 <b>anything other than that wasn't the case.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 138</p>	<p>1 <b>A. Yes, they said to contact Kent and Essex specifically</b></p> <p>2 <b>because they were taking overflow calls.</b></p> <p>3 Q. Did it cross your mind whether other fire and rescue</p> <p>4 service control rooms might be dealing with the incident</p> <p>5 other than Kent and Essex and they should be contacted</p> <p>6 as well?</p> <p>7 <b>A. Yes, it did potentially, but there's 49 control rooms</b></p> <p>8 <b>within the UK. I mean, yeah, so --</b></p> <p>9 Q. You called the ones you were specifically told to?</p> <p>10 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>11 Q. Fine.</p> <p>12 If I can turn to a separate topic, and that's other</p> <p>13 available sources of information.</p> <p>14 You refer in your witness statement -- and it's</p> <p>15 page 4, the last paragraph, we don't need to go to it --</p> <p>16 you mention that you had Sky News on in the control</p> <p>17 room; is that right?</p> <p>18 <b>A. Correct.</b></p> <p>19 Q. You describe having access to the television footage as</p> <p>20 a tool to assist you "build a picture of an incident".</p> <p>21 Again, is that a fair summary of your evidence?</p> <p>22 <b>A. Correct.</b></p> <p>23 Q. When you are faced with a major fire, would you</p> <p>24 ordinarily turn to see whether there was footage on the</p> <p>25 TV news to assist the advice you'd give to callers?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 140</p>

<p>1 <b>A. I would. There is also, you know, access to other kind</b>  2 <b>of ranges of information which you can get, highways</b>  3 <b>cameras, et cetera. But, yeah, you want to attempt to</b>  4 <b>get as much information as possible.</b>  5 Q. And presumably you'd have access in Surrey to Surrey's  6 CCTV; is that right?  7 <b>A. Not to the Surrey CCTV.</b>  8 Q. Right.  9 <b>A. You're talking about like town centre CCTV?</b>  10 Q. Yes.  11 <b>A. No.</b>  12 Q. Is there any mechanism to do that?  13 <b>A. Possibly.</b>  14 Q. But you're not aware of it?  15 <b>A. Yeah. We haven't got it at the moment, but there</b>  16 <b>possibly could be a way of doing it.</b>  17 Q. Ms Martin said in her evidence this morning that Kent  18 has access to the MPS's heli-tele live link, including  19 the heat camera mode. Do you have the technology to  20 access that?  21 <b>A. We have access to police helicopters, MPAS15, I think</b>  22 <b>it's called. I don't know what the extent -- I don't</b>  23 <b>know whether it's got a thermal imaging camera on it.</b>  24 Q. Did you use it on the night, access to that footage?  25 <b>A. It's a Surrey Police --</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 141</p>	<p>1 if so, to what extent?  2 <b>A. The real world practicality, I don't think -- it would</b>  3 <b>depend on operational business within the control room</b>  4 <b>as to whether you would be able to contact back however</b>  5 <b>many callers. If it's one or two callers -- it could be</b>  6 <b>10/20. Yeah, it really does depend on a number of</b>  7 <b>different factors.</b>  8 Q. On the night, did you discuss calling back Mr Disson,  9 for example, or Mr Disson's daughter-in-law, after the  10 calls we've discussed in evidence today?  11 <b>A. No.</b>  12 Q. Okay.  13 Could I ask you one final topic, and it's about  14 resources, and please say if you're not able to assist  15 us with this.  16 Would it have been part of your job to contact the  17 LFB to ask whether they required more resources from  18 Surrey?  19 <b>A. Typically any requests for additional resources would</b>  20 <b>come from the host brigade. They would identify that</b>  21 <b>there is a deficiency and therefore look to resolve</b>  22 <b>that.</b>  23 Q. Did you handle any additional requests from London on  24 the night for additional resources?  25 <b>A. No.</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 143</p>
<p>1 Q. My question was: do you have access to the MPS  2 helicopter footage?  3 <b>A. No.</b>  4 Q. No?  5 <b>A. No.</b>  6 Q. Okay.  7 Can I next talk about the call back system, and  8 really what's the system and what's Surrey's practice.  9 Just Surrey FRS automatically record all phone  10 numbers from FSG callers?  11 <b>A. Not automatically.</b>  12 Q. In what circumstances are they recorded?  13 <b>A. So the beginning of a phone call from a 999 emergency</b>  14 <b>call, the operator will pass the number 90 per cent of</b>  15 <b>the time. In any other percentage of the time which</b>  16 <b>they don't, you stay on the line to get the number from</b>  17 <b>the operator.</b>  18 Q. Have you previously encountered circumstances in which  19 stay-put advice has been withdrawn and people have been  20 told to leave and you've had to call people back who  21 have made 999 calls?  22 <b>A. I haven't personally encountered that.</b>  23 Q. Would you use the callback system to check on previous  24 callers to check they're all right and to gain an update  25 as to whether the situation has deteriorated or not and,</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 142</p>	<p>1 Q. Were you involved in a decision to deploy Surrey's ALP,  2 the 42-metre ALP, to London?  3 <b>A. No.</b>  4 MR KINNIER: Mr Brown, thank you very much. Those are all  5 the questions I have for now.  6 What we tend to do is the chairman grants me a short  7 piece of time at the end of the evidence to check that  8 I've covered everything off.  9 Sir, I would be grateful if you could extend that  10 indulgence to me now.  11 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes.  12 Well, you've heard, Mr Brown, counsel sometimes  13 needs a moment to check he's covered all the questions.  14 So we're going to have a short break now of no more than  15 5 minutes or so.  16 THE WITNESS: Okay.  17 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Let him do that.  18 You're going to go with one of the ushers. Please  19 don't talk to anyone about your evidence while you're  20 out of the room.  21 THE WITNESS: Of course not.  22 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: We'll get back at 3.05, or sooner,  23 possibly.  24 THE WITNESS: Thank you.  25 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: All right, Mr Kinnier, 3.05 or</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 144</p>

<p>1 before then, if you're ready.</p> <p>2 MR KINNIER: Thank you, sir.</p> <p>3 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: All right.</p> <p>4 (3.00 pm)</p> <p>5 (A short break)</p> <p>6 (3.05 pm)</p> <p>7 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: All right, Mr Brown, I think</p> <p>8 a couple of questions, probably.</p> <p>9 THE WITNESS: Okay.</p> <p>10 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes, Mr Kinnier.</p> <p>11 MR KINNIER: Mr Brown, thank you for your patience. Just</p> <p>12 two questions.</p> <p>13 First of all, if asked, how many operators could</p> <p>14 Surrey have mustered on the night to help with any</p> <p>15 London overflow?</p> <p>16 <b>A. We have four on duty.</b></p> <p>17 Q. How many were off duty that you could have called in</p> <p>18 should the need have arisen?</p> <p>19 <b>A. I don't know the exact number, but probably it would be</b></p> <p>20 <b>20 of the off duty.</b></p> <p>21 Q. How many desks do you have in the control room at which</p> <p>22 individuals could be sat?</p> <p>23 <b>A. Sorry ...</b></p> <p>24 Q. How many positions in the control room do you have at</p> <p>25 which --</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 145</p>	<p>1 go. Thank you.</p> <p>2 (The witness withdrew)</p> <p>3 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes, Mr Kinnier.</p> <p>4 MR KINNIER: Sir, the next witness is Group Manager</p> <p>5 Nigel Dilley from Essex County Fire and Rescue. There</p> <p>6 are no changes needed in the furniture, just the folder.</p> <p>7 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Right. I'll sit here for a couple</p> <p>8 of minutes while you get organised.</p> <p>9 MR KINNIER: Thank you, sir.</p> <p>10 (Pause)</p> <p>11 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes, Mr Kinnier. Now ...</p> <p>12 MR KINNIER: I think Mr Dilley is about to be retrieved.</p> <p>13 NIGEL DILLEY (sworn)</p> <p>14 Questions by MR KINNIER</p> <p>15 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Thank you very much. If you would</p> <p>16 like to sit down and make yourself comfortable.</p> <p>17 THE WITNESS: Yes, sir.</p> <p>18 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes, Mr Kinnier.</p> <p>19 MR KINNIER: Thank you, sir.</p> <p>20 First of all, would you please confirm your name for</p> <p>21 the record.</p> <p>22 <b>A. Nigel Dilley.</b></p> <p>23 Q. Thank you very much for coming along today. It's much</p> <p>24 appreciated.</p> <p>25 In front of you there is a blue folder and</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 147</p>
<p>1 <b>A. Ten positions.</b></p> <p>2 Q. Thank you.</p> <p>3 Finally, were you involved at all in the decision to</p> <p>4 acquire the 42-metre aerial ladder platform by Surrey</p> <p>5 FRS?</p> <p>6 <b>A. To acquire it?</b></p> <p>7 Q. To buy it.</p> <p>8 <b>A. No.</b></p> <p>9 Q. Good, thank you.</p> <p>10 <b>A. No.</b></p> <p>11 MR KINNIER: That concludes that question.</p> <p>12 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: It would have been a surprise.</p> <p>13 MR KINNIER: It wasn't a trick question.</p> <p>14 THE WITNESS: Okay.</p> <p>15 MR KINNIER: Mr Brown, thank you very much for coming along</p> <p>16 to assist today. It's very welcome.</p> <p>17 THE WITNESS: Thank you.</p> <p>18 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: I'll add my thanks, Mr Brown. It's</p> <p>19 very helpful to us to hear the different parts of the</p> <p>20 story, and as Surrey was involved, albeit in a fairly</p> <p>21 peripheral respect, it's useful to know what was going</p> <p>22 on. So thank you very much for coming to give your</p> <p>23 evidence.</p> <p>24 THE WITNESS: That's all right. Thank you.</p> <p>25 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: All right, and now you're free to</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 146</p>	<p>1 hopefully, if you open it, you'll find a copy of your</p> <p>2 statement of 19 October 2018 [LFB00024396]; is that</p> <p>3 right?</p> <p>4 <b>A. Yes, that's correct.</b></p> <p>5 Q. Have you read that document recently?</p> <p>6 <b>A. Yes, I have.</b></p> <p>7 Q. Are its contents true?</p> <p>8 <b>A. Yes, apart from 3b, where there's an extract from the</b></p> <p>9 <b>National Incident Command System. In the third line it</b></p> <p>10 <b>says:</b></p> <p>11 <b>"... to reduce risk and safety resolve ..."</b></p> <p>12 <b>It should be "safely resolve".</b></p> <p>13 <b>SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes.</b></p> <p>14 MR KINNIER: Thank you.</p> <p>15 Save for that typographical error, the contents are</p> <p>16 true?</p> <p>17 <b>A. They are.</b></p> <p>18 Q. You are content for the statement to stand as your</p> <p>19 evidence to the inquiry?</p> <p>20 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>21 Q. Just to deal with some background information, first of</p> <p>22 all, at the time of the fire, what was your position?</p> <p>23 <b>A. My position was the duty NILO, national inter-agency</b></p> <p>24 <b>liaison officer, for Essex Fire and Rescue Service.</b></p> <p>25 Q. You say in your witness statement you are a group</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 148</p>

<p>1 manager for operational policy for Essex County Fire and 2 Rescue Service. How long have you been in that role? 3 <b>A. I've been in that role since September 2017.</b> 4 Q. What does that particular job involve, group manager for 5 operational policy? 6 <b>A. So I'm involved in really organising anything to do with</b> 7 <b>operational policies, procedures, mobilising of</b> 8 <b>appliances, new equipment on appliances. A little bit</b> 9 <b>with control to do with the flexi rota system, risk</b> 10 <b>information. A whole raft of areas for my job.</b> 11 Q. Thank you. 12 In page 1 of your statement you say that on the 13 night you were: 14 "... one of two Level 3 Incident Commanders on duty 15 for Essex ..." 16 And you were also carrying at the role of duty NILO 17 which you adverted to earlier on. 18 Dealing with each of those jobs that you had on the 19 night, what is a level 3 incident commander? 20 <b>A. So a level 3 incident commander, in line with the</b> 21 <b>National Incident Command System, I would be called on</b> 22 <b>to deal with incidents of nine pumps and over. We have</b> 23 <b>three levels in Essex: level 1 for crew and watch</b> 24 <b>manager, level 2 for station managers, and then over</b> 25 <b>nine pumps for myself as a level 3 incident commander.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 149</p>	<p>1 As a major incident is unfolding, who usually 2 contacts you, as the duty NILO, to seek your advice? 3 Would it be the incident commander himself if the 4 incident is within Essex? 5 <b>A. No, it would be control.</b> 6 Q. Could you help us, when you're the duty NILO in Essex, 7 how do you assist with an incident that is in London? 8 <b>A. This is the first time that I've been asked for advice.</b> 9 <b>In this particular case, it was the passage of</b> 10 <b>information from Essex control to LFB control.</b> 11 Q. Right. 12 <b>A. So this was the first time this has happened.</b> 13 Q. Bearing in mind that answer, what's been your experience 14 of the knowledge of other agencies about the nature and 15 extent of the NILO's functions and responsibilities? 16 <b>A. Within Essex?</b> 17 Q. Within Essex. 18 <b>A. We train on a regular basis with police and ambulance.</b> 19 <b>For some of my other roles within the NILO cadre,</b> 20 <b>for example our marauding terrorist firearm-type</b> 21 <b>incidents, we work closely with police and ambulance.</b> 22 <b>So we've got a very good working relationship within the</b> 23 <b>county boundary and also within partner agencies in</b> 24 <b>Suffolk and Norfolk.</b> 25 Q. Will you have counterpart NILOs in Essex Police and</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 151</p>
<p>1 Q. What are the functions and responsibilities of a level 3 2 incident commander? 3 <b>A. So I would take over command at the incident ground, for</b> 4 <b>any large-scale incidents. So it's an operational role</b> 5 <b>within the structure of the incident command system.</b> 6 Q. You've already helpfully taken our attention to the 7 definition of the role of a NILO on page 1 of your 8 witness statement. 9 Can you help us with some form of background here. 10 What types of incident would usually engage the interest 11 of a duty NILO? 12 <b>A. So I would deal with anything supporting the incident</b> 13 <b>command structure. So where anything is outside of</b> 14 <b>policy and procedure, where there are any questions, any</b> 15 <b>queries, for example with control, I can give advice.</b> 16 <b>I also work with partner agencies, such as police</b> 17 <b>and ambulance, for any incidents they are dealing with</b> 18 <b>to offer support from fire and for those types of</b> 19 <b>incidents.</b> 20 Q. Is the advice and support for incident command given to 21 incident command within Essex or, as here, would it be 22 advice and support to the incident commander at the fire 23 ground itself, even though it's outside your area? 24 <b>A. So it would be just for Essex.</b> 25 Q. Okay.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 150</p>	<p>1 Essex Ambulance, for example, and in Suffolk and 2 elsewhere that you have arrangements with? 3 <b>A. Yes, definitely very close relationships with ambulance.</b> 4 <b>With police, my contact is mainly through force</b> 5 <b>control room.</b> 6 Q. Have you had any dealings as NILO, whether training or 7 otherwise, with the LFB? 8 <b>A. No.</b> 9 Q. Okay. 10 In terms of your NILO experience, have you 11 identified any difference between the regions with which 12 you have dealings in relation to the knowledge of and 13 approach to the effective deployment of NILOs to respond 14 to major incidents? 15 <b>A. We've had CPD, continuous professional development, days</b> 16 <b>with NILOs in Manchester following the Kerslake</b> 17 <b>incident, and regionally I've worked with NILOs.</b> 18 <b>My understanding of the London NILOs is we were very</b> 19 <b>similar – a very similar way.</b> 20 Q. Sorry, I cut across you, I apologise. Was that 21 understanding gathered as a result of practical 22 experience or just as a result of discussions at 23 training and continuing professional development. 24 <b>A. Just practically within the region, just through CPD</b> 25 <b>with London.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 152</p>

<p>1 Q. In relation to the responsibilities you have about 2 dealing with control, have you had any training as to 3 how to liaise with other brigades when Essex is 4 receiving overflow calls via the BT system?</p> <p>5 <b>A. No.</b></p> <p>6 Q. Are you familiar in your role, whether as level 3 7 incident commander or as NILO, with stay-put guidance 8 and fire survival guidance?</p> <p>9 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>10 Q. What's your understanding of, first of all, stay put?</p> <p>11 <b>A. So stay put, predominantly for high-rise, is something 12 which we have in Essex for high-rise properties. So we 13 would advise -- in fact, we do give advice for residents 14 to stay put.</b></p> <p>15 <b>Operationally, with dealing with fires in high-rise, 16 that has proved to be the policy we've had for some time 17 as the best policy, and we continue to adopt that 18 policy.</b></p> <p>19 <b>However, it can be changed.</b></p> <p>20 Q. In relation to that, in your practical experience, have 21 you ever had to withdraw stay put and advise callers to 22 evacuate a high-rise building, for example?</p> <p>23 <b>A. No, I haven't.</b></p> <p>24 Q. Could I next turn to the topic of overflow arrangements. 25 At the bottom of page 1 of your statement and the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 153</p>	<p>1 <b>the volume of calls, then that's passed on to a second 2 control, which I understand is North West Fire Control 3 for LFB. Should they be in a position where they can't 4 take the calls, then BT will pass a call to surrounding 5 brigades.</b></p> <p>6 Q. So the decision is made by the home fire brigade 7 control, rather than BT; is that a fair summary of your 8 understanding?</p> <p>9 <b>A. I understand it's BT, because BT initially take those 10 calls and pass them to the host brigade.</b></p> <p>11 Q. Do you know who at BT will take that decision to 12 activate the overflow arrangements?</p> <p>13 <b>A. No.</b></p> <p>14 Q. At paragraph 6 on page 2 of your statement, you say that 15 Essex would obtain information by phone or e-mail from 16 the LFB about an incident.</p> <p>17 Is that an arrangement you've had previous 18 experience of?</p> <p>19 <b>A. No, I haven't.</b></p> <p>20 Q. Have you had any training on these overflow 21 arrangements, their practice?</p> <p>22 <b>A. No, I haven't.</b></p> <p>23 Q. This limits the extent to which you'll probably be able 24 to give answers to these questions, but would you expect 25 LFB control to make a pre-emptive phone call to you to</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 155</p>
<p>1 top of page 2, you deal with overflow arrangements. 2 You've quoted there a Mr Peter Suarez, who is the group 3 fire control officer at Essex.</p> <p>4 First of all, what's his role and how does it fit in 5 with yours?</p> <p>6 <b>A. So Peter is really in charge of control in Essex, and 7 those questions I felt were more related to Peter's 8 sphere of operations, so I felt it was important to get 9 the stock answer from Peter. I did understand the 10 procedure myself, but I just wanted, from a professional 11 point of view, the correct wording.</b></p> <p>12 Q. Thank you.</p> <p>13 At the top of page 2 of your witness statement, you 14 say, quoting Mr Suarez:</p> <p>15 "There was no specific arrangement between ECFRS &amp; 16 LFB. There is a National arrangement between BT and all 17 Fire services ..."</p> <p>18 First of all, can you help us, are these 19 arrangements contained and formalised in a document?</p> <p>20 <b>A. I'm not aware.</b></p> <p>21 Q. When you say you're not aware, have you ever seen one?</p> <p>22 <b>A. No.</b></p> <p>23 Q. Do you know what criteria are applied by BT, for 24 example, that trigger the overflow arrangements?</p> <p>25 <b>A. So my understanding is if the host brigade cannot take</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 154</p>	<p>1 warn you that overflow calls may be directed towards 2 Essex?</p> <p>3 <b>A. Probably a difficult question to answer, but my 4 understanding is that if LFB were in a situation where 5 they couldn't handle the incoming calls, it would be 6 quite difficult to pass that information on to 7 surrounding brigades.</b></p> <p>8 Q. Okay.</p> <p>9 At paragraph 7 on page 2, you explain that Essex 10 would communicate information to the LFB by phone or, if 11 necessary, by e-mail.</p> <p>12 Looking at how this could possibly work in practice, 13 do you have a point person at the LFB that Essex can 14 contact with the information?</p> <p>15 <b>A. My understanding is there is a direct line -- in fact, 16 there are two lines: a direct line and an admin line 17 direct to LFB. So no one in particular.</b></p> <p>18 Q. You made reference in your witness statement to contact 19 by e-mail.</p> <p>20 Is there an e-mail address, for example, that you're 21 given that you know to use in these circumstances?</p> <p>22 <b>A. Not personally, but my colleague I referred to has 23 stated that there is an e-mail, although phone is 24 preferred.</b></p> <p>25 Q. For obvious reasons, presumably.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 156</p>

<p>1 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>2 Q. Are Essex officers given any training as to the type and</p> <p>3 level of detailed information they're required to pass</p> <p>4 on to London in the event that overflow arrangements are</p> <p>5 activated?</p> <p>6 <b>A. In control or ...?</b></p> <p>7 Q. Yes.</p> <p>8 <b>A. Yes. My understanding is they pass on the details which</b></p> <p>9 <b>they would ordinarily take from a call if it was in</b></p> <p>10 <b>Essex.</b></p> <p>11 Q. Looking at the Essex-specific context, if an Essex CRO</p> <p>12 is taking an FSG call, would the CRO be expected to stay</p> <p>13 on the line with the caller, or just pass the details</p> <p>14 and/or the call over to the LFB?</p> <p>15 <b>A. So my understanding is they would pass the information</b></p> <p>16 <b>over, but I'm not 100 per cent sure in this case what</b></p> <p>17 <b>actually happened, so --</b></p> <p>18 Q. Does Essex have the technology to patch through calls</p> <p>19 from Essex to the LFB Brigade control should the need</p> <p>20 arise?</p> <p>21 <b>A. No, they don't; they will take the information and then</b></p> <p>22 <b>call LFB control.</b></p> <p>23 Q. Mr Dilley, thank you. I am now turning on to events of</p> <p>24 the night.</p> <p>25 Is it safe to assume that, before 14 June, you had</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 157</p>	<p>1 the evening as the incident unfolded, ie at the moment</p> <p>2 that the overflow arrangements were activated?</p> <p>3 <b>A. No. This was a London incident, so ordinarily</b></p> <p>4 <b>I wouldn't be paged at all for this.</b></p> <p>5 Q. It's always difficult answering these questions about</p> <p>6 detail and timings, but when you were initially paged,</p> <p>7 can you remember what the paging message told you?</p> <p>8 <b>A. We don't have a specific message. The page is to</b></p> <p>9 <b>contact Essex control, so --</b></p> <p>10 Q. You contacted Essex control, and what did they tell you</p> <p>11 about the incident?</p> <p>12 <b>A. There was a large fire in a tower block in west London,</b></p> <p>13 <b>and that we'd received a call from a resident and they</b></p> <p>14 <b>were having problems passing that information on to LFB</b></p> <p>15 <b>control.</b></p> <p>16 Q. Were you given any sort of detail on the difficulties</p> <p>17 that were encountered, ie you just couldn't get through</p> <p>18 or the line kept on being cut? Were you given any</p> <p>19 further detail?</p> <p>20 <b>A. They were just having problems getting through, getting</b></p> <p>21 <b>information through.</b></p> <p>22 Q. Did it surprise you that there were difficulties getting</p> <p>23 through?</p> <p>24 <b>A. It's the first time this has actually happened, but, for</b></p> <p>25 <b>example, if we have a car fire on the M25 on a Saturday</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 159</p>
<p>1 no previous knowledge of Grenfell Tower?</p> <p>2 <b>A. That's correct.</b></p> <p>3 Q. You say on page 1 at paragraph 3a that you were the duty</p> <p>4 NILO for a 24-hour period starting at 0900 hours on</p> <p>5 13 June.</p> <p>6 Where were you based when you were on duty? Were</p> <p>7 you based at Essex headquarters?</p> <p>8 <b>A. So I'm based at Essex headquarters during the working</b></p> <p>9 <b>day, from 9.00 to 5.00, and then from my home address</b></p> <p>10 <b>for the rest of the period.</b></p> <p>11 Q. When you're at home, how are you contacted? Is it via</p> <p>12 mobile?</p> <p>13 <b>A. Via pager.</b></p> <p>14 Q. Pager, thank you.</p> <p>15 At page 2 of your witness statement, at</p> <p>16 paragraph 10, you say that you were:</p> <p>17 "... paged just before 0200hrs and informed that</p> <p>18 ECFRS Control had received a number of calls from</p> <p>19 residents about a fire in a tower block in West London</p> <p>20 and ECFRS Control were having difficulties in passing</p> <p>21 these calls through to London Fire Brigade."</p> <p>22 First of all, had you heard anything about the</p> <p>23 incident at Grenfell Tower before you were paged?</p> <p>24 <b>A. No, nothing.</b></p> <p>25 Q. Would you have expected to have been paged earlier in</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 158</p>	<p>1 <b>afternoon, we might receive up to 50 to 60 calls for</b></p> <p>2 <b>that one particular incident.</b></p> <p>3 <b>So, no, it didn't trigger any concerns, especially</b></p> <p>4 <b>knowing what the final outcome was and the enormity of</b></p> <p>5 <b>this.</b></p> <p>6 Q. Are there any workaround solutions you can use to try to</p> <p>7 get through to LFB if the phone lines aren't giving you</p> <p>8 any direct contact?</p> <p>9 <b>A. We've got nothing in policy and procedures, but my</b></p> <p>10 <b>thought process was either through Airwave or through</b></p> <p>11 <b>police, which I eventually managed to get through to Met</b></p> <p>12 <b>Police to try to pass the information on.</b></p> <p>13 Q. We'll come on to those particular contacts later.</p> <p>14 If we can now look at the detail of timings on the</p> <p>15 night, first of all, just so you can orientate yourself</p> <p>16 and have a fixed point for when your involvement</p> <p>17 started.</p> <p>18 Ralph, if I could ask you to put up LFB00003625.</p> <p>19 Mr Dilley, have you seen this document before?</p> <p>20 <b>A. Yes, I have, yes.</b></p> <p>21 Q. Is that the Essex incident log of their involvement on</p> <p>22 the night?</p> <p>23 <b>A. Yes, it is.</b></p> <p>24 Q. At page 4 -- and this is slightly difficult to make</p> <p>25 out -- at 01.58, which is just below the halfway point</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 160</p>



<p>1 on that page, it appears to say, "DO DILLEY NILO PAGED 2 TO INFORM".</p> <p>3 <b>A. Mm.</b></p> <p>4 Q. Have tried ringing LFB direct line put there is no 5 answer.</p> <p>6 "HAVE TRIED RINGING LFB DIRECT LINE BUT THERE IS NO 7 ANSWER</p> <p>8 "WE ARE AWARE THAT THEY HAVE A MAJOR HIGH RISE FIRE 9 AS BT GLASGOW ASKED IF WE COULD TAKE SOME OF THE 10 OVERFLOW CALLS AS THERE WERE TOO MANY FOR THEIR FALL 11 BACK SERVICE</p> <p>12 "BT STATED IF THIS BECAME A PROBLEM FOR ECFRS THEN 13 TO RING THEM BACK ON THE SECURE NUMBER AND THEY WOULD 14 STOP THE CALLS."</p> <p>15 Doing the best you can now, is it likely that you 16 were paged at or about 01.58?</p> <p>17 <b>A. Yes, that's correct.</b></p> <p>18 Q. If I could ask Ralph to zoom out and then to zoom back 19 in on 02.04, where you're recorded as saying:</p> <p>20 "DO DILLEY INFORMED AND SITUATION EXPLAINED 21 "HE WILL TRY AND MAKE CONTACT 22 "HE SUGGESTS THAT IF WE GET FURTHER CALLS FROM 23 RESIDENTS TO USE THE STAY PUT POLICY UNTIL WE CAN 24 CLARIFY WHAT ADVICE SHOULD BE GIVEN 25 "HE ALSO ASKED THAT WE CONTINUE TO TRY TO CONTACT</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 161</p>	<p>1 <b>the incident and what was happening.</b></p> <p>2 <b>So ordinarily we would give stay-put policy unless</b> 3 <b>we had information from the fire ground that it would be</b> 4 <b>changed. In this case, we had no further information.</b></p> <p>5 Q. It would help us, I think, at this stage, to understand, 6 at this very outset of your involvement with the 7 response to the incident, what precisely you knew about 8 the scale of the fire itself. Not very much, from the 9 sound of it.</p> <p>10 <b>A. That's correct.</b></p> <p>11 Q. Did you have any idea of the extent of the floors that 12 were affected by fire or that level of detail?</p> <p>13 <b>A. No. The information we had was there was a caller on</b> 14 <b>the 22nd floor. So to all intents and purposes, the</b> 15 <b>fire could've been on that floor, the floor below,</b> 16 <b>obviously not knowing the enormity of it at the time.</b></p> <p>17 Q. Thank you.</p> <p>18 Looking at the top of page 3 of your witness 19 statement, you say:</p> <p>20 "My normal course of action would be to contact the 21 LFB Duty NILO via LFB Control ..."</p> <p>22 First of all, how do you get in contact with the LFB 23 duty NILO? What's the means of communication?</p> <p>24 <b>A. So I would normally do that via control, for them to</b> 25 <b>contact LFB control, to ask their duty NILO to be paged,</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 163</p>
<p>1 LFB REGARDING CALLER ON 22ND FLOOR 2 "NO ANSWER FROM LFB VIA DIRECT LINE."</p> <p>3 Would this be the first time where you spoke to 4 someone at Essex regarding the advice that Essex control 5 ought to be given to callers directed to them?</p> <p>6 <b>A. Yes, it was, although the timing when that information</b> 7 <b>was inputted on the system, looking back at my own call</b> 8 <b>log, I actually started the call at 01.58, I think it</b> 9 <b>lasted for about 3/3.5 minutes, so that would be the</b> 10 <b>time when we'd finished the conversation and that</b> 11 <b>information was actually recorded.</b></p> <p>12 Q. Could you help us: you obviously gave an instruction 13 that stay-put advice was to be given until clarified.</p> <p>14 Can you help us, why did you give that instruction? 15 What was your reason?</p> <p>16 <b>A. So this was following a conversation with the control</b> 17 <b>operator from Essex, where we had information from the</b> 18 <b>caller, but we didn't have any information from London</b> 19 <b>Fire Brigade.</b></p> <p>20 <b>As such, it was agreed that we should continue to</b> 21 <b>give the advice we would normally give until we heard</b> 22 <b>differently from LFB.</b></p> <p>23 <b>I think one of the worst situations would be if we</b> 24 <b>gave advice which was contrary to LFB to tell people to</b> 25 <b>get out when, you know, we didn't have any awareness of</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 162</p>	<p>1 <b>to contact me direct, or to get the number of the duty</b> 2 <b>NILO. But clearly on the night, knowing that Essex Fire</b> 3 <b>control couldn't get through to LFB control, I realised</b> 4 <b>that this probably wasn't going to happen.</b></p> <p>5 Q. That's why you tried as the first next option Airwave; 6 is that right?</p> <p>7 <b>A. Yes, that's correct.</b></p> <p>8 Q. Why did you think Airwave was a sensible means of trying 9 to contact the duty NILO?</p> <p>10 <b>A. It would've been a very – how can I say? – quick and</b> 11 <b>easy way to talk to the duty NILO.</b></p> <p>12 Q. Is there a dedicated duty NILO channel?</p> <p>13 <b>A. We have dedicated NILO channels, but, likewise, if LFB</b> 14 <b>had tried to contact myself as duty NILO in the middle</b> 15 <b>of the night, there would've been no response. So that</b> 16 <b>was an option which I decided to try first before</b> 17 <b>attempting the longer route via police.</b></p> <p>18 Q. When you tried it, what contact did you make, if any?</p> <p>19 <b>A. None at all. There was no response.</b></p> <p>20 Q. Was the line operative?</p> <p>21 <b>A. That I don't know, because I just dialled into the</b> 22 <b>channel and then tried to call up the London NILO. It</b> 23 <b>was of no surprise that there was no response, but it</b> 24 <b>was something I could do very quickly, and just trying</b> 25 <b>to get that information through.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 164</p>

<p>1 Q. Did you hear any other activity on the channel or could 2 you hear anything?</p> <p>3 <b>A. No.</b></p> <p>4 Q. If I could ask to go back to the Essex incident log, 5 LFB00003625, and page 3.</p> <p>6 Looking at the entry for 02.16, I'll just let you 7 read that Mr Dilley. It says:</p> <p>8 "DO DILLEY HAS TRIED ALL THE TALK GROUPS AND HAS NOT 9 GOT A RESPONSE."</p> <p>10 First of all, does that time stamp of 02.16 record 11 your attempt to contact your LFB counterpart duty NILO?</p> <p>12 <b>A. So, it was probably before that, it was probably 02.10, 13 round about that time. So having tried to contact the 14 duty NILO, then I spoke to Essex Fire control again to 15 say I've had no luck getting through, just to get 16 an update as well just to see that information had been 17 passed through.</b></p> <p>18 Q. Can you help us, it says "DO Dilley HAS TRIED ALL THE 19 TALK GROUPS". What's a talkgroup?</p> <p>20 <b>A. That's a channel, basically.</b></p> <p>21 Q. So when you say you tried all the talkgroups, you've 22 obviously explained to us that you used the duty NILO 23 channel.</p> <p>24 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>25 Q. What other talkgroups did you try that you're referring</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 165</p>	<p>1 <b>dial into that national talkgroup in order to 2 communicate with colleagues in police, fire and 3 ambulance.</b></p> <p>4 Q. Thank you.</p> <p>5 Staying with the Essex incident log and looking at 6 the time stamp 02.21, which is six or seven lines down 7 from the top, it says:</p> <p>8 "HAVE SPOKEN TO LFB 9 "THEY WANT TO KNOW 10 "HOW MANY PEOPLE 11 "FLAT NUMBER 12 "FLOOR NUMBER 13 "AND IF FIRE IS AFFECTING THEIR FLAT."</p> <p>14 Were you aware that Essex appear to have spoken to 15 the LFB at this stage?</p> <p>16 <b>A. No, not at this stage.</b></p> <p>17 Q. Are you able to clarify any background information to 18 that call that's recorded there?</p> <p>19 <b>A. No.</b></p> <p>20 Q. Mr Dilley, I'm going to ask to see whether you can help 21 us with this call. First of all, I'm going to ask 22 a transcript to be put up on the screen. It is 23 LFB00004790_0076 -- apologies, it's not the transcript, 24 first of all, it's the Brigade report entry. 25 Thank you.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 167</p>
<p>1 to here at the time stamp of 02.16?</p> <p>2 <b>A. There are a couple of NILO dedicated channels which 3 I tried, but no other channels. So that was for LFB.</b></p> <p>4 Q. You would've tried those between 02.10, when you made 5 your initial attempt on the Airwave, and 02.16 when --</p> <p>6 <b>A. Probably 2 or 3 minutes maximum.</b></p> <p>7 Q. Are there any other systems that are available to you to 8 allow instant communication between duty NILOs across 9 the country?</p> <p>10 <b>A. We have the national talkgroup. This would be set up 11 prior to major exercises, or set up for a major 12 incident, but that would be set up by the host brigade, 13 so we'd be invited into that talkgroup.</b></p> <p>14 Q. Can you remember such a talkgroup being set up at 15 Grenfell?</p> <p>16 <b>A. No, no.</b></p> <p>17 Q. Is it that you don't remember it or one wasn't set up?</p> <p>18 <b>A. I wasn't informed that this talkgroup had been set up.</b></p> <p>19 Q. You adverted to it earlier on, and maybe I should have 20 asked you a question about it earlier on, but how do 21 talkgroups function at night? Are the duty officers 22 expected to have all the means of communication 23 available to them?</p> <p>24 <b>A. So I would be paged to be informed of the incident, that 25 a national talkgroup had been set up, so then I could</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 166</p>	<p>1 It's the call at 02.18.55, so the second entry. 2 I'll just let you read that. 3 (Pause)</p> <p>4 <b>A. Okay.</b></p> <p>5 Q. If I could ask Ralph to put that document down and put 6 up LFB00000325.</p> <p>7 If we can turn over the page, this is a call at 8 01.48 in respect of a flat on the 22nd floor. 9 You'll see roughly halfway down the page, the caller 10 says:</p> <p>11 "CALLER: And it's getting very smoky inside the 12 house."</p> <p>13 Bearing that in mind, if we put that document down, 14 and, Ralph, if we can go back to LFB00004790_0076 and go 15 back to 02.18.55, on the fourth line:</p> <p>16 "CRO Adams then asks about conditions like smoke in 17 her flat and the Essex CRO says that the caller seems 18 okay."</p> <p>19 Then it goes on to say two lines down:</p> <p>20 "The caller has reported that it has started to get 21 smoky."</p> <p>22 What seemed striking was that the caller, as 23 recorded in the transcript at 01.48, was saying it was 24 very smoky, and looking at how it's been summarised 25 there, would you agree that the full import of the smoke</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 168</p>

<p>1 description given by the caller hasn't been fully 2 conveyed here by the Essex CRO phoning through to 3 London? 4 <b>A. It's the first time I've seen this, this documentation.</b> 5 <b>It was something that I wasn't involved in, very much of</b> 6 <b>an opinionated -- so I'm really not too sure I can --</b> 7 <b>SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: No. You're being asked to tell us</b> 8 <b>what you think the document means, aren't you? Which</b> 9 <b>isn't a very fair question.</b> 10 MR KINNIER: Yes. If you can't help us any further, I won't 11 push my luck. 12 Do you remember any stage during the communications 13 between the LFB and Essex whether there was any concern 14 expressed by Essex regarding stay put and whether it 15 should be pulled or not? Do you remember being involved 16 in any discussions along those lines? 17 <b>A. No, the conversations I had with Essex originally was</b> 18 <b>regarding a query over the stay-put policy.</b> 19 <b>Further on, as we'll probably come on to, is my</b> 20 <b>information from Met Police with regards to advice given</b> 21 <b>for people to exit.</b> 22 <b>But for that first half hour, I wasn't aware of --</b> 23 <b>well, originally we couldn't get through to LFB control.</b> 24 Q. That's helpful. It's that contact with the Met Police 25 I want to ask you about now.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 169</p>	<p>1 you just read that and then ask you to confirm that that 2 is indeed a transcript of that call. 3 <b>A. Yes, it is.</b> 4 Q. We see in relation to that call the first complete box 5 at the top of page 2 -- so, Ralph, if you could turn the 6 page over and amplify the first complete box at the 7 top -- Mr Dilley, you're recorded there as saying: 8 "Nigel DILLEY: Yeah, have you, unless you've got 9 anybody on the scene that can pass that message to the 10 erm erm Silver Silver on scene to get that message to 11 London Fire Brigade." 12 The Silver you're referring to there, is that the 13 Met or the LFB? 14 <b>A. So that would be the LFB, through the incident command</b> 15 <b>structure.</b> 16 <b>So it was terminology which I felt that the LFB --</b> 17 <b>the Met Police would be familiar with through the</b> 18 <b>command structure on the incident ground.</b> 19 Q. Thank you. 20 We don't need to go through it, but you pass on the 21 information that had come through in relation to flats 22 193 and 82. 23 How did you get the information in respect of those 24 two flats? 25 <b>A. So that was from control. So the first call I had was</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 171</p>
<p>1 Going back to page 3 of your witness statement, it's 2 really five lines down from the top, you say this, and 3 I quote: 4 "... I decided the next best option was to contact 5 Met Police Control with a view of getting them to pass 6 the caller details I had, via Police, directly to the 7 LFB Command team at the incident." 8 Summarising your evidence, is it fair to say that 9 all other options having failed, the last practicable 10 option was contacting the police? 11 <b>A. I had spoken to control about them trying to get in</b> 12 <b>touch with North West Fire Control. So then, for me, it</b> 13 <b>was looking at other options, other ways of getting that</b> 14 <b>information. And with my close working relationships</b> 15 <b>with Essex Police and the information which we share,</b> 16 <b>I felt, through police, that might be a very good way of</b> 17 <b>getting information.</b> 18 <b>Knowing the type of incident it was, I would've</b> 19 <b>thought police would be present on the incident ground,</b> 20 <b>so that information could be passed to the command unit</b> 21 <b>directly via police.</b> 22 Q. Thank you. 23 Now, Ralph, if you could put up on the screen 24 document INQ00000284, which hopefully is a transcript of 25 a call that you made at 02.26.40 to the Met. If I let</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 170</p>	<p>1 <b>for the 22nd floor, a flat on the 22nd floor, which</b> 2 <b>I believe was 193, and then on my conversation with</b> 3 <b>control around about 02.15, they gave me information</b> 4 <b>about a second caller, which I believe was on the</b> 5 <b>11th floor.</b> 6 <b>So that information I passed to Met Police.</b> 7 Q. Thank you. 8 About halfway down page 2, you're recorded as saying 9 this: 10 "Nigel DILLEY: ... no I haven't got any further 11 details but I can get them." 12 Did you follow that up and try and obtain further 13 details from Essex control? 14 <b>A. So following on from that conversation, I actually got</b> 15 <b>the CAD number and then spoke to Essex control and gave</b> 16 <b>them the information, believing actually it would be</b> 17 <b>better for them to contact Met Police directly rather</b> 18 <b>than me as a third party. So I had made those contacts,</b> 19 <b>so I passed that number back to Essex control.</b> 20 Q. When you ended the call, what did you expect would be 21 done with the information you'd conveyed in respect of 22 flats 193 and 82? 23 <b>A. So two things I'd requested: the first was for the</b> 24 <b>information to be passed on to the fire ground, and</b> 25 <b>secondly to see if Met Police had another contact number</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 172</p>

<p>1 to get in touch with LFB control which we could use. So</p> <p>2 looking at almost like a third option, a third line of</p> <p>3 communication.</p> <p>4 Q. In relation to the latter, did you ever get that number?</p> <p>5 A. Not that I'm aware of, I wasn't given that number, but</p> <p>6 I gave the information to Essex Fire control. But</p> <p>7 having spoken, then, to Essex fire control with that</p> <p>8 information, I was told we had finally got through to</p> <p>9 LFB control, so the information had been passed.</p> <p>10 So I was trying to triangulate the communications,</p> <p>11 but knowing the information had been passed direct from</p> <p>12 Essex Fire control to LFB control, then for me, the</p> <p>13 information had got through, so it wasn't something</p> <p>14 I needed to chase up.</p> <p>15 Q. Thank you.</p> <p>16 If we can go back and look at the Essex incident</p> <p>17 log, which is LFB00003625 and look at time stamp 02.36.</p> <p>18 Go on to page 3. 02.36 we're looking for, Ralph.</p> <p>19 Page 2?</p> <p>20 All right. You'll see at the very last entry at the</p> <p>21 bottom of that page, 02.36:</p> <p>22 "DO DILLEY HAS SPOKEN TO THE POLICE."</p> <p>23 And now could we go to page 3, and the top, if you</p> <p>24 can highlight that:</p> <p>25 "CONTROL IN HENDON THEY ARE TRYING TO GET A NUMBER</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 173</p>	<p>1 A. No, I think my last conversation with control was about</p> <p>2 03.15.</p> <p>3 Q. Thank you very much for that, Mr Dilley.</p> <p>4 Let's move topic and to change of the stay-put</p> <p>5 advice which you adverted to in your answer.</p> <p>6 Just to give you some context, at paragraph 14 on</p> <p>7 page 3 of your statement, you say that you did become</p> <p>8 aware that the LFB had changed the stay-put policy</p> <p>9 during the night:</p> <p>10 "... when talking to the Met Police Control</p> <p>11 Operator."</p> <p>12 Is that a fair summary of your evidence?</p> <p>13 A. It was, but that was my understanding when I submitted</p> <p>14 my evidence in October this year. However, it wasn't</p> <p>15 when I was talking to the Met Police operator, it was</p> <p>16 actually I received a text message --</p> <p>17 Q. Okay.</p> <p>18 A. -- to say that they were advising residents to evacuate.</p> <p>19 Q. Okay.</p> <p>20 Could I just bottom out this point. If I could ask</p> <p>21 Ralph to put up INQ00000284, and if we can go to page 2.</p> <p>22 That's the transcript of the call we were looking at</p> <p>23 earlier, but if you go to the end, and amplify the box</p> <p>24 at the bottom of page 3.</p> <p>25 You mentioned a text message earlier on. This</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 175</p>
<p>1 FOR US</p> <p>2 "THEIR NUMBER IS [redacted] CAD 0801 14/06</p> <p>3 INCASE[sic] WE NEED IT</p> <p>4 "CONTROL INFD[sic] DO DILLEY THAT WE HAVE SPOKEN TO</p> <p>5 LFB CONTROL NOW."</p> <p>6 Does that give us a sort of relatively accurate time</p> <p>7 point of the conversation you had --</p> <p>8 A. Yes, it does. When I --</p> <p>9 Q. -- and fed back to Essex, I should say?</p> <p>10 A. Yes. When I was in conversation with Met Police at</p> <p>11 Hendon, I was paged again by Essex Fire control. As</p> <p>12 soon as I'd finished the conversation, then I spoke to</p> <p>13 Essex Fire control, and that would equate to the</p> <p>14 timelines there.</p> <p>15 Q. After this particular call that's recorded, you updating</p> <p>16 Essex control at 02.36, were you aware of any later 999</p> <p>17 calls that were directed towards Essex?</p> <p>18 A. I was aware -- I think I -- well, in fact I spoke to</p> <p>19 Essex Fire control just after that with regards to</p> <p>20 a message which I'd got from Hendon regarding asking</p> <p>21 residents to evacuate the building, and then I think</p> <p>22 I was paged after that just after 3 o'clock. But by</p> <p>23 that time, Essex were talking to LFB control.</p> <p>24 Q. Were you aware of any further communication difficulties</p> <p>25 between Essex and the LFB that night?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 174</p>	<p>1 appears to be a voicemail message left for you at</p> <p>2 02.32.31.</p> <p>3 Is that the message you're referring to there?</p> <p>4 A. Yes, sorry, yes.</p> <p>5 Q. So it's a voicemail as opposed to a text?</p> <p>6 A. A voicemail, yes. And the reason they couldn't get</p> <p>7 through is because at the time I was talking to Essex</p> <p>8 Fire control. So that would equate to the timings.</p> <p>9 Q. Thank you.</p> <p>10 If we could tie this document chain together,</p> <p>11 LFB00003625 and page 2, Ralph.</p> <p>12 If you go time stamp 02.40, so second entry up from</p> <p>13 the bottom of the page:</p> <p>14 "DO DILLEY HAS CALLED THE CONTACT NUMBER FOR MET</p> <p>15 POLICE AND THE MESSAGE THEY ARE GIVING TO RESIDENTS FROM</p> <p>16 LFB IS THAT THEY ARE TO MAKE THEIR WAY TO A FIRE EXIT IF</p> <p>17 SAFE TO DO SO."</p> <p>18 A. Yes.</p> <p>19 Q. I think that's the phone message you were referring to</p> <p>20 earlier on as to how you communicated the contents of</p> <p>21 the voicemail message back to Essex control; is that</p> <p>22 right?</p> <p>23 A. That's why there were two calls Essex Fire control</p> <p>24 within 3 or 4 minutes. My first message was to pass the</p> <p>25 information on regarding Hendon, and the second with</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 176</p>

<p>1 <b>this change, which had been communicated via Met Police.</b></p> <p>2 Q. Do you know the identity of the person to whom you spoke</p> <p>3 at the Essex control room when you communicated this</p> <p>4 information?</p> <p>5 <b>A. I believe it was Russ, Russ White.</b></p> <p>6 Q. Yes, okay.</p> <p>7 Mr White, in his witness statement -- and I can</p> <p>8 bring up the reference, but I don't think it's</p> <p>9 necessary, but please shout if you'd like to see it --</p> <p>10 he says in his witness statement -- and I quote:</p> <p>11 "At 02:36 hours, I spoke to Nigel DILLEY. Message</p> <p>12 from London Fire Brigade via the Metropolitan Police</p> <p>13 control room is to advise all residents to make their</p> <p>14 way to the fire escape/exit. I informed Nigel DILLEY</p> <p>15 that London had confirmed when speaking with the last</p> <p>16 that the advice was to 'stay put', although this may</p> <p>17 have changed depending on how the incident was dealt</p> <p>18 with. Nigel DILLEY again passed me the Metropolitan</p> <p>19 Police number to get an update."</p> <p>20 Does that recollection of the content of your phone</p> <p>21 conversation with Mr White coincide with your</p> <p>22 recollection of that conversation?</p> <p>23 <b>A. Yes, it does. And just to clarify, I needed Russ to</b></p> <p>24 <b>speak to Hendon just to clarify the information which</b></p> <p>25 <b>I'd been given via the voicemail was correct, because</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 177</p>	<p>1 incident log, which is LFB00003625 and the time entry at</p> <p>2 03.03, which is on page 1 of that log, second from the</p> <p>3 bottom.</p> <p>4 I'll just let you read that to yourself, Mr Dilley.</p> <p>5 (Pause)</p> <p>6 <b>A. Okay.</b></p> <p>7 Q. That essentially records a caller being recontacted and</p> <p>8 advised to leave.</p> <p>9 Is this the practice that would normally be adopted</p> <p>10 in relation to calling back residents who are trapped</p> <p>11 within the flat, and advising them of change of advice?</p> <p>12 <b>A. Not normally. We wouldn't call back definitely</b></p> <p>13 <b>a landline, on the basis that the caller may be outside</b></p> <p>14 <b>and then return to pick up the call.</b></p> <p>15 <b>My understanding is from this, with the change to</b></p> <p>16 <b>advice given, and Russ having the time to be able to do</b></p> <p>17 <b>this, I understand that he decided to recontact the</b></p> <p>18 <b>caller.</b></p> <p>19 Q. Okay. Thank you very much.</p> <p>20 Could you remove the amplification, please, Ralph,</p> <p>21 and go to time stamp 03.10.</p> <p>22 It says there:</p> <p>23 "DO DILLEY INFORMED AS DUTY NILO."</p> <p>24 Does that confirm the advice that was given in</p> <p>25 relation to the call we looked at at 03.03?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 179</p>
<p>1 <b>obviously a change to the stay-put policy is something</b></p> <p>2 <b>we needed to clarify.</b></p> <p>3 Q. Okay.</p> <p>4 If I can deal with some individual calls, and if you</p> <p>5 don't know anything about them, please say so because</p> <p>6 I don't want to ask you questions in which you can't</p> <p>7 assist us.</p> <p>8 There's a call in relation to flat 153, which is on</p> <p>9 the 18th floor.</p> <p>10 If I could ask Ralph to bring up the control report,</p> <p>11 which is LFB00004790 at page 105.</p> <p>12 If I could ask Ralph to amplify 02.51, the first</p> <p>13 entry at that time there.</p> <p>14 I'll just let you read that, Mr Dilley, to yourself.</p> <p>15 (Pause)</p> <p>16 <b>A. Okay.</b></p> <p>17 Q. Were you familiar with that call or were you aware of</p> <p>18 that call on the night?</p> <p>19 <b>A. No, I wasn't, no.</b></p> <p>20 Q. I won't ask you to comment on the contents of the</p> <p>21 transcript then. That probably won't assist us any</p> <p>22 further.</p> <p>23 Can I move to a separate topic, which is the topic</p> <p>24 of callbacks.</p> <p>25 If I could ask Ralph to take us back to the Essex</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 178</p>	<p>1 <b>A. Yes, that would be correct, although the conversation at</b></p> <p>2 <b>that time, my understanding was that they had received</b></p> <p>3 <b>further calls but they were talking to LFB at the time.</b></p> <p>4 <b>I also understand at that time the executive officer was</b></p> <p>5 <b>also paged to be informed.</b></p> <p>6 Q. Do you remember being informed at any stage in the night</p> <p>7 that the LFB had defined and classified the incident as</p> <p>8 a major incident?</p> <p>9 <b>A. That was, I believe, at that time.</b></p> <p>10 Q. So around 03.10?</p> <p>11 <b>A. 03.10, yes.</b></p> <p>12 Q. What's the effect of that declaration on your role and</p> <p>13 responsibilities as the duty NILO at Essex?</p> <p>14 <b>A. So a major incident within London Fire Brigade, unless</b></p> <p>15 <b>it was close to the Essex border, wouldn't normally</b></p> <p>16 <b>trigger the duty NILO being informed. As you can</b></p> <p>17 <b>appreciate, London have resources to deal with,</b></p> <p>18 <b>ordinarily, incidents themselves without requesting</b></p> <p>19 <b>advice or assistance from Essex.</b></p> <p>20 Q. The penultimate question I'd like to ask you is going</p> <p>21 back to the NILO system itself, having gone through the</p> <p>22 nature of your involvement over the night with the</p> <p>23 incident.</p> <p>24 Looking at what happened on the night, do you think</p> <p>25 the NILO system functioned as intended, given the</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 180</p>

<p>1 communication difficulties you encountered?</p> <p>2 <b>A. The NILO function is an option that could be used.</b></p> <p>3 <b>I think with the type of incident, it just wasn't put</b></p> <p>4 <b>into action at the time.</b></p> <p>5 Q. My final question is one of resources.</p> <p>6 Would it have formed part of your job to have</p> <p>7 contacted London to see whether they needed more</p> <p>8 resources from Essex?</p> <p>9 <b>A. No, that's the host brigade contacting Essex to request</b></p> <p>10 <b>additional resources.</b></p> <p>11 MR KINNIER: Thank you.</p> <p>12 Mr Dilley, I have no further questions at the</p> <p>13 moment.</p> <p>14 As we've said to other witnesses, the chairman</p> <p>15 allows me 5 minutes to review my notes to see if there</p> <p>16 are any further matters.</p> <p>17 Sir, I'd be grateful for that indulgence now, but</p> <p>18 you may feel slightly longer may be permissible.</p> <p>19 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: I think maybe seven.</p> <p>20 MR KINNIER: Yes.</p> <p>21 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Mr Dilley, we're going to have</p> <p>22 a short break now so counsel can check there aren't any</p> <p>23 questions which should've been asked but haven't been,</p> <p>24 so we're going to rise for just over 5 minutes. I'm</p> <p>25 going to ask you, please, not to talk to anyone about</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 181</p>	<p>1 When you made your efforts to contact the LFB's duty</p> <p>2 NILO, was that as a result of a policy process set out</p> <p>3 in this document or another policy document, or was it</p> <p>4 basically an example of initiative to try and get</p> <p>5 through to the LFB?</p> <p>6 <b>A. It's not in the policy, it was part of the original</b></p> <p>7 <b>conversation with my first call with Essex Fire control.</b></p> <p>8 <b>In fact, a suggestion from control to see if I could get</b></p> <p>9 <b>in touch with the LFB NILO.</b></p> <p>10 Q. So initiative reacting to circumstances on the night as</p> <p>11 opposed to policy?</p> <p>12 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>13 Q. Is that likewise for trying to make use of Airwave,</p> <p>14 contacting the Met and using those alternative means of</p> <p>15 communication?</p> <p>16 <b>A. Yes, and I think my involvement was because things</b></p> <p>17 <b>weren't working out as they should've done for that</b></p> <p>18 <b>short period of time, probably for 20/25 minutes before</b></p> <p>19 <b>the information got through to LFB control.</b></p> <p>20 Q. Thank you.</p> <p>21 Going back to the topic of callbacks, did you ever</p> <p>22 in your capacity as NILO, or indeed as level 3 incident</p> <p>23 commander, specifically raise with Russ White or anyone</p> <p>24 else in Essex control the need for all CROs to call back</p> <p>25 callers where possible to provide an update, such as</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 183</p>
<p>1 your evidence while you're out of the room.</p> <p>2 If you would like to go with the usher, she'll look</p> <p>3 after you. Thank you.</p> <p>4 (Pause)</p> <p>5 I'll say 4.05.</p> <p>6 MR KINNIER: Thank you, sir.</p> <p>7 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: All right? Thank you.</p> <p>8 (4.00 pm)</p> <p>9 (A short break)</p> <p>10 (4.05 pm)</p> <p>11 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Well, Mr Dilley, I think Mr Kinnier</p> <p>12 has found a couple of questions he would like to ask.</p> <p>13 MR KINNIER: Mr Dilley, thank you very much for your</p> <p>14 patience. Just a few more questions that we'd be</p> <p>15 grateful for your help in relation to.</p> <p>16 On the first page of your witness statement --</p> <p>17 indeed, you made reference to it in correcting</p> <p>18 a typographical error at the outset -- you refer to the</p> <p>19 fire and rescue service incident command system.</p> <p>20 Is that a national or an Essex-specific policy?</p> <p>21 <b>A. So that's a national system.</b></p> <p>22 Q. Would you be able to provide a copy of that policy</p> <p>23 document to the inquiry?</p> <p>24 <b>A. Yes, yes.</b></p> <p>25 Q. Thank you.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 182</p>	<p>1 Essex could?</p> <p>2 <b>A. That's not a conversation that I've had.</b></p> <p>3 Q. Can you help us why not? Why wouldn't you have had</p> <p>4 that --</p> <p>5 <b>A. My understanding was Russ made that call on the night</b></p> <p>6 <b>because he had the capacity to do so. Things had</b></p> <p>7 <b>changed, so Russ used, I'd say, his initiative to do</b></p> <p>8 <b>that, but he had the capacity to do it as well.</b></p> <p>9 Q. Final question.</p> <p>10 The LFB has a policy, number 539, which establishes</p> <p>11 the principles escape, assess, protect and rescue to</p> <p>12 deal with FSGs.</p> <p>13 Some of the questions that are recommended in that</p> <p>14 LFB policy to ask are: do you know where the fire is?</p> <p>15 Which room are you in? Is there anyone there with you?</p> <p>16 Has the smoke stopped coming in? Let me know if it's</p> <p>17 thicker? What is happening now?</p> <p>18 Does Essex have a comparable policy?</p> <p>19 <b>A. Yes, they do. I believe it's advance call handling.</b></p> <p>20 Q. Is that something which you could provide to the</p> <p>21 inquiry?</p> <p>22 <b>A. Yes, that can be provided.</b></p> <p>23 MR KINNIER: Thank you. I'm very grateful.</p> <p>24 Mr Dilley, thank you very much for your time this</p> <p>25 afternoon, and apologies that you've had a longer wait</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 184</p>

<p>1 before coming to give evidence, but we're very grateful.  2 Thank you.  3 THE WITNESS: Thank you, sir.  4 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: I'd add my thanks as well,  5 Mr Dilley. I'm sorry we kept you waiting for a long  6 time to come and give your evidence, but it's worth the  7 wait. We're very grateful to you for coming and your  8 evidence will be very helpful to us, so thank you very  9 much indeed.  10 THE WITNESS: Thank you very much.  11 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: And now you're free to go. The  12 usher will look after you.  13 THE WITNESS: Thank you, sir.  14 (The witness withdrew)  15 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes, Mr Kinnier.  16 MR KINNIER: Sir, the next and final witness for today is  17 Sharon Lancaster. There has to be some minor  18 rearrangement of the furniture just to put a lectern on  19 the desk. It may be easier for this to be done in your  20 absence, I suspect -- or the usher doesn't seem to mind,  21 so we're in your hands.  22 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Let them carry on. I'm going to ask  23 you if you have any idea how long Ms Lancaster might  24 need to be?  25 MR KINNIER: Ms Lancaster is going to be examined by</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 185</p>	<p>1 Now, you're going to stand, I think, to give your  2 evidence.  3 THE WITNESS: Yes.  4 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Right. That's fine.  5 Yes, Ms Jones.  6 MS JONES: Thank you. Thank you very much.  7 First of all, please could you give your full name  8 for the record.  9 <b>A. Sharon Elizabeth Lancaster.</b>  10 Q. Thank you.  11 First of all, can I say thank you very much for  12 coming to the inquiry today to help us with our  13 investigations, and also thank you very much for waiting  14 so patiently all day. We appreciate you being here  15 since this morning.  16 It may be that my questions run over 4.30. If  17 that's the case, I'll check to see if you're still happy  18 to continue.  19 <b>A. Okay.</b>  20 <b>SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Can I ask you now, you'd like to get</b>  21 <b>your evidence over and done with today, I imagine?</b>  22 <b>A. Yes.</b>  23 <b>SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes. Well, it may be that it will</b>  24 <b>run a bit past 4.30. Are you happy to do that?</b>  25 <b>A. Yes, that's fine.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 187</p>
<p>1 Ms Jones. I am told examination will last between 30 to  2 45 minutes, but more at the briefer end of the spectrum  3 rather than the longer end of that range.  4 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: We'll see how that goes. I think as  5 we overrun the usual deadline of 4.30, it's quite nice  6 to explain that Ms Lancaster has been waiting I think  7 all day, probably, to give her evidence.  8 MR KINNIER: She has.  9 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Out of courtesy to her, and in order  10 to enable her to finish her attendance, it would be good  11 if we can take her evidence this evening.  12 Could I ask Mr Documents Manager and the ladies who  13 do the stenography whether they mind running over yet  14 again for a short time, I hope?  15 All right. Thank you very much.  16 I think that's all happened while I've been  17 speaking. I don't need to rise at all.  18 (Pause)  19 Yes, Ms Jones.  20 MS JONES: Thank you, sir. If I may call Ms Sharon  21 Lancaster.  22 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Thank you.  23 SHARON LANCASTER (sworn)  24 Questions by MS JONES  25 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Thank you very much.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 186</p>	<p>1 <b>SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Shall we crack on?</b>  2 MS JONES: Thank you very much, sir.  3 First of all, Ms Lancaster, can I take you to your  4 witness statement, which will come up on the screen in  5 front of you, but it's also in that folder in front of  6 you as well.  7 The reference number for our records is MET00018755  8 and it's dated 29 May and should be on the screen now.  9 <b>A. Yes.</b>  10 Q. Can I first of all ask you, is that your witness  11 statement?  12 <b>A. It is.</b>  13 Q. It runs for three pages. Have you had a chance to read  14 it recently?  15 <b>A. I have, yes.</b>  16 Q. Do you confirm that the contents of it are true?  17 <b>A. Yes.</b>  18 Q. And you're happy for it to stand as your evidence to  19 this inquiry?  20 <b>A. I am, yes.</b>  21 Q. Thank you very much.  22 Ms Lancaster, I have a number of questions about  23 your witness statement and some other evidence that we  24 have already been taken to and I'll take you to in due  25 course. But let me say at the outset that my questions</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 188</p>

<p>1 are intended to be short and simple, but if they're not,</p> <p>2 please just say, I'll be happy to repeat or rephrase</p> <p>3 them.</p> <p>4 If you do want a break at any point in time, again,</p> <p>5 please do just say?</p> <p>6 <b>A. Okay.</b></p> <p>7 Q. All right.</p> <p>8 First of all, you say in your witness statement that</p> <p>9 at the time of the Grenfell Tower incident, you were</p> <p>10 a control room operator at Essex County Fire and Rescue</p> <p>11 Service; is that right?</p> <p>12 <b>A. It is.</b></p> <p>13 Q. You'd been working in the control room since 2012.</p> <p>14 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>15 Q. In 2017 -- August, I think it is -- you left the</p> <p>16 employment of Essex?</p> <p>17 <b>A. I did, yes.</b></p> <p>18 Q. All right, thank you.</p> <p>19 I want to ask you a bit more about your training and</p> <p>20 your experience as a control room operator whilst at</p> <p>21 Essex.</p> <p>22 First of all, when you joined the control room, did</p> <p>23 you have training on the stay-put policy?</p> <p>24 <b>A. In our training, we covered lots of different policies.</b></p> <p>25 <b>I can't remember literally one by one, I'm afraid, but</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 189</p>	<p>1 Q. That's very helpful, thank you.</p> <p>2 During your training, did you have any training</p> <p>3 about fires in high-rise flats and about fire spread and</p> <p>4 breach of compartmentation?</p> <p>5 <b>A. No.</b></p> <p>6 Q. By the time of the Grenfell Tower fire, had you had any</p> <p>7 experience working in a control room where there had</p> <p>8 been a large-scale fire or major incident?</p> <p>9 <b>A. Not to that degree, no.</b></p> <p>10 Q. To any degree, any kind of major incident had you been</p> <p>11 involved in?</p> <p>12 <b>A. Not personally, no.</b></p> <p>13 Q. Did you have any training on how the overflow call</p> <p>14 arrangements worked with other control rooms?</p> <p>15 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>16 Q. Can you briefly tell us what that training -- how it was</p> <p>17 delivered and what it was, if you can remember?</p> <p>18 <b>A. From what I can remember, I think we tried it with</b></p> <p>19 <b>Bedfordshire a few times, where our call would divert to</b></p> <p>20 <b>them or their calls would divert to us. On a few</b></p> <p>21 <b>occasions, Bedfordshire's 999 system did fail, so their</b></p> <p>22 <b>calls automatically came through to us, and that</b></p> <p>23 <b>highlighted that we did need further training, because</b></p> <p>24 <b>it wasn't something that we did on a regular basis.</b></p> <p>25 Q. When did that take place?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 191</p>
<p>1 <b>we did go through numerous policies.</b></p> <p>2 Q. You're aware of the national sort of stay-put guidance?</p> <p>3 <b>A. I wasn't aware it was a national stay-put policy.</b></p> <p>4 Q. Were you given any training on something that we</p> <p>5 understand to be called fire survival guidance calls?</p> <p>6 <b>A. We were given fire survival training when we first go to</b></p> <p>7 <b>training school.</b></p> <p>8 Q. Were you given any training after your initial training</p> <p>9 school session?</p> <p>10 <b>A. Not on fire survival, no.</b></p> <p>11 Q. The initial training you say, was that in 2012 when you</p> <p>12 joined the control room, or was that earlier when you</p> <p>13 joined Essex County Fire and Rescue Service?</p> <p>14 <b>A. In 2012, when I joined control.</b></p> <p>15 Q. I appreciate it's a while ago, but are you briefly able</p> <p>16 to give us an outline of what that training was?</p> <p>17 <b>A. You go to training school for six weeks, where you learn</b></p> <p>18 <b>all the stations, station numbers, lots of different</b></p> <p>19 <b>things about the fire service. The different machines</b></p> <p>20 <b>that we use, different sort of scenarios, attendances.</b></p> <p>21 Q. In particular, with fire survival guidance, what kind of</p> <p>22 training were you given? Was it just a lecture or was</p> <p>23 it role play?</p> <p>24 <b>A. Role play, mainly, and then sometimes we would've used</b></p> <p>25 <b>like old tapes of calls for the fire survival.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 190</p>	<p>1 <b>A. I think that was -- trying to think now -- it was</b></p> <p>2 <b>definitely 2017.</b></p> <p>3 Q. Before or after the fire, do you remember?</p> <p>4 <b>A. Before.</b></p> <p>5 Q. Before?</p> <p>6 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>7 Q. Did you have further training on how those overflow</p> <p>8 arrangements were to work?</p> <p>9 <b>A. Yes, we had prompt cards of what we would do, who we'd</b></p> <p>10 <b>call, how to divert the lines. We'd have a designated</b></p> <p>11 <b>console that would be purely for that brigade to take</b></p> <p>12 <b>calls and receive calls.</b></p> <p>13 Q. Am I right in saying that Bedfordshire is your buddy</p> <p>14 service?</p> <p>15 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>16 Q. So was your training specifically only about how to pass</p> <p>17 calls to Bedfordshire and take their calls, or was it</p> <p>18 also about passing calls to other brigades where you</p> <p>19 don't have this formal buddy arrangement?</p> <p>20 <b>A. No, it would be to pass calls to other brigades as well.</b></p> <p>21 Q. I'll come back to that in a bit more detail in a moment.</p> <p>22 What I want to do is go to page 2 of your witness</p> <p>23 statement, where you speak about the stay-put policy.</p> <p>24 If we could look at the top of the witness statement</p> <p>25 there, and it's that first paragraph on page 2.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 192</p>



<p>1 You say:</p> <p>2 "With regards to the stay put policy, we will tell</p> <p>3 the caller that if it is safe to do so, start to make</p> <p>4 their way out. If it isn't safe to leave, then we would</p> <p>5 take information from the caller to help our crews</p> <p>6 locate them when they arrive on scene. This information</p> <p>7 included things such as where the caller was, how many</p> <p>8 people there are."</p> <p>9 Was it your understanding that the stay-put policy</p> <p>10 only applied to certain buildings?</p> <p>11 <b>A. No, that's the training -- that's on our watch, that's</b></p> <p>12 <b>what we would go with, because we weren't there, that's</b></p> <p>13 <b>what we would tell our caller.</b></p> <p>14 Q. So you would elicit this information, would you, from</p> <p>15 the caller, working out with them if it was safe to</p> <p>16 leave or not?</p> <p>17 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>18 Q. Would there be any specific circumstances which would</p> <p>19 indicate to you that it wasn't safe for them to leave?</p> <p>20 <b>A. Only if they were to tell us that it's not safe to</b></p> <p>21 <b>leave, then we would take further information and pass</b></p> <p>22 <b>that to the crew.</b></p> <p>23 Q. So are you familiar with the stay-put policy being in</p> <p>24 place for high-rise buildings, so essentially that it's</p> <p>25 a policy that unless they're affected by fire, heat or</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 193</p>	<p>1 <b>can open a window, get as low as you can, and we would</b></p> <p>2 <b>stay with the caller.</b></p> <p>3 Q. You say you would stay with the caller; would you stay</p> <p>4 with them for the entire duration of the call until</p> <p>5 they're rescued or until the line drops out?</p> <p>6 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>7 Q. Turning, then, to overflow call arrangements, which we</p> <p>8 touched upon earlier, can you just explain for us the</p> <p>9 system that you said has developed in Essex Fire and</p> <p>10 Rescue Service? How would it come to be that you would</p> <p>11 take overflow call from another brigade?</p> <p>12 <b>A. If calls were coming in to us?</b></p> <p>13 Q. Yes.</p> <p>14 <b>A. Bedfordshire would call us to say that they were having</b></p> <p>15 <b>a problem, or if they had too many calls, that their</b></p> <p>16 <b>calls would automatically divert to Essex. We then had</b></p> <p>17 <b>a designated console that we would have to log out, log</b></p> <p>18 <b>back in with a different username and password which was</b></p> <p>19 <b>purely for Bedfordshire. That would then bring up all</b></p> <p>20 <b>Bedfordshire's stations, they're ground. So any calls</b></p> <p>21 <b>that came in on that console, you'd start to put the</b></p> <p>22 <b>address in and that would automatically match for</b></p> <p>23 <b>Bedfordshire. We could then mobilise their machines</b></p> <p>24 <b>straight from that console.</b></p> <p>25 Q. So when Bedfordshire would call you, would they tell you</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 195</p>
<p>1 smoke, they should remain within their flat unless that</p> <p>2 situation changes?</p> <p>3 <b>A. From what I can recall, the training that I received on</b></p> <p>4 <b>our watch was that we wouldn't say either way. We</b></p> <p>5 <b>wouldn't tell them to leave, we wouldn't tell them to</b></p> <p>6 <b>stay, we would tell them, you know, "If you feel it's</b></p> <p>7 <b>safe to do so, then you start to make your way out."</b></p> <p>8 Q. But in terms of your watch, your training, nothing</p> <p>9 specific to say --</p> <p>10 <b>A. No.</b></p> <p>11 Q. -- just high-rises, this is the policy that always</p> <p>12 applies?</p> <p>13 <b>A. No.</b></p> <p>14 Q. No set policy. All right.</p> <p>15 The advice that you would give them in terms of when</p> <p>16 it becomes a fire survival guidance call, are you able</p> <p>17 just to help us with that, what was your training on</p> <p>18 what to do when you received a call where they're saying</p> <p>19 that they're trapped and you need to give fire survival</p> <p>20 guidance?</p> <p>21 <b>A. It was quite a while ago in 2012. From what I can</b></p> <p>22 <b>remember, the prompt cards -- we would still have prompt</b></p> <p>23 <b>cards at each console, and the prompt cards would be --</b></p> <p>24 <b>I'm trying to think -- you know, shut the door, if</b></p> <p>25 <b>you've got anything you can lay along the floor, if you</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 194</p>	<p>1 a bit about the incident that they were experiencing?</p> <p>2 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>3 Q. What kind of information would they tell you about that</p> <p>4 incident?</p> <p>5 <b>A. They would just tell us what they knew, really, what the</b></p> <p>6 <b>incident was, why they needed our assistance. But</b></p> <p>7 <b>I think the last couple of times, it was purely because</b></p> <p>8 <b>their mobilising system was down. They couldn't take or</b></p> <p>9 <b>receive any emergency calls.</b></p> <p>10 Q. This facility of being able to log in to Bedfordshire's</p> <p>11 system, was that available for other fire brigade's? So</p> <p>12 were you able to, for example, log in to, say, London's</p> <p>13 system?</p> <p>14 <b>A. No, it was only for Bedfordshire, because we used the</b></p> <p>15 <b>same mobilising system.</b></p> <p>16 Q. I see, okay.</p> <p>17 So then turning on to when you receive calls from</p> <p>18 other fire brigade's, so not Bedfordshire.</p> <p>19 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>20 Q. Have you any experience of that?</p> <p>21 <b>A. We took calls for London quite a few times, or if</b></p> <p>22 <b>a caller was on our ground but the incident was actually</b></p> <p>23 <b>in London, it would automatically come through to us</b></p> <p>24 <b>because they were on Essex's ground. Then we would just</b></p> <p>25 <b>take the details and pass the call across to --</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 196</p>

<p>1 sometimes we had it for Kent Fire, sometimes we'd have</p> <p>2 it for London Fire.</p> <p>3 Q. When you were dealing with an incident going on in</p> <p>4 London, how would you first be contacted? Would it be</p> <p>5 by London or would it be by BT or someone else?</p> <p>6 A. Normally London -- what, if a call came in for London?</p> <p>7 Q. Yes.</p> <p>8 A. Sometimes it came through the BT operator. Sometimes it</p> <p>9 might have been mispatched, so it would come to us by</p> <p>10 error. So we would just take the details and then pass</p> <p>11 it across.</p> <p>12 Q. Have you had any experience of overflow calls coming to</p> <p>13 you and London notifying you of the fact that you may be</p> <p>14 receiving overflow calls before you first start to get</p> <p>15 them?</p> <p>16 A. Not that I can recall, no.</p> <p>17 Q. When you had experience of these calls coming in to you</p> <p>18 before, would you have information about the incident</p> <p>19 going on in London at the time of receiving the call or</p> <p>20 is that something you'd have to find out after?</p> <p>21 A. It's something we'd normally have to find out after.</p> <p>22 I've not experienced an incident before like Grenfell.</p> <p>23 It would literally be just a one-off call that would</p> <p>24 come through in error.</p> <p>25 Q. What's your usual practice when you take these calls?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 197</p>	<p>1 that it was really smoky, so I passed that across.</p> <p>2 Q. All right. We'll come on to that in a moment.</p> <p>3 In terms of the information you've got, would you</p> <p>4 log that on your system?</p> <p>5 A. We would make an incident of it every time, yes.</p> <p>6 Q. How would you pass that information to London?</p> <p>7 A. We have two numbers: we have an admin line, which would</p> <p>8 be just for information, or an emergency line. So if</p> <p>9 it's a call that we've taken, we would automatically go</p> <p>10 through on the emergency line.</p> <p>11 Q. Is that going to a specific person in the London Fire</p> <p>12 Brigade control room, as far as you're aware, or is it</p> <p>13 just someone ready to pick up that line?</p> <p>14 A. It would just go through on a 999 line, but in Essex we</p> <p>15 would have a designated console that would always be</p> <p>16 first call take. I don't know if London operate the</p> <p>17 same, but it's so that call would get answered as</p> <p>18 quickly as possible.</p> <p>19 Q. Turning then to the night of 14 June, and looking again</p> <p>20 at page 2 of your witness statement, the third paragraph</p> <p>21 down. You say:</p> <p>22 "On Tuesday June 2017 [sic], I was working with</p> <p>23 White Watch ..."</p> <p>24 You say you were working with Russ White, who was</p> <p>25 a supervisor, Katrina Clarke -- does she also go by the</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 199</p>
<p>1 Is it to just take the information from the caller or is</p> <p>2 it to take the call and patch it over to London? How</p> <p>3 would it usually work?</p> <p>4 A. We don't have the facility to patch, so we would take</p> <p>5 the caller's name, contact number and what the incident</p> <p>6 was. We would then go through to London, pass as much</p> <p>7 information as we could get to London.</p> <p>8 Q. Would that information be, if it was, say, in</p> <p>9 a high-rise building, the floor, the flat number?</p> <p>10 A. Yes.</p> <p>11 Q. Would it be about if they had any kind of disability or</p> <p>12 mobility issues or --</p> <p>13 A. No, we wouldn't have asked that. We would literally</p> <p>14 just get as much information as quickly as we could to</p> <p>15 then pass across. So it would just be the standard,</p> <p>16 name, address, and the type of incident.</p> <p>17 Q. So you would usually find out their name, would you?</p> <p>18 A. Sometimes they would automatically tell you. It's not</p> <p>19 something -- probably, no, we wouldn't normally ask</p> <p>20 their name, it would just be number and incident, not</p> <p>21 their name, no, sorry.</p> <p>22 Q. That's all right.</p> <p>23 What about conditions in the flat? Is that</p> <p>24 something you would elicit from the caller?</p> <p>25 A. I think the call that I took, she automatically said</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 198</p>	<p>1 name of Katrina Marshall at some point?</p> <p>2 A. Yes, she's now married, so she's Katrina Marshall.</p> <p>3 Q. She was a control room operator; is that right?</p> <p>4 A. Yes.</p> <p>5 Q. Vanessa Osborne, was she a control room operator?</p> <p>6 A. Yes.</p> <p>7 Q. The Jayde Palmer, was she a control room operator?</p> <p>8 A. Yes.</p> <p>9 Q. We know you were also working with a new recruit,</p> <p>10 Claire Bannister, who was shadowing the control room</p> <p>11 operators; is that right?</p> <p>12 A. Yes.</p> <p>13 Q. You go on to say when the first call came in from</p> <p>14 Grenfell Tower, it was just you and Katrina in the</p> <p>15 control room; is that right?</p> <p>16 A. Yes.</p> <p>17 Q. We have a record at 1.43 am that your control room was</p> <p>18 first contacted by BT about the incident at</p> <p>19 Grenfell Tower. Are you aware of that, that first</p> <p>20 contact?</p> <p>21 A. Yes. I didn't take that though. I was aware of it</p> <p>22 though, yes.</p> <p>23 Q. I don't need to show it to you, but what</p> <p>24 Katrina Marshall says in her witness statement is</p> <p>25 Glasgow exchange contacted your control room via the</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 200</p>

<p>1 link phone to ask if Essex Fire control could help</p> <p>2 London Fire Brigade as they had a large incident going</p> <p>3 and there were too many calls for them and their</p> <p>4 fallback brigade to answer.</p> <p>5 Were you aware of those details, did Katrina tell</p> <p>6 you that?</p> <p>7 <b>A. Yes, she did call out after saying that London had</b></p> <p>8 <b>called, they had an incident and we would be taking</b></p> <p>9 <b>overflow calls.</b></p> <p>10 Q. Was it her decision to accept or kind of offer the</p> <p>11 assistance?</p> <p>12 <b>A. You would automatically --</b></p> <p>13 Q. You wouldn't need to seek approval from someone senior?</p> <p>14 <b>A. No.</b></p> <p>15 Q. Were you or Katrina given any more details about the</p> <p>16 incident at that point in time?</p> <p>17 <b>A. Not at that time, no.</b></p> <p>18 Q. Did you have a discussion between you about trying to</p> <p>19 obtain any more information at that time about the</p> <p>20 incident that was taking place?</p> <p>21 <b>A. I don't think we realised the scale of it at the time</b></p> <p>22 <b>because we wasn't -- as soon as she'd taken that call,</b></p> <p>23 <b>we didn't really change, you know, we didn't accept many</b></p> <p>24 <b>calls at all at that time, so we wasn't aware.</b></p> <p>25 Q. Do you have any other ways of obtaining information in</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 201</p>	<p>1 If we go over to page 6, the time mark of 01.46, at</p> <p>2 the very bottom -- thank you, Ralph -- it says:</p> <p>3 "Incident type added FIRE - HIGH RISE RESIDENTIAL</p> <p>4 BUILDING."</p> <p>5 Then to go one line above at 01.47, if you could,</p> <p>6 Ralph, so if you could zoom out of that and go to one</p> <p>7 line above to 01.47:</p> <p>8 "Additional info changed W11 AREA A40, BLOCK OF</p> <p>9 FLATS - LADBROOK[sic] ROAD AREA LONDON."</p> <p>10 Are you familiar with this incident log before I go</p> <p>11 any further with it?</p> <p>12 <b>A. Not too much.</b></p> <p>13 Q. Is this something you would've seen on the night as</p> <p>14 calls were coming in?</p> <p>15 <b>A. Yes, yes.</b></p> <p>16 Q. Do you remember at all if you saw that entry going into</p> <p>17 the log in front of you?</p> <p>18 <b>A. No, I don't, no, sorry.</b></p> <p>19 Q. Does this in any way summarise the type of information</p> <p>20 that you had about the incident, the extent of it, being</p> <p>21 in a block of flats in the Ladbroke Grove area?</p> <p>22 <b>A. Yes, we didn't realise the full address at the</b></p> <p>23 <b>beginning.</b></p> <p>24 Q. Sure.</p> <p>25 I want to come on to the call that you took, which</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 203</p>
<p>1 your control room, such as having Sky News on or having</p> <p>2 a heli-tele downlink? Is any of that available to you?</p> <p>3 <b>A. Yes, we have a video wall where we would have BBC News</b></p> <p>4 <b>on.</b></p> <p>5 Q. BBC News?</p> <p>6 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>7 Q. Was anything showing at that point in time, do you</p> <p>8 remember?</p> <p>9 <b>A. It did come on. I don't think it was on at that</b></p> <p>10 <b>particular moment, but it wasn't long after.</b></p> <p>11 Q. Just to follow up on something, I'll just ask you, did</p> <p>12 you have this heli-tele downlink facility that we've</p> <p>13 heard in other control rooms?</p> <p>14 <b>A. No, we don't have that facility.</b></p> <p>15 Q. We know that at around 01.45/01.47, depending on which</p> <p>16 document you look at, there was a call that was received</p> <p>17 from someone on the A40 just reporting the incident. Do</p> <p>18 you remember that call coming in?</p> <p>19 <b>A. I don't, no.</b></p> <p>20 Q. No, all right.</p> <p>21 If I can just perhaps just show the log for Essex</p> <p>22 control room just so we can put a bit of a time marker</p> <p>23 on it. LFB00003625, please, Ralph, page 7.</p> <p>24 So page 7 is actually where our incident log starts</p> <p>25 and it runs backwards.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 202</p>	<p>1 you discuss at the second half of page 2 of your witness</p> <p>2 statement and, as I understand, is the only call you</p> <p>3 took on the night to do with Grenfell.</p> <p>4 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>5 Q. We know it was from the 22nd floor at flat 193.</p> <p>6 Ralph, if I can just ask you to go back to</p> <p>7 Ms Lancaster's statement.</p> <p>8 It's halfway down there, Ms Lancaster, second last</p> <p>9 paragraph on that page:</p> <p>10 "My first call was from a woman, who was on the 22nd</p> <p>11 floor. The lady said it was getting smoky and there was</p> <p>12 lots of smoke on her floor. I took her address as Flat</p> <p>13 193, Grenfell Tower in London. I advised her that I</p> <p>14 would pass her call onto London Fire Brigade, as we</p> <p>15 would with any call we take on behalf of London. I</p> <p>16 recall Katrina contacting London to pass on the details</p> <p>17 of this call, whilst I remained available to take any</p> <p>18 other calls."</p> <p>19 In terms of Katrina taking that information and</p> <p>20 calling London, is that something that would be normal</p> <p>21 practice?</p> <p>22 <b>A. Yes. On a night shift, we would split into two halves</b></p> <p>23 <b>and we would take it in turns to -- one would be on the</b></p> <p>24 <b>back on the supervisor console while the other one would</b></p> <p>25 <b>sit out the front.</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 204</p>

<p>1 Q. Yes.</p> <p>2 <b>A. It just worked out this night that Katrina was sitting</b></p> <p>3 <b>on the back and I was sitting out the front.</b></p> <p>4 Q. Do you remember in this call -- we can go to the</p> <p>5 transcript if we need to -- asking how many persons were</p> <p>6 in the flat at that time?</p> <p>7 <b>A. No.</b></p> <p>8 Q. Is there any reason why you didn't take that</p> <p>9 information? Would it be normal for you to do so?</p> <p>10 <b>A. I think she was panicking -- from what I can remember,</b></p> <p>11 <b>I think she was panicking on the phone, so I just took</b></p> <p>12 <b>what I could, but I didn't ask how many people were in</b></p> <p>13 <b>the flat.</b></p> <p>14 Q. Would it be usual when you're taking this kind of call</p> <p>15 to start advising the caller as to whether they should</p> <p>16 stay or go, whether it's safe or not to do so?</p> <p>17 <b>A. Yes. But because it was in London, I just took the</b></p> <p>18 <b>details just to pass it across to London as soon as</b></p> <p>19 <b>possible.</b></p> <p>20 Q. So am I right in saying that your evidence is that</p> <p>21 because it's a call from London and not your own</p> <p>22 incident ground, you wouldn't go through that usual</p> <p>23 assessment process to give them the advice to work out</p> <p>24 whether it's safe to leave or not?</p> <p>25 <b>A. No, you wouldn't, no.</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 205</p>	<p>1 this incident log?</p> <p>2 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>3 Q. Okay.</p> <p>4 Is there any reason why you weren't inputting that</p> <p>5 information when you took the call?</p> <p>6 <b>A. I can't remember, sorry.</b></p> <p>7 Q. No, that's all right.</p> <p>8 Was Claire Bannister listening into your call or did</p> <p>9 you tell her information about it such that she was able</p> <p>10 to input it into the system?</p> <p>11 <b>A. Yes. From what I recall, I think she was sitting at my</b></p> <p>12 <b>console, with me, plugged into a headset so that she</b></p> <p>13 <b>could listen.</b></p> <p>14 Q. We know from your own summary in your witness statement</p> <p>15 about the call that you took the flat number, which was</p> <p>16 193 --</p> <p>17 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>18 Q. -- and you obtained the conditions from the caller</p> <p>19 because she volunteered the information that it was very</p> <p>20 smoky.</p> <p>21 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>22 Q. Would you expect that kind of information also to be</p> <p>23 inputted on this log?</p> <p>24 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>25 Q. Again, do you have any idea why it wasn't?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 207</p>
<p>1 Q. So you would just take the details, end the call and</p> <p>2 pass it to London?</p> <p>3 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>4 Q. Can I just ask you to look at the incident log, so back</p> <p>5 to LFB00003625, and if we can go to page 5, please,</p> <p>6 Ralph.</p> <p>7 If we could look at the time mark 01.48, it's about</p> <p>8 five lines up from the bottom, and there's a number of</p> <p>9 stars, and then it says:</p> <p>10 "****CALLER IS AT THE 22 FLOOR*****"</p> <p>11 It's quite difficult to make out, but if you look at</p> <p>12 01.48 up from the bottom:</p> <p>13 "... 01:48 Duplicate Additional info changed</p> <p>14 "****CALLER IS AT THE 22 FLOOR*****"</p> <p>15 Can you see that?</p> <p>16 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>17 Q. Is that information you inputted into the system on</p> <p>18 taking this call?</p> <p>19 <b>A. No.</b></p> <p>20 Q. Is it somebody else, and possibly Claire Bannister, who</p> <p>21 has inputted it in?</p> <p>22 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>23 Q. By CB1, we can see there.</p> <p>24 Would it be usual for you to input information about</p> <p>25 the call you're taking into this system to appear on</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 206</p>	<p>1 <b>A. No.</b></p> <p>2 Q. In terms of then passing the information over to London,</p> <p>3 we know of course from your witness statement and the</p> <p>4 evidence of others that Katrina wasn't able to get</p> <p>5 through to London at all.</p> <p>6 <b>A. Mm-hm.</b></p> <p>7 Q. You say in the same paragraph we looked at earlier that</p> <p>8 they were not answering the phones.</p> <p>9 Can you tell us a little bit more what happened</p> <p>10 there? How many times did Ms Marshall try to contact</p> <p>11 London, what kind of process --</p> <p>12 <b>A. Continuously. We have a system that you literally just</b></p> <p>13 <b>press the button that will dial through. We were just</b></p> <p>14 <b>continuously pressing both, just trying to get through.</b></p> <p>15 Q. So that was both of you trying to contact London?</p> <p>16 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>17 Q. Then we know that because you couldn't get hold of them,</p> <p>18 you paged Nigel Dilley, who has just given evidence to</p> <p>19 assist us with that part of the night.</p> <p>20 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>21 Q. After you contacted Nigel Dilley, did you then continue</p> <p>22 to try and get hold of London?</p> <p>23 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>24 Q. Again, just through trying these two lines that you</p> <p>25 mention in your witness statement?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 208</p>

<p>1 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>2 Q. The emergency line and the admin line.</p> <p>3 Is this something you'd experienced before when you</p> <p>4 had taken overflow calls from London --</p> <p>5 <b>A. No.</b></p> <p>6 Q. -- you had experienced communication difficulties like</p> <p>7 this?</p> <p>8 <b>A. Not at all, no.</b></p> <p>9 Q. We know from Mr Dille's evidence that he passed the</p> <p>10 details of this call that you took and another call from</p> <p>11 flat 82 at 02.26.30, but we also know that at 02.18,</p> <p>12 someone from Essex -- and I believe it's Ms Marshall --</p> <p>13 did actually get hold of someone in the LFB control room</p> <p>14 to be able to pass the details over.</p> <p>15 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>16 Q. Are you aware of that information being passed over at</p> <p>17 that time?</p> <p>18 <b>A. I remember her calling out saying that she'd managed to</b></p> <p>19 <b>get through to London.</b></p> <p>20 Q. If I can just ask you to go to the transcript -- and if</p> <p>21 you can't help us with this call any more, do just</p> <p>22 say -- it's LFB00000347, please, Ralph.</p> <p>23 So on page 1 there, you can see the last set of</p> <p>24 numbers says, "021855", so we know the call took place</p> <p>25 at 02.18.55.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 209</p>	<p>1 this conversation --</p> <p>2 <b>A. No.</b></p> <p>3 Q. -- with this control room operator?</p> <p>4 So just one more question: you're not able to tell</p> <p>5 us why Ms Marshall didn't pass over the details that you</p> <p>6 had actually taken from the call, which was the flat</p> <p>7 number and that it was getting very smoky inside the</p> <p>8 flat?</p> <p>9 <b>A. I could've been taking other calls at that time, so</b></p> <p>10 <b>I wasn't -- I can't remember Katrina having that</b></p> <p>11 <b>conversation, I'm afraid.</b></p> <p>12 Q. Yes. That's absolutely understandable.</p> <p>13 So just then finally on this, we obviously now have</p> <p>14 elicited that the call was taken at 01.48 from flat 193,</p> <p>15 that you took yourself, and the information was passed</p> <p>16 to the LFB at the earliest point seems to be 02.18 in</p> <p>17 the evening. So that appears to be about a 30-minute</p> <p>18 delay.</p> <p>19 Is that something you would agree with --</p> <p>20 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>21 Q. -- from what we've looked?</p> <p>22 Again, in your experience, having dealt with</p> <p>23 overflow calls to London, is that something that you</p> <p>24 have experienced?</p> <p>25 <b>A. Not that it's taken that long before, no.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 211</p>
<p>1 If we go to page 2 of that transcript, please, we</p> <p>2 can see the conversation going on between the operators</p> <p>3 there. We have operator 1, which I believe is the LFB</p> <p>4 control room operator, and operator 2 is Ms Marshall.</p> <p>5 There on page 1 she passes over the details about flat</p> <p>6 number 82 on the 11th floor.</p> <p>7 Then if we can go to the next page, please, Ralph.</p> <p>8 If you look halfway down, Ms Lancaster, you can see</p> <p>9 that she says:</p> <p>10 "OPERATOR 2: And there's another one, on the 22nd</p> <p>11 floor, as well.</p> <p>12 "OPERATOR 1: Have you got a flat --</p> <p>13 "OPERATOR 2: She said she -- sorry.</p> <p>14 "OPERATOR 1: Sorry.</p> <p>15 "OPERATOR 2: Yeah, sorry, flat -- let me just find</p> <p>16 it. He just (Several inaudible words) flat number? Oh,</p> <p>17 we didn't get the flat number on that one. She said</p> <p>18 there was smoke -- was starting to get smoky.</p> <p>19 "OPERATOR 1: Okay, but she's -- they're okay?</p> <p>20 "OPERATOR 2: Yeah, they're okay, and we've advised</p> <p>21 them to stay put until they hear otherwise.</p> <p>22 "OPERATOR 1: Yeah. Yeah, it sounds a terrible</p> <p>23 fire."</p> <p>24 Then they pretty much end the call.</p> <p>25 First of all, are you aware of Ms Marshall having</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 210</p>	<p>1 Q. All right.</p> <p>2 Final set of questions, Ms Lancaster.</p> <p>3 On page 3 of your witness statement -- if we could</p> <p>4 please go to it, Ralph -- top paragraph, you say that</p> <p>5 you checked the internet for any information on</p> <p>6 Grenfell Tower, googling Grenfell Tower itself. You</p> <p>7 found a paragraph on a website stating there is a fire</p> <p>8 arrangement and their policy was to stay put unless</p> <p>9 otherwise advised.</p> <p>10 You go on there to say:</p> <p>11 "Grenfell was designed to rigorous fire safety</p> <p>12 standards and each front door for the flats can</p> <p>13 withstand fire for up to 30 minutes."</p> <p>14 So, first of all, what prompted you to go onto the</p> <p>15 internet to find this information?</p> <p>16 <b>A. Only because it's not on our ground and I didn't know</b></p> <p>17 <b>anything about Grenfell Tower. We couldn't get through</b></p> <p>18 <b>to London. So I thought any information, whether it big</b></p> <p>19 <b>or small, would be useful to either us or if we could</b></p> <p>20 <b>find something and pass it back to London to help.</b></p> <p>21 Q. Do you remember which website you found this information</p> <p>22 on?</p> <p>23 <b>A. Google.</b></p> <p>24 Q. Just Google --</p> <p>25 <b>A. I just googled Grenfell Tower and then it came up lots</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 212</p>

<p>1 <b>of different subheadings. I think I went onto the first</b></p> <p>2 <b>one and I just started reading about it, when it was</b></p> <p>3 <b>built in the 1970s, how many stairwells it had.</b></p> <p>4 Q. Do you remember -- again, I appreciate this might be</p> <p>5 difficult -- if it was the Tenant Management</p> <p>6 Organisation's website, so the company that ran</p> <p>7 Grenfell Tower or a number of flats in it, or the</p> <p>8 council's website?</p> <p>9 <b>A. I can't -- it was the top one in Google. As soon as you</b></p> <p>10 <b>typed it in, it was the first one underneath. I can't</b></p> <p>11 <b>remember what that one was though, I'm afraid.</b></p> <p>12 Q. You've just been telling us that there was more</p> <p>13 information on there than I think you've input into your</p> <p>14 witness statement --</p> <p>15 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>16 Q. -- about the type of building and the number of</p> <p>17 stairwells, et cetera.</p> <p>18 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>19 Q. In terms of picking out what was relevant to you, was</p> <p>20 the information you've set out in your witness statement</p> <p>21 what you thought was relevant --</p> <p>22 <b>A. That's what I thought was the most important, the stay</b></p> <p>23 <b>put and the 30 minutes for the doors. I thought that</b></p> <p>24 <b>was the most important, you know. We had something to</b></p> <p>25 <b>go on.</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 213</p>	<p>1 Q. -- and found this information?</p> <p>2 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>3 Q. Was it from approximately that point onwards that, to</p> <p>4 your knowledge, you or any others in the control room</p> <p>5 were telling callers from London and Grenfell Tower to</p> <p>6 stay put?</p> <p>7 <b>A. Yes, stay put, yes.</b></p> <p>8 Q. Okay. All right.</p> <p>9 Ms Lancaster, those are all the questions I have.</p> <p>10 What is usual practice is for the chairman to extend</p> <p>11 indulgence to us for a 5-minute break to check we've</p> <p>12 asked everything we need to.</p> <p>13 So if I can just ask the chairman if he wouldn't</p> <p>14 mind.</p> <p>15 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes. We have a short break at this</p> <p>16 point to enable counsel to check she's covered</p> <p>17 everything.</p> <p>18 So I'm going to ask you to go with the usher for</p> <p>19 a few minutes, and please don't talk to anyone about</p> <p>20 your evidence. Thank you.</p> <p>21 Well, Ms Jones, I'll say 5 minutes unless you're</p> <p>22 ready sooner.</p> <p>23 MS JONES: Thank you very much, sir.</p> <p>24 (4.45 pm)</p> <p>25 (A short break)</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 215</p>
<p>1 At that time, we couldn't get through to London. We</p> <p>2 were not aware of their policies and procedures, do you</p> <p>3 tell them to stay, do you tell them to go. So as soon</p> <p>4 as I found that information, I called out to Katrina,</p> <p>5 you know, "This is what I've found", I put it on there.</p> <p>6 So that's why we agreed, you know, okay, we've found</p> <p>7 this. We didn't have anything else to go on at the</p> <p>8 time.</p> <p>9 Q. If I can turn back to that incident log we're now</p> <p>10 familiar with, so LFB00003625 at page 3, if we can look</p> <p>11 at the time mark 02.14, about three or four time marks</p> <p>12 down, there it says:</p> <p>13 "ON THE GRENELL TOWER REGENERATION THERE IS A</p> <p>14 EMERGENCY FIRE ARRANGEMENT PARAGRAPH</p> <p>15 "THEIR POLICY STATES TO STAY PUT UNLESS OTHERWISE</p> <p>16 ADVISED, GRENELL WAS DESIGNED TO RIGOROUS FIRE SAFETY</p> <p>17 STANDARDS.</p> <p>18 "EACH FRONT DOOR FOR EACH FLAT CAN WITHSTAND A FIRE</p> <p>19 FOR UP TO 30 MINUTES."</p> <p>20 Was that something that you inputted onto the</p> <p>21 system?</p> <p>22 <b>A. I asked Claire.</b></p> <p>23 Q. As far as you can recollect for us, is that about the</p> <p>24 time when you googled this --</p> <p>25 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 214</p>	<p>1 (4.50 pm)</p> <p>2 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: I think there are just one or two</p> <p>3 questions. Let's see how we go.</p> <p>4 MS JONES: Yes, thank you.</p> <p>5 First of all, can you tell us, was there a debrief</p> <p>6 after this incident in the Essex Fire control room?</p> <p>7 <b>A. I can't remember, sorry.</b></p> <p>8 Q. That's all right.</p> <p>9 Secondly, are you aware of a policy within Essex</p> <p>10 control that is called advanced call management?</p> <p>11 <b>A. No.</b></p> <p>12 Q. Are you aware of any policy that deals with how you go</p> <p>13 about taking a call from someone who needs fire survival</p> <p>14 guidance?</p> <p>15 <b>A. Only when I did my initial training back in 2012.</b></p> <p>16 Q. Do you know the name of it?</p> <p>17 <b>A. It was just fire survival.</b></p> <p>18 Q. Fire survival?</p> <p>19 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>20 Q. Just asking you about that -- and, again, if you don't</p> <p>21 remember, please do just say -- in terms of the fire</p> <p>22 survival guidance that you were given training on, do</p> <p>23 you know if it had four principles set out in it which</p> <p>24 is essentially you have to work through with the</p> <p>25 caller -- first of all, help them to find out if there's</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 216</p>

<p>1 an alternative escape route; secondly, to assess the</p> <p>2 situation they're in; thirdly, then, to begin by</p> <p>3 protecting them, so going through fire survival guidance</p> <p>4 with them; and then, fourthly, reassessing the</p> <p>5 situation?</p> <p>6 <b>A. Yes, we would have -- they were prompt cards, from what</b></p> <p>7 <b>I can recall. But I didn't ever have to use them, I'm</b></p> <p>8 <b>afraid, so I can't remember what's actually written on</b></p> <p>9 <b>them, but I know they were literally step-by-step cards.</b></p> <p>10 Q. Okay, thank you very much.</p> <p>11 Looking at the incident log, if we could please go</p> <p>12 to that again, Ralph, so LFB00003625 on page 6, if we</p> <p>13 could, and four lines up from the bottom on the</p> <p>14 right-hand side, it says:</p> <p>15 "Smart text changed EMERGENCY Call Change."</p> <p>16 There's a few references throughout this log to</p> <p>17 something called "smart text".</p> <p>18 Are you able to tell us what that is?</p> <p>19 <b>A. If we mobilised into it to change details or if we had</b></p> <p>20 <b>further information on what kind the call was, it would</b></p> <p>21 <b>automatically come up saying that it had been changed.</b></p> <p>22 Q. So that's the smart text saying it has automatically</p> <p>23 been changed?</p> <p>24 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>25 Q. All right.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 217</p>	<p>1 patience.</p> <p>2 You'll all understand that when a witness has been</p> <p>3 waiting all day to give her evidence, it's very</p> <p>4 disappointing if I simply say, "Please come again</p> <p>5 tomorrow". So I'm sorry to keep you all, but I think</p> <p>6 that was necessary.</p> <p>7 I'm grateful to the support team over on that side</p> <p>8 of the room. Again, I've kept them late, but thank you</p> <p>9 for your patience as well.</p> <p>10 Right, that's it.</p> <p>11 10 o'clock tomorrow?</p> <p>12 MS JONES: Yes.</p> <p>13 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes, 10 o'clock, please.</p> <p>14 Thank you.</p> <p>15 (5.00 pm)</p> <p>16 (The hearing adjourned until Tuesday, 20 November 2018</p> <p>17 at 10.00 am)</p> <p>18 I N D E X</p> <p>19 SARAH RUSSELL (affirmed) .....1</p> <p>Questions by COUNSEL TO THE INQUIRY .....1</p> <p>20</p> <p>ZOE MARTIN (sworn) .....76</p> <p>21 Questions by MR KINNIER .....76</p> <p>22 ROB BROWN (affirmed) .....113</p> <p>Questions by MR KINNIER .....113</p> <p>23</p> <p>NIGEL DILLEY (sworn) .....147</p> <p>24 Questions by MR KINNIER .....147</p> <p>25 SHARON LANCASTER (sworn) .....186</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 219</p>
<p>1 Then a different question: were you aware that night</p> <p>2 of the stay-put advice being changed by the LFB?</p> <p>3 <b>A. No.</b></p> <p>4 MS JONES: Okay.</p> <p>5 Well, Ms Lancaster, thank you ever so much for</p> <p>6 coming to assist us. It's been very helpful to have</p> <p>7 your evidence to assist us with our inquiries.</p> <p>8 THE WITNESS: Thank you.</p> <p>9 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: I'd add my thanks as well,</p> <p>10 Ms Lancaster.</p> <p>11 Tell me, have you been waiting all day to give your</p> <p>12 evidence?</p> <p>13 THE WITNESS: Yes.</p> <p>14 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: I'm very sorry for that, because</p> <p>15 it's very disagreeable to be kept hanging around for so</p> <p>16 long. But thank you for your patience and coming to</p> <p>17 give evidence. It's very helpful to us, and you are</p> <p>18 free to go. Thank you.</p> <p>19 THE WITNESS: Thank you.</p> <p>20 (The witness withdrew)</p> <p>21 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Thank you very much, Ms Jones, and</p> <p>22 that's it for the day.</p> <p>23 MS JONES: That's it for the day. Thank you for sitting</p> <p>24 late.</p> <p>25 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: I should thank everyone for their</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 218</p>	

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